

NEW IMPORTANT TRAVELING REQUIREMENTS

Why is it happening?

It is being done to curb human trafficking. According to the Department of Home Affairs, 30 000 minors are trafficked through South African borders every year. 50% of these minors are under the age of 14.

Please note the following requirements regarding minors (under 18) who plans to accompany you:

From 1 June 2015, the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa will require all passengers under 18 to travel with an Unabridged Birth Certificate.

Under the new law, all minors under the age of 18 years are required to produce, in addition to their passport, an Unabridged Birth Certificate (showing the particulars of both parents) when exiting and entering South African ports of entry.

It is the responsibility of passengers to ensure their children have the correct documentation or risk being denied boarding. The new law is being enforced by airlines and immigration officials across the board (land, sea and air). Although airlines and travel agents are doing everything to keep passengers informed, ultimately it is passengers' responsibility to know what is required of them. In all cases an Unabridged Birth Certificate is required for minors departing and arriving in South Africa ... they are not allowed to travel without it.

In cases where the Unabridged Birth Certificate is in a language other than English, it must be accompanied by a sworn translation issued by a competent authority in the country concerned.

Children travelling with only one parent

When a child travels with only one parent, additional documents should include an affidavit in which the absent parent gives consent for the child to travel, a court order granting full parental responsibilities or legal guardianship of the child, or the death certificate of the absent parent. The affidavit should be no more than 3 months old from date of travel.

Children travelling without either parent

In the case of a child travelling with a person other than a parent, the Unabridged Birth Certificate must be supplemented by affidavits from the parents or legal guardians confirming that the child may travel with that person, copies of the ID documents or passports of the parents or legal guardian, and the contact details of the parents or legal guardian.

Similarly, a child travelling as an unaccompanied minor would have to produce not only the Unabridged Birth Certificate, but also proof of consent from both parents or legal guardians and contact details, plus documentation relating to the person receiving the child in South Africa. The latter documentation should include a letter stating the person's contact details and residential address, contact details where the child will be residing, plus a copy of his or her ID document, passport or residence permit.

Application process for Unabridged Birth Certificates

- Apply at your nearest Home Affairs office where your Biometric information will be verified.
- Take your ID book along, as well as your child's ID number.
- All documents submitted must be originals or certified copies.
- The Unabridged Birth Certificate costs R75.
- It can take up to 8 weeks to acquire an Unabridged Birth Certificate from the date of application.

Since last year, Unabridged Birth Certificates have been issued automatically for newborns. If your infant was born after 14 March 2013, you should be in possession of a UBC.

Certified copies of documents are usually valid for 6 months only.

Don't delay applying for Unabridged Birth Certificates as the time frame for obtaining the documentation varies greatly, from a few weeks to several months.

Minors travelling in school groups or with their grandparents are not exempt from the requirement.

Who is exempt?

- The new law does not apply to children travelling domestically (E.g. Between Johannesburg and Cape Town).
- Minor passengers on a 'Cruise to Nowhere'. For example, a cruise that departs Durban Harbour and returns to Durban Harbour, or a cruise that goes from Durban Harbour to Cape Town Harbour.

Getting copies of birth certificates

Unabridged birth certificates are issued upon request to persons who are:

- South African citizens, whether in the Republic or outside the Republic, including persons who are not South African citizens but who sojourn permanently or temporarily in the Republic, for whatever purpose.

If you need additional copies of an unabridged birth certificate you must:

- Complete Form BI--154 and submit it to the nearest office of the Department of Home Affairs if you are in South Africa, or the nearest South African embassy, mission or consulate if you are overseas P
- pay the required fee for the application

Undocumented Foreign Nationals who are born in South Africa are issued with a certificate free of charge on registration of their births