

7 FAM 160

FAMILY ABUSE SITUATIONS

(CT:CON-101; 02-10-2005)
(Office of Origin: CA/OCS/PRI)

7 FAM 161 SUMMARY

(CT:CON-101; 02-10-2005)

It is not unusual for posts to encounter situations involving allegations of abusive family relationships. This may include troubled marriages, domestic violence, child abuse and even elder abuse. The traditional consular role of conducting welfare and whereabouts checks is more complicated in these cases. You are not simply being asked to locate a citizen/national and confirm that he or she is all right and ask the person to contact his or her family in the United States. When a post or the Department receives an allegation of family abuse and we are asked to conduct a welfare and whereabouts check, we must consider whether a visit by the consular officer could put the person in greater danger, and whether it would be appropriate to seek assistance from the host government. Consular officers are not professional social workers, even if individual officers have background in that field. We cannot compel a family to permit a consular officer to observe a citizen or national or inspect the household, school, etc. The family's cooperation with consular officers is purely voluntary. Nevertheless, there are cases where it is imperative that the consular officer act quickly. This frequently requires close coordination with the host government. CA/OCS is available to assist you 24/7 in critical cases.

7 FAM 162 REPORTS OF FAMILY ABUSE

(CT:CON-101; 02-10-2005)

Reports of family abuse situations usually come to a post's attention from the alleged victim, relatives in the United States, neighbors, teachers, physicians or local police authorities. Consular officers should:

- (1) Report such cases to CA/OCS/ACS as soon as possible;
- (2) Review 7 FAM 1900 Crime Victim Assistance and the Crime Victim Assistance Resource Notebook on the CA/OCS Intranet site;
- (3) Review 7 FAM 1700 Child Abuse;

- (4) Review 7 FAM 500 Federal Benefits for guidance on representative payees for elderly federal benefits recipients; and
- (5) Review 7 FAM 300 guidance on medical and financial assistance;
- (6) Review 7 FAM 190 concerning refuge; and
- (7) See also 3 FAM 1810, Family Advocacy Program: Child Abuse, Neglect and Domestic Violence for questions concerning the official U.S. community.

7 FAM 163 REPATRIATION AND RESETTLEMENT

(CT:CON-101; 02-10-2005)

If repatriation or resettlement is necessary, the Department will coordinate with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ACF/ORR), and its service provider, International Social Services, USA, (ISS/USA) to facilitate assistance in the United States. (See 7 FAM 300.)

7 FAM 164 CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(CT:CON-101; 02-10-2005)

See 7 FAM 1900 for guidance about crime victim assistance that may be available in these cases. This includes referral of victims to special services available for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and other crimes.

7 FAM 165 THROUGH 169 UNASSIGNED.