

Overseas Travel

If you are planning an overseas holiday you should tell the other parent (and any other person with parental responsibility) as soon as possible. You should give them full details of where you will go and include contact numbers. You may be committing a criminal offence if you take a child overseas and keep them there without the written consent of both parents if there are parenting orders or a current application for parenting orders.

If written consent is given by all parties with parental responsibility, a passport application can be lodged as normal. If it is not, you can make a written request to the Approved Senior Officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to consider issuing the passport due to special circumstances. If they refuse you can apply to the Court for an order permitting a child to travel internationally. The Court will only allow the child to travel internationally if it decides it is in the best interests of the child.

If you are concerned that a child may be taken out of the country, you can:

- Prevent a passport being issued for a child by lodging a Child Alert Request at any Australian Passport Office. If a child alert is in force (it lasts 12 months) and an application for an Australian passport is received, you will be notified. It does not stop a child from leaving Australia on a valid passport and does not affect a passport issued by another country.
- Apply to the Court for a child alert order. A court-ordered child alert stays in force until a child turns 18, or as directed by the Court. A child alert does not stop a child from leaving Australia on a valid passport and does not affect a passport issued by another country.
- Apply to the court for an order requiring a person to deliver a child's or accompanying adult's passport to the Court.
- Apply for an order preventing a child from leaving Australia. This can include a request that the Australian Federal Police (AFP) place the child's name on the Airport Watch List. The child's name will stay on the Airport Watch List until a further order of the Court. If you agree to a child going overseas in the future or wish to take a child out of Australia yourself, you must apply to the Court (before you travel) to have the child's name removed from the Airport Watch List. If you don't, the child will be prevented from leaving irrespective of who they are travelling with. The AFP won't remove the child from the list without an order of the Court.

See information sheet; **Stopping a Child Leaving Australia**