BRINGING CHILDREN ACROSS THE U.S. BORDER

Child is a **Minor** who is **under the age of 18** years

Who **CAN** bring my child across the border?
- A parent with proof*
- A legal guardian with proof*

Who **CANNOT** *(or Should Not)* bring my child across the border?
- Any adult **without** proof of being a parent or legal guardian
- Relatives who do **not** have proof of legal guardianship
- Without proof of legal guardianship, the child is **likely** to be separated from the parent, or any other adult, and detained.

Can a child cross the US Border **without an adult**?
- If a child crosses the border without an adult they will **definitely** be detained.
- STOP An unaccompanied minor is **NOT** eligible for the Uniting for Ukraine program.

What **proof** do I need to bring my child across the border?
- If you are a parent, please have proof such as your child's birth certificate with your name on it.
- If you are a legal guardian of the child, please have a Judicial Custody Order, preferably translated into English, or else the minor child may be detained and you will be separated.
- STOP Power of Attorney is **NOT** considered proof! STOP Permission to Travel form is **NOT** considered proof!

What happens to children who are detained?
- First, they can be held by Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) for up to 72 hours.
- Then they can be transferred to a detention center run by the Office of Refugee Resettlement(ORR), where they could be held for weeks or even months.
- Once a child is in ORR custody, they may **move the child across the US** to a facility, such as a group home, that has bed space.
- No guarantee that siblings will be kept together.
- When an **unaccompanied minor** is transferred to ORR, ORR will try to find someone in the US to take custody of the child. The more distant the relation (relative vs. friend vs. stranger), the more time it will take to screen the adult before releasing the child into their custody.

How can I find out the status of a child who has been detained?
- It is *extremely difficult* to find out a child's location.
- ORR will only tell a **parent** their child's **location**.
- For a non-parent, ORR can only confirm **if they have custody** of the child, but will not release that child's location or any other information.
  - ORR will instead send the caller's contact information to the facility where the child is located.
  - Non-parents or attorneys only learn where the child is physically located once social workers from ORR contact the potential sponsor to begin the screening process for taking custody of the child.

Resources And Contacts

United States Federal Agency contact information

Customs and Border Patrol (CBP):
Justin.Kelemen@cbp.dhs.gov,
Patricia.Acevedo@cpb.dhs.org

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR):
1(800)203-700, information@orrncc.com

ICE Locator Information:
https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index

Additional Resources for Assistance

Al Otro Lado:
1(323)238-9935, https://alotrolado.org/

Kids in Need of Defense (KIND):
1(202)824-8680, https://supportkind.org/
https://supportkind.org/resources/unaccompained-children-fleeing-ukraine/

Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service (LIRS):
1(410)230-2700, https://www.lirs.org

Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES):
https://www.raicestexas.org/what-we-do

Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition:
https://www.caircoalition.org/what-we-do/detained-childrens-program

Razom for Ukraine:
info@razomforukraine.org, 1(646)449-9750

Each Step Home:
https://www.eachstephome.org/about/

Vecina: https://vecina.org/

This document was prepared for informational purposes only by licensed attorneys from the Ukraine Immigration Task Force: https://ukrainetaskforce.org/
For legal advice, please consult a qualified immigration attorney