

Update on Processing Times for South African Birth Certificates and Passports

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The Department of State, Office of Children's Issues, wishes to advise U.S. prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) and adoption service providers (ASPs) of potential delays in the processing time to complete an adoption from South Africa. The South African Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has recently changed its process on how Convention adoptions are noted on birth certificates, which has resulted in significant delays in the issuance of South African passports to Convention adoptees.

PAPs are encouraged to keep their travel plans flexible while they wait for DHA to issue birth certificates and passports. We understand that previous processing time for birth certificates and passports was approximately six weeks; however, we have received reports from adoptive parents and ASPs that families are now being asked to wait for a year or more in some cases for DHA to issue their adoptive child's documents. PAPs who are preparing to travel to South Africa soon to finalize their adoption and families who are currently in South Africa awaiting these documents should continue to work with their adoption service provider.

Please note the Consulate General in Johannesburg and the South African Central Authority are aware of the significant delays in the processing of birth certificates and South African passports, and of the direct impact that the delays are having on families. They are in direct communication with the DHA regarding this matter. The Consulate General in Johannesburg and the Office of Children's Issues will continue to monitor this situation.

Please continue to monitor adoption.state.gov for updated information. We will update this site as new information becomes available. For questions about this notice, please email the Office of Children's Issues at adoption@state.gov.