## Hague Convention International Child Abduction Cases



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## What is the Hague Convention?



The multilateral treaty known as the Hague Abduction Convention was developed by the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH). The Convention's primary goal is to protect the rights of child custody for bicultural parents of different, participating Hague Convention countries. The intention of the Hague Convention on child abduction is to preserve existing living arrangements for Hague Convention children under 16 years of age, who are wrongfully removed or retained by a parent across international boundaries.

With a current total of 98 contracting states, the objective of the Hague Convention on abduction is to ensure that a child will be returned to his or her habitual residence with expediency. The Convention states that a final decision is to be made within 6 weeks from the beginning of the return application filing date.

## Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law Handles Hague Convention Child **Abduction Cases**

Legal representation by an experienced law firm, who understands the civil aspects of Hague Convention child abduction cases, *is imperative* to expedite the return of your child. A parent who is faced with the abduction of their child, or whose child is currently being retained across an international border, has powerful rights under the Hague Abduction Convention. If your child is at risk or is already a victim of international parental kidnapping, contact our compassionate, knowledgeable legal team at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law at 801-948-2203 for your free case evaluation in Salt Lake City, Utah. We are experienced in Hague Convention child abduction cases.

# What You Need to Know to File a Hague Convention Application

As a left-behind parent, prompt action is critical when your child has been taken across international borders. Depending on your circumstances, your <u>Wall & Wall Legal Team</u> will consider every option to determine the best legal solution to return your child to your custody. For a parent to file a Hague Convention return application, immediate action is necessary to prevent any claim that you, as the left-behind parent, agreed to the retention or taking of your child in the beginning. Listed here are common issues and procedures to expect during your Hague Abduction Convention case:

#### **Article 12, One-Year Time Limit**

Under article 12 of the Hague Abduction Convention, a parent has up to one year after the abduction to institute a Hague Convention lawsuit. The experienced attorneys at Wall & Wall recommend legal proceedings be initiated as soon as possible. Fast action will help to prevent the qualifying defense of your child becoming settled in his or her new environment.

#### **Formal Written Notice**

Unless there is a suspicion that the abducting parent may try to hide the child, your legal team will prepare a *formal written notice to inform the kidnapping parent of the dire consequences he or she faces if the child is not immediately returned*. The notice will detail the criminal, civil and financial consequences the taking parent and other conspiring individuals may face as a result of wrongful removal, abduction or retention of the child.

### **Gather Necessary Documents**

Your legal counsel will request that you gather the necessary documents needed for the upcoming hearing. You will also most likely be asked to *prepare a detailed family history to help develop evidence to aid your case*. If there is no custody order in place, you will also need to pursue immediate civil action to <u>establish child custody</u> or <u>modify an original order</u>.

## **Jurisdiction and US State Department Support**

In the US, your legal representative will decide to bring suit in state or federal court, in accordance with the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (ICARA), to ensure concurrent jurisdiction. Your attorney may also enlist the support of the US State Department's Office of Children's Issues if you are unsure about your child's location.

#### Immediate, Interim Relief

Your child will be protected with interim relief by the express authorization to the state or federal court, where the return application is filed, to immediately put into effect the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspect of International Child Abduction. *This gives the court the ability to order "provisional remedies" to protect the well-being of your child*.

## **Contact Experienced Hague Abduction Convention Attorneys in Utah at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law**

Our caring and compassionate Hague Abduction Convention law firm of Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law understand the importance of mounting a quick campaign to reunite your family. We will collect the vital evidence necessary to protect your legal rights as a parent and support your case. With over 190 years of combined experience, we understand that Hague cases are often tried quickly and there is usually just one chance to present the best possible case to retrieve your child. If you are a parent whose child has been wrongfully taken across international borders, contact Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law in Salt Lake City, Utah for your free case review today.