



Victim of crime abroad & over seas



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Victim of crime abroad

Most visits abroad are trouble free depending on your destination of course. But should you be the victimized overseas, seek out counselors who are ready to help you at your nearest embassy.

Working hours vary but most Embassies or Consulates operate an answer phone service outside office hours giving an emergency number. So make sure prior to your trip you know the location and hours of your Embassy.

This leaflet explains what they may do for you and what you may need to do for yourself. But it is your responsibility to confirm all facts prior to your departure. The information you will have here is only a guide to assist you.

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What kind of help can you expect from your embassy or consulate?

Help which is appropriate to the individual circumstances of each case, including:

- issuing replacement passports after a security check;
- providing information about transferring funds;
- contacting family or friends for you if you need assistance;
- providing appropriate help if you have suffered rape or serious assault, are a victim of other crime, or are in hospital and need medical attention;
- providing details of local lawyers, interpreters, doctors and funeral directors or any other guidance you may need;
- offering you basic information about the local police and legal systems, including whether a legal-aid scheme is available;
- offering support and help in a range of other cases, such as death of a relative in suspicious circumstances overseas.

Neither the Government nor your Embassy, or Consulate can make any guarantees in relation to the professional ability or character of any person or company on the list that they may provide to you, nor can they be held responsible in any way for you relying on any advice you are given. So do your homework and pre plan.

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What they cannot do:

- get you out of prison if you broke the law or are under investigation, prevent the local authorities from deporting you after your jail or prison sentence, or interfere in criminal or civil court proceedings against you;
- give you legal advice, act on your behalf with the local authorities in any legal action, investigate crimes or carry out searches for missing people, though we can give you details of people who may be able to help in these cases, such as your language speaking lawyers;
- get you better treatment in hospital or prison than is given to local people;
- pay any bills or give you money (in very exceptional circumstances they may lend you some money which you will have to pay back) like flight ticket back to you home.

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There may also be additional steps you can take to help yourself, or additional support your embassy can give you, if you are a victim of the following types of crime:

In case of theft

You should:

- make a list of the items stolen with identification markings;
- tell the local police as soon as possible and insist they give you a police report, you will need this for any insurance and/or compensation claim);
- cancel your credit cards as soon as possible;
- contact the nearest Embassy or Consulate if your passport has been stolen or lost. They can issue a replacement travel document once some checks have been made.

In case of assault

You should:

- contact your embassy especially if you have been arrested or admitted to hospital or physicians;
- tell the local police as soon as possible and insist on a Police report for proof;
- Your embassy can provide lists of lawyers, interpreters and doctors if you choose;

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- If you have been detained by local authorities, your embassy tries to contact you, depending on local procedures, within 24 hours of being told about your arrest or detention, and to visit you as soon as possible if you want them to.
- If you are in hospital, they will try to contact you within 24 hours of being told that you are there and to visit you as soon as possible. If you want, they can help you to liaise with your insurance company or medical evacuation company. Remember to keep any receipts or doctors' notes in case you need them to make a claim. Using the resources that are available to your embassy, your embassy may also be able to help you communicate with hospital staff if they do not speak English or your native language.

Rape or other forms of sexual assault

- You should talk to someone straight away. Do not keep the attack to yourself. If possible, talk to a friend or relative or contact your embassy;
- Normally your embassy counselors aim to be polite, patient, sensitive and nonjudgmental. Choose if you would like to talk to a male or female person.

In many cases of rape and sexual assault, the victims, no matter what their sex, prefer to talk about their ordeal with women. If that is what you want, they will do our best to ensure that the right person is present at any meeting;

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- If you want to contact the police normally they can go to the police station with you and can provide you with a list of local lawyers and interpreters. However, only you can choose to take legal action: they cannot make this decision for you. Remember that if you chose not to report the crime immediately but change your mind later, forensic and other evidence may be lost. Also in some countries, you must report the crime before returning to Your country if you want it to be investigated;
- Your embassy can help you to deal with the local authorities in arranging a medical examination or other formal paper work. Depending on local conditions and laws, they can arrange for you to see a doctor who can give advice on sexually transmitted infections.
- Your embassy can provide you with information on what professional help is available locally or in your home country both for you and for your family. They can also consult your home countries-based Police Adviser, who can consider using the services of a Sexual Offences Trained Officer from your local police station to advise and help you and assist you;

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DEATH ABROAD IN SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

The tragic death of a relative or friend is always distressing and painful.

When the death is under suspicious circumstances, it is even more distressful. In all cases where you, as next of kin, have concerns about the circumstances surrounding the death of a relative or loved one, your embassy may suggest you get professional legal advice.

You should as soon as possible:

- register the death in the country where the person died.

Your embassy will advise you how to do this. You will need documents about you and the person who has died, including for example, their full name, date of birth, and passport number or any other form of legal identification. The local authorities will need to be told if the person suffered from an infectious condition so precautions against infection can be taken. You do not have to register a death at your embassy or consulate, by reporting it, you can get a death certificate and a permanent copy of it will always be available in your home country. In certain countries, they may not be able to issue death certificates and the local ones are suitable. Find out exactly which ones can and cannot.

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- some people may consider the options of local burial and local cremation (if the local authorities allow these for foreigners) or of transporting the body and personal belongings back to your home country. Your embassy may give you information about these options and details of costs. Such arrangements may be delayed by any continual post mortem and overseas investigations, so be ready for that. Post mortems may be carried out without your permission or the next of kin.

You should be aware that in some countries there may be a lack of suitable storage and may make it impossible to obtain the international certificates to transport the body back home. While your embassy cannot pay any burial costs, cremation or repatriation expenses or settle any debts, they however may help transfer money from friends and relatives to pay any necessary costs. They can also provide lists of local and international funeral directors.

- Where there is evidence of suspicious circumstances, we can give you support and suggest the best way deal the local authorities.
- Your embassy cannot investigate deaths and in many countries investigating authorities and the courts will refuse to answer enquiries.

It is very important to consider appointing a local lawyer who can look after your interests in court, and follow any trial for you. Get ready for the cost however.

Be aware of local corruption and try to get your country authorities to work with the local ones.

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- Your embassy should consider making appropriate representations to the local authorities if there are concerns that the investigation is not being carried out in line with local procedures or if there are justified complaints about discrimination against the person who has died or their family.
- Consular staff in your home country are available to your family representatives or lawyers, and they will inform the next of kin of any information provided by the local authorities. If possible, the next of kin visits the country where the person died, during the stages of the investigation or the any court hearings, embassy staff there may be able to meet them, but don't always count on it.

REMEMBER! GET EVERYTHING DOCUMENTED AND GET ALL THE DOCUMENTS IN YOUR HAND!

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Insurance

You should arranged travel insurance before travelling if possible and affordable, if you have it then your policy may provide some limited coverage for theft and may also cover personal injuries and medical expenses received as a result of crime. Insurance policies are likely to require that the incident be reported to the local police in the country of travel at the time. Check what your policy covers before travelling and adjust it accordingly.

Compensation for crime and injuries

Courts abroad and overseas **may** be able to order the offender to pay compensation for your injuries and losses either following his/her conviction in a criminal or civil court. Some countries have a state-funded compensation plans to cover your physical or psychological injuries sustained as a result of a violent crime, which may apply to foreigners as well.

Remember! a police report will be needed. Local lawyers should be able to provide information about how to claim for compensation.

Emergency contact in the European Union and U.S

Within the EU, the emergency services can be contacted by calling 112. This number can be used on either landlines or cell phones. And in the U.S it is 911.

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For more information or you would like to arrange a travel security seminar for your company or organization, please feel free to contact us at:

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