



Official Solicitor

**The International Child Abduction and  
Contact Unit (ICACU)  
DX: Official Solicitor & Public Trustee  
Post Point 0.53 DX152380  
Westminster 8**

By email only

**E-Mail:** [ICACU@ospt.gov.uk](mailto:ICACU@ospt.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.justice.gov.uk](http://www.justice.gov.uk)

31 March 2025

Dear Central Authority,

**The 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child  
Abduction ('the 1980 Hague Convention')**

In accordance with the Guide to Good Practice prepared by the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, I would be grateful if colleagues in other central authorities could provide information about the mechanisms and procedure in their country for 1980 Hague Convention applications to help us ensure the effective operation of the 1980 Hague Convention.

We intend to share any information provided by your central authority with applicant parents as guidance about how they can expect their case to be dealt with in your country.

The ICACU would be grateful to receive a copy of or links to any information available online or other available documentation about the 1980 Hague Convention process in your country so that we can pass it on to the applicants.

In addition, I would be grateful if you could provide a response to the following specific questions:

**1. Locating children**

In your country which agencies are involved in locating children and what is the process for the location of missing children? Is there specific information which the applicant parent may be able to provide which would assist with location?

**2. Judicial procedures**

a) In your system which courts/administrative bodies have jurisdiction to decide applications for return orders (and to determine questions of access) in 1980 Hague Convention cases?

b) What measures/processes are in place to ensure return applications are dealt with expeditiously at first instance and on appeal?

c) Who brings the return application – for example, does the responsibility lie with the central authority, the State or with the parent?

d) What type of legal representation is available to an applicant parent to assist them in bringing their application before the courts? Will legal representation be provided or arranged by the central authority? Is legal aid available and, if so, on what basis?

### **3. Enforcement procedures**

a) What is the process for the enforcement of:

i) a return order?

ii) a contact/access order?

b) Who takes responsibility for enforcement – for example, is it the responsibility of the parent or the State? Will the parent need to retain a lawyer, or can they make a direct enforcement application to the court?

I attach a copy of the ICACU's own response to the questions listed for your own reference. There is also information about the ICACU available on the UK Government's website at: [International Child Abduction and Contact Unit application form - GOV.UK](#) – we are in the process of updating some of this information and some of our forms.

The ICACU would greatly appreciate any responses to the above.

Kind regards,

Laura Williams – Team Leader for ICACU

Central Authority for the 1980 Hague Convention

(for England and Wales)