

# ASSISTANCE FOR U.S. CITIZEN VICTIMS OF CRIME ABROAD

U.S. Department of State | Bureau of Consular Affairs



The U.S. Department of State is committed to assisting U.S. citizens who become victims of crime while abroad.

## HOW WE CAN HELP VICTIMS OF CRIME:

- Address emergency needs that arise as a result of the crime
- Facilitate access to appropriate medical care
- Provide information on how to report to law enforcement
- Accompany you to the police station (whenever possible)
- Assist you in securing information about your legal case from local authorities
- Replace a lost or stolen passport
- Connect you to overseas and U.S.-based resources for victims of crime
- Explain financial assistance options, such as assistance available to return to the United States
- Assist you with making arrangements for returning to the United States
- Contact anyone you designate in the United States, if you wish (in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974).

Our staff in Washington and at U.S. embassies and consulates around the world can help you locate information available for victims in the foreign country and in the United States, if available.

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

Resources vary by location. The nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can provide you with information on local doctors, counselors, advocates, lawyers, and other professionals who can help you following the crime.

## MEDICAL TREATMENT:

Following certain crimes, there may be a limited window of time when medical treatment is available and/or effective. The embassy may be able to provide information on availability of medical options in the host country and possible associated costs. This is also dependent on the resources available.

Examples include treatment for sexually transmitted diseases or infections, unwanted pregnancies, and/or other medical care.

- For crimes such as sexual assault and child abuse, a forensic exam— if available— may allow medical professionals to collect evidence that may be used to prosecute the perpetrator(s).
- In most cases, forensic evidence needs to be collected within 72 hours of an assault.

## DID YOU KNOW?:

- While living or traveling abroad, you are subject to the laws and judicial system of the country in which you are located.

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- Local systems and practices – such as filing a police report, medical services, and court proceedings – may differ from those in the United States. For more information, talk to consular staff at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- The U.S. embassy or consulate is not responsible for legal, medical, or other expenses for victims of crime.
- Consular officers cannot investigate crimes, provide legal advice, or serve as an official interpreter/translator.

## BEFORE YOU TRAVEL:

- Be informed about the country/ies to which you are traveling. For embassy and consulate contact information, visit [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov).
- Obtain required documents (passport, visas, etc.)
- Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at [step.state.gov](https://step.state.gov).
- Consider whether travel insurance may be right for you

## THINGS TO CONSIDER IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF CRIME:

- Am I safe?
- Is there a place or shelter where I can go to be safe?

- Do I need medical assistance?
- Whom do I contact in an emergency?
- What resources are available to me?

## PRIVACY ACT CONSIDERATIONS:

- With your permission, consular staff can help you reach out to friends, family, and/or others if you become a victim of crime while abroad.
- If you would like us to contact someone on your behalf to help you, consular staff may ask you to sign a Privacy Act waiver before they release your information, in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

Visit [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) for more information on Overseas Citizens Services and [ovc.gov](https://ovc.gov) for the Office for Victims of Crime.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

Overseas Citizens Services  
In Washington, D.C. available 24/7  
In the U.S./Canada: 888-407-4747  
When Abroad: +1 202-501-4444  
[travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)

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