

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING  
PETITION TO REGISTER FOREIGN ADOPTION DECREE  
PURSUANT TO 23 Pa. C.S. § 2908**

When a child is adopted in conformity with the laws of a foreign country, the adopting parent(s) may register the Foreign Adoption Decree so that the Decree is considered full and final, enforceable as if entered pursuant to the Pennsylvania Adoption Act, and a Pennsylvania birth certificate can be obtained.

Adopting parent(s) seeking to register the Foreign Adoption Decree must:

1. Complete, sign and date the Petition to Register Foreign Adoption Decree and Verification. If a Foreign Adoption Decree shows that there are two adopting parents, both parent(s) *must* execute the Petition to Register Foreign Adoption Decree.
2. Attach the following documents to the Petition:
  - A copy of the Foreign Adoption Decree;
  - A copy of the child's birth certificate. If no birth certificate was issued, a copy of any other birth identification issued by the country of birth should be attached. If no birth certificate or birth identification can be obtained, an Affidavit stating the reason should be submitted;
  - A copy of the child's United States visa;
  - An English translation of all documents not in English, with a verification by the translator that all translations are true and correct;
  - Pennsylvania Department of Health, Division of Vital Records Form No. HD01273F, Certificate of Adoption of a Foreign-Born Child with Parts 1 and 2 (and Part 3, if applicable) completed;
  - Pennsylvania Department of Health, Division of Vital Records Form No. HD01275F, Statement of Citizenship and Residency;
  - If available, a copy of U. S. Government Form N-560 and/or a copy of the child's U.S. Passport.
3. The Petition to Register with the attachments should be filed with the Clerk of the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas in the county in which the adopting parent(s) reside(s), except for Philadelphia County resident(s), who must file with the Family Court Division. A filing fee will be charged in accordance with the fee schedule of the county court.

After the Petition to Register is filed, it will be submitted to the Court for review. If the Petition to Register and accompanying documents establish that the foreign adoption of the child is full and final, the Court will enter a Decree directing the registration of the Foreign Adoption Decree. The Clerk of the appropriate Court will then issue a certificate of adoption and transmit to the Department of Health, Division of Vital Records Forms HD01273F and HD01275F, and if provided by the adopting parent(s), a copy of U.S. Government Form N-560 and/or a copy of the child's United States passport.

If the Court cannot determine that the foreign adoption is full and final, it will enter a Decree denying the petition. In that case, it will be necessary to proceed under Pa.R.O.C.P. Rule 15.15.

Some of the following are reasons why a foreign adoption may not be a full and final adoption eligible for registration:

- both adopting parents were not present for the adoption hearing in the foreign country and the foreign country is not a Hague Convention country; or

- the sole adopting parent was not present at the adoption hearing in the foreign country and the foreign country is not a Hague Convention country; or
- the foreign court did not enter a final adoption Decree or Order or its equivalent; or
- the child's United States visa is not the type that affords the child full United States citizenship.

If the child has an IH-4 or IR-4 United States visa, it will be necessary to proceed under Pa.R.O.C.P. Rule 15.15.