



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

VICTIMS OF CRIME ABROAD



www.fco.gov.uk/travel





VICTIMS OF CRIME ABROAD



Most visits abroad are trouble free. But should you be the victim of a crime overseas, our consular staff are ready to help you. Working hours vary but most Embassies, High Commission or Consulates operate an answer phone service outside office hours giving an emergency number.

This leaflet explains what we can do for you and what you may need to do for yourself.



GENERAL INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF ANY CRIME

WHAT KIND OF HELP WE CAN PROVIDE VICTIMS OF ANY CRIME:

We offer help which is appropriate to the individual circumstances of each case, including:

- issuing replacement passports;
- providing information about transferring funds;
- contacting family or friends for you if you want;
- providing appropriate help if you have suffered rape or serious assault, are a victim of other crime, or are in hospital;
- providing details of local lawyers, interpreters, doctors and funeral directors (see Note 1);
- 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.

Note 1:

Neither the Government nor the relevant British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate can make any guarantee in relation to the professional ability or character of any person or company on the list, nor can they be held responsible in any way for you relying on any advice you are given.



WE CANNOT:

- get you out of prison, prevent the local authorities from deporting you after your prison sentence, or interfere in criminal or civil court proceedings;
- 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 English-speaking lawyers;
- get you better treatment in hospital or prison than is given to local people; or
- pay any bills or give you money.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR SPECIFIC CRIMES

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

THEFT

You should:

- make a list of the items stolen;
- tell the local police as soon as possible and insist on a police report (needed for any insurance and/or compensation claim);
- cancel your credit cards and travellers cheques immediately and re-book your travel tickets;
- contact the nearest British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate if your passport has been stolen. We can issue a replacement travel document once some checks have been made.

ASSAULT

You should:

- contact us especially if you have been arrested or admitted to hospital;
- tell the local police as soon as possible and insist on a police report;
- We can provide lists of lawyers, interpreters and doctors if you want;



- If you have been detained, we aim 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 us to. We have a leaflet called *In prison abroad* with more information. You can find details on our travel website under 'Our Publications';
- If you are in hospital, we aim to contact you within 24 hours of being told that you are there and to visit you as soon as possible. If you want, we 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 us, we may also be able to help you communicate with hospital staff if they do not speak English.

RAPE OR 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 us;
- We aim to be polite, patient, sensitive and non-judgemental. 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, we will do our best to ensure that a female officer is present at any meeting;

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR SPECIFIC CRIMES

- If you want to contact the police we can come to the police station with you and we can provide you with a list of local lawyers and interpreters. However, only you can decide whether or not to take legal action: we 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 the UK if you want it to be investigated;
- We can help you to deal with the local authorities in arranging a medical examination. Depending on local conditions and laws, we can also arrange for you to see a doctor who can give advice on sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and on pregnancy or abortion;
- We can provide you with information on what professional help is available locally and in the UK both for you and for your family. We can also consult our London-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;
- We have a leaflet called *Rape and sexual assault overseas* with more information. You will find details on our travel website, under 'Our Publications'.



DEATH ABROAD IN SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

The tragic death of a relative or friend is always distressing. When the death is under suspicious circumstances, it is even more so. In all cases where you, as next of kin, have concerns about the circumstances surrounding the death, we suggest you get professional legal advice.

You should:

- register the death in the country where the person died. We can tell 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. The local authorities will need to be told if the person suffered from an infectious condition (such as hepatitis or HIV) so precautions against infection can be taken.

You do not have to register a death at the British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate, but by doing so, you can get a UK death certificate and a permanent copy of it will always be available in English in the UK. In certain countries, we cannot issue death certificates and the local ones are suitable for British purposes. These countries are Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR SPECIFIC CRIMES

- consider the options of local burial and local cremation (where local authorities allow these for foreigners) or of transporting the body and personal belongings back to the UK. We can give you information about these options and details of costs. Such arrangements may be delayed by any post mortem and overseas investigations. Post mortems may be carried out without the permission of the next of kin. In some countries, organs may be removed and kept during these procedures without the next of kin being informed or consulted.

You should be aware that in some countries a lack of suitable storage may make it impossible to obtain the necessary international certificates to transport the body. While we cannot pay any burial, cremation or repatriation expenses ourselves or settle any debts, we can help transfer money from friends and relatives in the UK to pay any necessary costs. We 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 to raise concerns with the local authorities.
- We cannot investigate deaths ourselves and in many countries investigating authorities and the courts will refuse to answer enquiries, including from British consular staff. In these circumstances, it is very important to consider appointing a local lawyer who can look after your interests in court, and follow any trial for you.



- We will 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. You should be aware that the standard of investigative procedures and expertise varies greatly across the world.
- Consular staff in London are available to meet family representatives, and they will inform the next of kin of any information provided by the local authorities. Where possible, if the next of kin visit the country where the person died, either during the early stages of the investigation or the initial court hearings, our staff there may be able to meet them.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

INSURANCE

You should have arranged travel insurance before travelling. If so, your policy may provide limited cover 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 was reported to the police in the relevant country at the time. Check what your policy covers before travelling.

COMPENSATION

Courts abroad **may** be able to order the offender to pay compensation for your injuries and losses either following conviction in a criminal court or as a result of a civil action. Some countries have a state-funded compensation scheme to cover physical or psychological injuries sustained as a result of a violent crime, which may apply to foreign nationals as well. It is likely that a police report will be needed. Local lawyers should be able to provide information about how to claim compensation.

COMPENSATION IN THE EU

If you have been injured as a result of a violent crime in an EU country, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority in the UK can help you apply for compensation from that country. See www.cica.gov.uk for further information, or contact the EU Compensation Assistance Team on 0800 358 3601 or eucat@cica.gsi.gov.uk. Please be ready to tell them the date on which you were injured and the nearest city to where it happened.



EMERGENCY CONTACT IN THE EU

Within the EU, the emergency services can be contacted by calling 112. This number can be used on either landlines or cellular phones.

USEFUL CONTACTS

If you have been the victim of a crime overseas, or a friend or relative has been the victim of violent death, help and advice is also available in the UK.

Victim Support

Cranmer House
39 Brixton Road
London, SW9 6DZ
Supportline: 0845 303 0900
www.victimsupport.com

SAMM Abroad

c/o Support after Murder and Manslaughter Abroad.
Cranmer House
39 Brixton Road
London, SW9 6DZ
Tel: 0845 123 2384
Email: info@SAMMabroad.org
www.SAMMabroad.org

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre

Helpline: 08451 221 331
www.rasasc.org.uk

VICTIMS OF CRIME ABROAD

Samaritans

Chris,
PO Box 9090
Stirling, FK8 2SA
Helpline: 0845 790 9090
www.samaritans.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse House
126 Sheen Road
Richmond,
Surrey
Helpline: 0870 167 1677
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

EU Compensation Assistance Team

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority
Tay House
300 Bath Street
Glasgow, G2 4LN
Tel: 0800 358 3601
www.cica.gov.uk

Your local doctor



COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

We welcome any comments on the support we provide. If you have any comments, please write to:

FEEDBACK

Strategy, Communications and Training Group
Consular Directorate
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Old Admiralty Building
Spring Gardens
London
SW1A 2PA
Phone: 020 7008 1500
Fax: 020 7008 0152
Email: feedback.consular.services@fco.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied and want to make an official complaint, please write to the FCO Director of Consular services at the same address or email complaint.consular.services@fco.gov.uk

We will investigate your complaint fully and do our best to give you a full reply within 20 working days. If we cannot give you a full reply within this time, we will tell you when we expect to do so. We will record and examine complaints, and use the information to help make sure we offer the best possible help and support.



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Consular Directorate

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Old Admiralty Building
The Mall, London SW1A 2PA
Tel: 00 44 (0)20 7008 1500



HELP IS AT HAND...

If your in a fix and need money urgently.
Ask a friend or relative to visit their
local Western Union Agent where money
can be sent to you, ready to collect from
over 260,000 Western Union Agents
worldwide within minutes.

www.ukmoneytransfer.com

**WESTERN
UNION**

MONEY TRANSFER

brought to you by

FEXCO

the global payments group



FCO TRAVEL ADVICE

know before you go

fco.gov.uk/travel

Western Union support the aims of the Know Before You Go Campaign.
Printed in July 2008

www.fco.gov.uk/travel

