

**Travel Into and Out of South Africa:
Travel Documents Required for Passengers under 18 years old
Frequently Asked Questions**

Section A

Both parents travelling with children

Parents must produce an unabridged birth certificate of the child reflecting the particulars of the parents of the child.

1. Are transit passengers required to produce these documents?

It is not required for passengers remaining in transit, unless s/he requires a transit visa.

2. What is the definition of a child?

The South African regulations regard a child as any person under the age of 18 years.

3. Is this applicable to all nationalities?

It is applicable to all nationalities departing from and arriving in South Africa.

4. What is an unabridged birth certificate?

It is a birth certificate reflecting the particulars of both parents.

5. Is a copy of the unabridged birth certificate sufficient or must it be the original?

A copy is sufficient but it must be certified as a true copy of the original by a competent authority (Commissioner of Oaths/Notary or equivalent commissioning authority).

6. What is required if the child is from a country that does not issue unabridged birth certificates?

A letter issued by the competent authority stating that unabridged birth certificates are not issued should be produced.

7. What if the documents are not issued in English?

These documents should be accompanied by a sworn translation issued by a competent authority (Commissioner of Oaths/Notary or equivalent commissioning authority) in the country concerned.

8. What if the child is not travelling with the biological parents but his/her legal guardian?

A court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child must be produced. This is in addition to the unabridged birth certificate.

9. Must an original document be produced?

A copy is sufficient but it must be certified as a true copy of the original by a competent authority (Commissioner of Oaths/Notary or equivalent commissioning authority).

Section B

Children travelling with one parent

The parent must produce an unabridged birth certificate of the child reflecting the particulars of the parents of the child and:

- i. Consent, in the form of an affidavit from the other parent registered as a parent on the birth certificate of the child, authorising him or her to enter into or depart from the Republic of South Africa with the child he or she is travelling with;
- ii. A court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child, if he or she is the parent or legal guardian of the child; or

- iii. Where applicable, a death certificate of the other parent registered as a parent of the child on the birth certificate,

provided that the Director-General may, where the parents of the child are both deceased and the child is travelling with a relative or another person related to him or her or his or her parents, approve such a person to enter or depart the Republic with such a child.

10. What is an affidavit?

It is a written statement of facts voluntarily made by an affiant under an oath or affirmation administered by a person authorised to do so by law.

11. When must the affidavit be issued?

The affidavit must be no older than 3 months, dating from the time of travel.

12. What if my country does not issue affidavits?

A letter from the Government of the country concerned confirming non-issuance of affidavits must be included along with a document with the parents' name and surname, physical address, telephone and mobile phone numbers.

Please also refer to Section A.

Section C

Persons travelling with children who are not related to them

The person in question must produce:

- i. A copy of the unabridged birth certificate of the child;
- ii. An affidavit from the parents or legal guardian of the child confirming that he or she has permission to travel with the child;
- iii. Copies of the identity documents or passports of the parents or legal guardian of the child; and
- iv. The contact details of the parents or legal guardian of the child,

provided that the Director-General may, where the parents of the child are both deceased and the child is travelling with a relative or another person related to him or her or his or her parents, approve such a person to enter or depart the Republic with such a child.

13. Does this include children travelling with school groups and grandparents?

Yes, any child under the age of 18 travelling with a person other than his / her parents must be in possession of the above documentation.

14. Must the copies of the parents' passports / ID's be certified?

They must be certified as a true copy of the original by a competent authority (Commissioner of Oaths/Notary or equivalent commissioning authority).

15. What are the contact details required?

A document with the parents' name and surname, physical address, telephone and mobile phone numbers would be sufficient.

16. How do you obtain approval from the Director General when you do not reside in South Africa?

You may obtain approval through the nearest [South African diplomatic or consular representative](#) abroad.

Please also refer to Section A and B.

Section D

Children travelling as unaccompanied minors

Any unaccompanied minor shall produce to the immigration officer:

- i. Proof of consent from one or both of his or her parents or legal guardian, as the case may be, in the form of a letter or affidavit for the child to travel into or depart from the Republic: Provided that in the case where one parent provides proof of consent, that parent must also provide a copy of a court order issued to him or her in terms of which he or she has been granted full parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child;
- ii. A letter from the person which is to receive the child in the Republic, containing his or her residential address and contact details where the child will be residing;
- iii. A copy of the identity document or valid passport and visa or permanent residence permit of the person who is to receive the child in the Republic; and
- iv. The contact details of the parents or legal guardian of the child.

17. What is the age for an Unaccompanied Minor?

Any child under 18 travelling by themselves will be seen as an unaccompanied minor by Immigration.

18. Must the letter stated above be certified?

It must be certified as the original or as a true copy of the original by a competent authority (Commissioner of Oaths/Notary or equivalent commissioning authority).

Please also refer to Sections A, B and C.