



**Travel Reminder:
Get Your Documentation in Order if Vacationing Out of the Country**

For Immediate Release

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Vancouver, BC—As BC Family Day, February 10, approaches, and families are also planning Spring Break vacations, BC Notaries are reminding travellers to get their documents in order.

If people are travelling out of the country with a child and both parents are not present, they will need a notarized letter of permission (called a Declaration of Consent) from the parents/guardians that includes the dates of travel. Situations where this may be required include if only one parent is with the child, if the parents are separated or divorced, if neither parent is present such as for school trips, or if grandparents or other relatives and not the parent or parents are with the child. Sample Declarations of Consent are available from [BC Notaries](#).

“Particularly for travel to Mexico, check the [Mexican Consulate](#) website because they sometimes change their requirements unexpectedly,” says Kristy Martin, Victoria Notary Public. “For example, a new policy just came into effect January 24 whereby Mexico no longer requires that minors—those under 18 years of age—have a Declaration of Consent from their parents if travelling alone or without their parents, but the Declaration is often required by Canadian immigration officials for re-entry into Canada.”

“You need to research which documents you need, not only to enter or exit the country you are visiting but what is required by [Immigration Canada](#) to exit and re-enter Canada,” adds Delta Notary Daniel Boisvert. “From what I hear from clients, travellers may not be asked for the Declaration of Consent when going into another country, but they are often asked to provide it when coming back into Canada on their way home from a trip.”

Other tips for Declarations of Consent include the following: The names of more than one child may be listed, only the parent not travelling with the child needs to sign it, and a copy should be left at home with a family member in a safe and accessible place, in case the original gets lost during the trip. While Notaries often see people arriving in their office late on a Friday afternoon before a long weekend or a school break to request the required travel documents, it is better to have them drawn, notarized, and ready well in advance.

In general, prior to any international travel that includes a child, parents should contact the Embassy or Consulate of all countries the child will be visiting to enquire about entry and exit requirements. In some countries, if the mother’s surname is different from the child’s, a statutory declaration may need to be drawn and notarized. Airlines can be another good source of information.

Each person travelling outside of Canada requires a valid **Canadian passport**.

The following documents are recommended when travelling with a child.

- The child's **birth certificate** showing the names of both parents
- Any **legal documents** pertaining to custody, if applicable
- A **Declaration of Consent** letter authorizing the travel and the dates of the travel (If the child is travelling with one parent, the Declaration must be signed and dated by the other parent. For children travelling without their parents, the Declaration must be signed and dated by both parents.)
- The **death certificate**, if one of the parents is deceased

Note that some countries require that a person's passport be valid for 6 months beyond the date of entry. Travellers are advised to check the Voyage.gc.ca website to determine if the 6-month rule applies to their destination.

"If a customs officer wants to go by the book, he or she can deny entry into the States if your paperwork isn't all in order," says Kamloops Notary Derek Smoluk. "It is best to err on the side of caution and have all the documentation ready that you may need."

BC Notaries are also able to help with the documents needed by foreign travellers visiting friends or family in Canada. "Notarized Letters of Invitation may need to be issued to guests from another country, particularly those countries where visitors must go through the Canadian Consulate, such as the Philippines," says Boisvert. Depending on the country of origin, foreign visitors may need to apply for a Temporary Resident Visa. BC Notaries can assist with drafting and notarizing Letters of Invitation, which are often required when applying for a Visitor Visa. More about Letters of Invitation can be found on [Immigration Canada's website](#).

To find a Notary near you, visit www.notaries.bc.ca.

The Society of Notaries Public of BC represents more than 320 highly trained Notary professionals. Most have locally owned and operated offices and all provide personal assistance to clients around the province. Individuals, families, and businesses seek the services of BC Notaries for a wide range of non-contentious legal matters, including residential and commercial real estate transfers, mortgage refinancing, Wills and advance health-care planning, powers of attorney, and other important documents.

Notaries' Tradition of Trust spans 2000 years. Notaries first came to British Columbia over 100 years ago. They continue to serve their valued clients and their communities across the province.

Editors: Local Notaries are available in many areas of BC to talk about travel documents.

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