



FAMILY PREPAREDNESS FORMS



Important Information about You

A Personal Emergency Information Sheet is a simple yet vital document that everyone should have. In the event of an arrest, detention, or any other emergency, this sheet is meant for parents, guardians, or other adult family members. It provides important names and phone numbers that a caregiver or emergency contact might need if you are not able to be present.

This information sheet includes things as:

- Full name and birthdate
- A#, immigration case numbers
- Allergies, medications
- Health Insurance number
- Consulate Information
- Emergency Contacts



[FORM](#)

This form does not need notarization or witnesses and can easily be done by yourself.

Important Information about your Child

Similar to the personal information sheet, if you are a parent or a guardian, you can prepare an information sheet for your children as well.

This sheet would include :

- Full name and birthdate
- Social Security number
- Passport number
- Medical information
- Information about their school and after-school activities
- Emergency contacts, including in the home country, etc



[FORM](#)

This form does not need notarization or witnesses and can easily be done by yourself.

Permission to Pick Up a Paycheck

This form is only relevant if you receive your salary via a check. In this form, you give a trusted person permission to pick up your paycheck if you are unable to. It would be important to talk to your employer about this and give them this form when it is completed.

Information/documents needed:

- Name of company or employer
- Name of employee
- Full name of the person authorized to pick up paycheck

This form needs notarization but does not need witnesses.



[FORM](#)



This guide is for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice. If you have questions about your rights, your family situation, or your immigration case, you should speak with a qualified immigration or family law attorney, or an accredited representative.



Department of State
Office for New Americans

New Americans Hotline:
1-800-566-7636
Monday – Friday, 9 AM–8 PM EST
MULTI-LINGUAL AND CONFIDENTIAL



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Permission for Child to Travel

This form allows you to give permission for your child to travel without you. It can be especially important for families who are trying to reunite after being separated due to detention or deportation. Authorities such as immigration officials and airline staff often require this form when a child is traveling alone or with someone other than a parent—such as a relative or family friend. It serves as proof that the child has your consent to travel without you. Every parent must prepare a separate form for each of their children. You can complete it in advance to be prepared.

The form must be signed in front of a notary and is valid for one year from the date of signing. This form does not need witnesses.

Information/documents needed:

- Full name of the parent
- Address of the parent
- Child's full name
- Child's date of birth
- Child's passport country and number
- Travel destination and purpose of travel
- If applicable, caretaker's name, passport country and number, address, phone, email
- Birth certificate of each child
- Passport biographic page of each child
- Passport biographic page of parent
- Passport biographic page of custodian / guardian / caretaker
- Consent of the other parent
- If applicable, death certificate of the other parent
- If applicable custody / guardianship court order



[FORM](#)



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Standby Guardianship

Standby guardianship allows you to give another adult full legal authority over your minor child. The guardian steps in only if an emergency described in the form occurs—such as if the parent becomes seriously ill, passes away, or is detained. In that situation, the guardian will have similar authority to a parent, including the ability to travel abroad with the child, apply for their documents, approve medical procedures, and enroll them in school.

The form remains valid for 60 days after the emergency begins. During that 60-day period, the guardian must bring the form to Family Court or Surrogate's Court to have it approved by a judge. Once the judge approves the standby guardianship, it stays in place until the court decides otherwise. The court will try to contact the parents to confirm they agree. If one or both parents cannot be reached (for example, if they are in detention), the judge can make a decision without them. Before deciding, the court will investigate the potential standby guardian and their household, including criminal background checks, to ensure they are safe and trustworthy.

Parents do not lose any of their rights, even while the standby guardianship is active. The form can be canceled at any time simply by destroying it. A form must be completed for each child.

This form does not require notarization, but it must be signed in front of two adult witnesses.

Information/documents needed:

- Parent's full name, address, and phone number
- Chosen guardian's full name, address, and phone number
- Full name(s) and date(s) of birth of a child(en)
- Two witnesses' full names, addresses, and phone numbers



[FORM](#)



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Parental Designation Form (OCFS-4940)

This form allows a parent to give another adult temporary authority to make school and medical decisions for their child. It does not allow the adult to travel with the child, approve surgery, apply for documents like a passport, or make any decisions beyond education and healthcare.

This form is usually used when a parent cannot care for their child for a short time due to an emergency. The chosen adult can make school and medical decisions for the child while an emergency is happening. The parent does not lose any parental rights. This form is valid for 12 months from the triggering event, and it can be renewed.

In New York State, this form must be notarized, but witnesses are not required.

Information/documents needed:

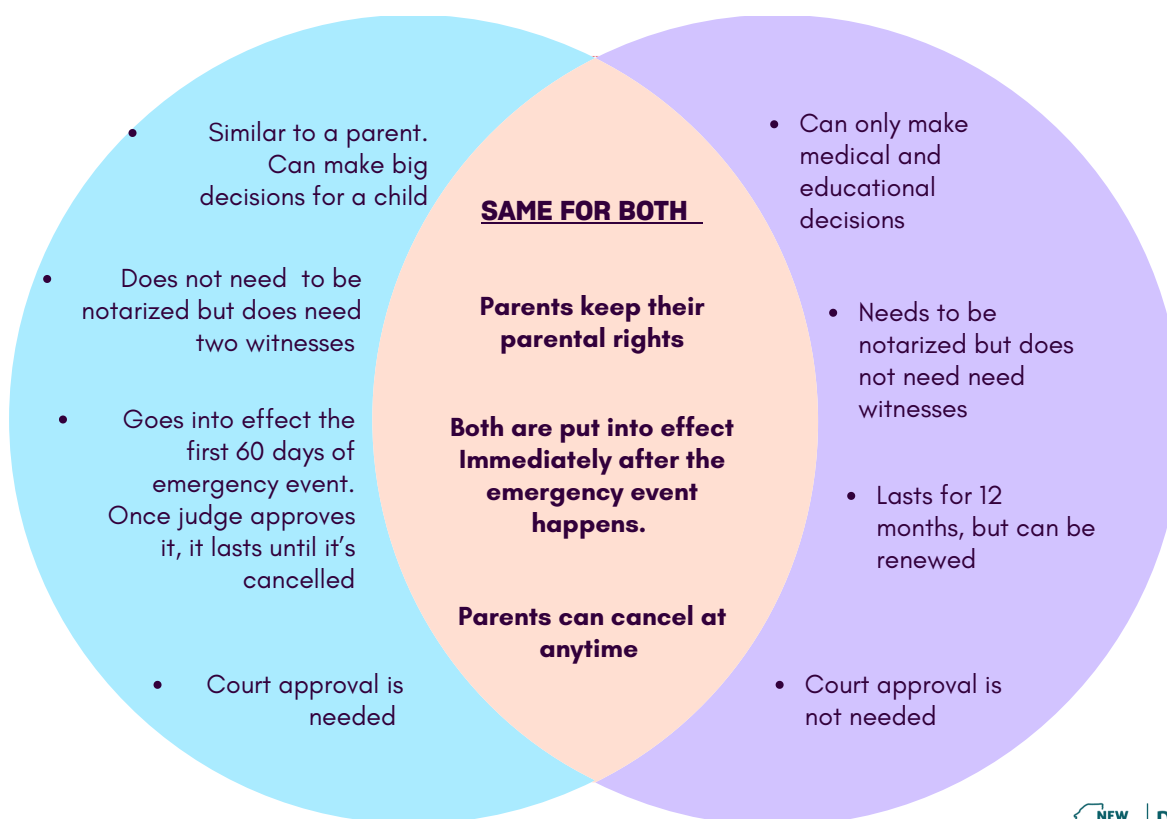
- Parent's full name, address, and phone number
- Chosen caregiver's full name, address, and phone number
- Full name(s) and date(s) of birth of a child(en)
- If applicable, the legal guardian's full name, address, and phone number



[FORM](#)

Standby Guardianship (Blue) vs. Parental Designation (Purple)

None of the two forms is better than the other, choosing a form depends on your particular situation and needs.





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U.S. Passport Application for Children

If your child was born in the United States, they are a U.S. citizen. If they are under 16, it's a good idea to apply for their U.S. passport. A passport allows your child to travel in and out of the country if needed and serves as official proof of their U.S. citizenship and legal status.

DS-11

The main passport application form is called DS-11, and it is used for all children under 16. It has to be submitted in person at a passport acceptance location, like a post office or other authorized sites. Both parents must be present to apply. If the parents cannot be there, a legal guardian can also do it. This form doesn't need notarization or witnesses, but everyone involved must go in person.



[MAIN FORM DS-11](#)

Form DS-3053

If one parent can't come in person, you can use Form DS-3053. This form lets one parent give the other parent permission to apply for the child's passport without their physical presence. This is a very important form to prepare in advance if there's a risk of detention or separation before the application is submitted. This form needs notarization but does not need witnesses.



[DS-3053](#)

Form DS-5525

If one of the parents can't be reached or contacted at all, or their location is unknown, you'll need Form DS-5525. This form is used when there's no way to get the second parent's agreement due to special family circumstances. This form does not need notarization or witnesses, but you'll need to provide supporting evidence, like a statement explaining the situation.



[DS-5525](#)

To sum up:

- DS-11 is the standard form used when both parents are present.
- DS-3053 helps when one parent can't be there, but can give a notarized agreement.
- DS-5525 is for when the second parent is unreachable.





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U.S. Passport Application for Children

Information/documents needed:

- Child's birth certificate (shows both parents' names)
- Both parents' IDs
- If applicable, legal guardian documentation
- Passport photo of the child
- Fee – a passport for a child under 16 costs around \$135, it might be more expensive if an expedited processing is needed.

DS-11 (Main form)

- Child's name, gender, date of birth, place of birth, social security number, height, hair color, eye color
- Address, email, phone number
- Parents' names, dates of birth, and places of birth

Form DS-3053 (if one parent can't be there in person)

- Child's name, date of birth
- Parents' names, addresses, emails, and phones
- If applicable legal guardian's name, address, and phone number

Form DS-5525 (If the second parent is unreachable)

- Child's name, date of birth
- Applying Parent/Legal Guardian's name, address, email, and phone number
- Non-Applying Parent/Legal Guardian's name, address, email, and phone number
- When and how was the last time you communicated with the non-applying parent/legal guardian?
- Description of your attempts to contact the non-applying parent/legal guardian
- If applicable, information about friends/relatives through whom you tried to contact the non-applying parent/legal guardian
- Explanation of how you have attempted to obtain consent from the non-applying parent/legal guardian and why you have not been able to



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