

**[DSWD DEPARTMENT ORDER NO. 03, s. 2001,
January 12, 2001]**

AMENDED GUIDELINES FOR MINORS TRAVELLING ABROAD

Administrative Order No. 6 Series of 1993 setting guidelines for unaccompanied minors travelling abroad is hereby amended in response to the following international commitments and legislations:

1. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which the Philippines ratified on July 26, 1990 mandates State Parties to take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return children abroad (Article 11) and to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form (Article 35).
2. RA 7610 also known as the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act mandates the DSWD to issue a travel clearance or Certificate of Travel to unaccompanied minors travelling abroad (Article IV, Sec. 8, a), as a measure to protect children and prevent child trafficking. This law strengthens Article 3 of the Child and Youth Welfare Code (PD 603).

I

Statement of Policy

The Department recognizes its mandate to provide protection to minors against exploitation, trafficking, improper influence, abuse, hazards and other conditions prejudicial to their physical mental, emotional, social and moral development. Hence, the following policies and guidelines are set forth in compliance with the provisions of applicable laws as a preventive measure against child trafficking.

II

Objective

To set forth guidelines and mechanisms to provide direction for the effective implementation of Article IV, Child Trafficking of RA 7610 towards achieving the following:

- Protect the child from abuse and exploitation while abroad;
- Prevent child trafficking;
- Ensure that the travelling companion is duly authorized and able to look after the welfare of the minor;

III

General Guidelines

A. Travel Clearance

1. An application for travel clearance (Annex A) authorizing the unaccompanied foreign travel of a child shall be filed with the DSWD Field Office. A Travel Clearance is a document issued by the DSWD certifying that the child is authorized to travel abroad for valid reasons based on the assessment of the social worker. This shall be required only for minors/children travelling abroad who are in any of the following circumstances:

- 1.1 A minor who is travelling alone.
- 1.2 A minor who is travelling with a person other than his/her parents or those exercising parental authority and custody of the child.
- 1.3 A minor travelling for the purpose of adoption abroad (intercountry adoption).
- 1.4 A minor adopted in the Philippines.

2. An illegitimate child travelling with his/her father shall be required to secure travel clearance.

3. A minor travelling in group for sports competition, cultural presentation, pilgrimage or study tours shall be required to secure an individual travel clearance.

B. Parental Travel Permit

1. A Parental Travel Permit is a duly notarized written permission given by anyone of the birth of adoptive parent, who will be left behind or not in the company of the child, allowing the concerned minor to travel with the other spouse. The Parental Travel Permit shall be filed with the DSWD Field Office in a form prescribed by the Department. A sample form is hereto attached for guidance and reference. (Annex B).

2. The parent who has custody problem of his/her child/ren and wants to prevent the foreign travel of the said child shall be directed to secure a court order to include the name of the child in the hold departure order with the Bureau of Immigration.

C. Common Provisions

1. The DSWD Field Office which is located in a region with an international airport or port shall maintain and operate a DSWD Desk at the international airport or port. The social worker assigned thereat shall have the following functions as spelled out in Department Order No. 15, Series 2000, to wit: (a) provide assistance to unaccompanied minors travelling abroad; (b) provide counselling services to minors travelling abroad; (b) provide counselling services to off-loaded minors to cope with the trauma, anxieties, frustrations, etc.; (c) disseminate accurate information on the requirements and procedures in securing travel clearance for minors travelling abroad; and (d) maintain network with the DSWD Field Offices and other appropriate agencies towards efficient delivery of service.

2. The DSWD shall install security system/bar coding to ensure the authenticity of the signature affixed on the Certificate of Travel Abroad for a Minor issued by the Field Director or his/her authorized representative. The approval for the issuance of