



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIR's](#) | [Help](#)

13 February 2008

HTI102709.FE

Haiti: Whether it is possible to obtain a Haitian marriage certificate in the United States; procedure for issuing a marriage certificate in Haiti; security features on a Haitian marriage certificate
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In a 20 December 2007 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an assistant head (*assistante-responsable*) in the consular section at the Embassy of the Republic of Haiti in Washington stated that it is no longer possible to obtain a Haitian marriage certificate (*acte de mariage*) through the embassy because of the lengthy processing times (six months to one year). However, a relative or friend can obtain an *extrait* [official copy or summary] of the marriage certificate of a person in the United States by going to the Haitian National Archives (Archives Nationales) (Haiti 20 Dec. 2007). The Assistant Head added that this procedure is fairly quick (*ibid.*).

Vital statistics registry offices (bureaux de l'état civil) send all marriage certificates to the Haitian National Archives; certificates can normally be found there one year after the marriage (*ibid.*), or after five years, at most, for marriages performed abroad (Haiti 23 Jan. 2008). According to a counsellor at the Embassy of Haiti in Ottawa, [translation] "it is easy" to submit a search request for a marriage certificate to the Haitian National Archives with a few pieces of basic information such as the names of the couple, the year of the marriage and the location of the ceremony (*ibid.*).

An *extrait* of a marriage certificate can also be obtained from the Haitian National Archives through the Consulate General of the Republic of Haiti in Montréal (Haiti n.d.). The consulate indicates on its website that the procedure can take six months but that the official document is sent to the applicant as soon as it is received (*ibid.*). An international bank money order of 38 US dollars made out to the Archives Nationales d'Haiti must accompany the application made on site (*ibid.*). The following documents are required to make such an application: a photocopy of the marriage certificate, the applicant's valid passport, his or her Quebec Health Insurance Card and his or her Haitian identity card, if applicable (*ibid.*). The steps are listed as follows on the consulate's website:

[translation]

1. Go to the consulate with the necessary documents.
2. Fill out and sign the application form entitled *Demande de Recherche d'Extrait d'Acte de Mariage aux Archives Nationales*.
3. Submit the application and the documents for photocopying.
4. Pay the required fee.
5. Obtain a receipt and retrieve the original documents. (*ibid.*)

The consulate states that, if a document cannot be found, it [translation] "may be because the applicant was single until he or she left Haiti" (*ibid.*).

Haitian National Archives, forms and security features

An officer at the Embassy of Canada in Port-au-Prince provided the information in the following paragraphs on the Haitian National Archives and on the appearance of the vital statistics documents they issue (14 Jan. 2008). Blank forms with a legal seal for civil or religious marriage certificates are available in the 145 offices of the Tax Branch (*Direction générale des impôts*). During the ceremony, the official or priest fills out the form, stamps it with the stamp of the district where the marriage took place and signs it. The information is recorded in a registry booklet that, once completed, must be sent to the Haitian National Archives, which is the only repository for vital statistics registry documents in Haiti. However, the information is sometimes incomplete or simply not sent, despite the fact that the vital statistics registries are required to send the information once a year.

Since 1 October 2007, the documents issued by the Haitian National Archives have a pentagonal ink seal across the signature of the archives officer in the bottom right-hand corner. On documents issued before 1 October 2007, the seal is round. There is also a round dry seal in the upper right-hand corner (or in the bottom right-hand

corner if it is a civil judgement order). In addition, a circular seal fluoresces when placed under ultraviolet rays. However, because of the technique used to affix the seal, it is not an absolutely reliable security feature. Each document issued by the Haitian National Archives is given a serial number made up of six digits and one letter (e.g., 123456A). Since 1 October 2007, the director general's office (bureau du directeur général) has recorded the serial numbers of the documents issued, making sure to change the series every day. On 14 January 2008, the only individuals authorized to sign the documents issued were the director general, Jean-Wilfrid Bertrand, and the administrator, Paul Quéru Dalencourt.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Canada. 14 January 2008. Embassy of Canada in Port-au-Prince. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate by a migration integrity officer.

Haiti. 23 January 2008. Embassy of Haiti in Ottawa. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate by a counsellor in the consular section.

_____. 20 December 2007. Embassy of the Republic of Haiti in Washington. Telephone interview with an *assistante -responsable* in the consular section.

_____. N.d. Consulate general of the Republic of Haiti in Montréal. "Recherche d'extrait d'acte de mariage." <<http://www.haiti-montreal.org/PDF/Rech%20ext%20AM.pdf>> [Accessed 21 Dec. 2007]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Embassy of Canada in Port-au-Prince, Caribbean Net News, Factiva.

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.