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Honduras: The procedure for obtaining a birth certificate and a death certificate, and the information indicated on those documents

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According to the website of the government of Honduras, the National Registry of Individuals (Registro Nacional de las Personas, RNP) is the organization responsible for registering Hondurans in the civil registry and for issuing identity cards (*tarjetas de identidad*) and all other documents attesting to a person's civil status (Honduras n.d.a). The information in the following paragraphs was provided by an RNP public accountant in an 18 January 2010 telephone interview with the Research Directorate.

The Public Accountant stated that the registration of a child's birth or a person's death are services offered free of charge by the RNP and that registrations can be made in municipalities throughout the country.

Birth certificate

The Public Accountant explained that to register the birth of a child, one or both parents must go in person to the civil registry office in the municipality where the birth occurred and fill out a birth registration form, standardized throughout the country. Moreover, one or both parents must present their own identity card and a medical certificate (*reporte médico*) for the birth, if the birth took place in a hospital. If the child was born at home, the birth report must be provided by the midwife (*constancia de la partera*), or by any other person who attended to the mother and the newborn. That report-containing, among others, the midwife's full name, the number of her identity card, her place of residence, her signature confirming that she was the person in charge during the birth, and photocopies of the identity cards of two witnesses-must be submitted at the time of registration.

Once the form is completed, the birth is registered by hand at the registry. Then a birth certificate (*Certificación de Acta de Nacimiento*)-which can be filled out by hand or electronically, depending on the computer equipment available at each civil registry office-is issued the same day to the awaiting parents. The following information is indicated from top to bottom:

- the newborn child's identity number
- the page number (*folio*) and book (*tomo*) in which the registration was recorded
- the year of registration
- the child's family name(s)
- the child's given name(s)
- the child's gender
- the place of birth (name of the municipality, the department and the country)
- date of the birth (day, month, year)
- the order of birth: first (*uno*), second (*dos*) in the case of multiple births, for example
- the father's family name(s)
- the father's given name(s)
- the father's nationality
- the mother's family name(s)
- the mother's given name(s)
- the mother's nationality
- the place of issue of the document (name of the municipality, the department)
- the complete date written out in letters
- the seal and signature of the registrar (*registrador*)

According to the Public Accountant, all the identity numbers for newborns that have been issued since the creation of the RNP in the 1980s contain 13 numbers. The first four refer to the code of the department or

municipality where the birth was registered, the four digits in the centre represent the year of registration, and the last five digits are the registration number.

Moreover, another number appears in the upper right corner of the birth certificate: the Public Accountant stated that it corresponds to the form number. He explained that the forms are issued in a bundle in Tegucigalpa before they are redistributed to the various municipalities throughout the country. He added that the number sometimes serves to establish consistency with a document, since each bundle of forms is associated with the municipality where it was sent.

The Public Accountant specified that for a document to be considered official, the registrar's seal and signature-whether inscribed manually or electronically-must appear. If the registrar is absent, the clerk (*escribiente*) must sign the documents.

However, there is another step required when applying for a birth certificate from abroad. If the original is handwritten, the document must be reproduced electronically. In order to be authenticated, the official birth certificate and a copy of the page in the book (*folio*) where the registration was recorded must be sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores) in Tegucigalpa. Once authenticated, the seal of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the signature of the secretary-general (*secretaria general*) are affixed.

As for a child born of Honduran parents in a foreign country, the parents must register the birth with their consulate or embassy. They must also present the birth certificate issued to their child by the civil registrar in the country where they are located. The diplomatic or consular agents then send the document to the Department of Foreign Affairs to be authenticated (seal and signature). The Public Accountant stated that a fee of approximately 250 lempiras [1 lempira = 0.06 Canadian dollars (XE.com 3 Feb. 2010)] is required for the translation and authentication of the document. The document is then sent to the RNP so that the birth is recorded in the civil registry of the corresponding municipality. He added that approximately 15 days are needed for the registration to be completed.

Death certificate

According to the RNP Public Accountant, the process for registering the death of a person is similar to that for registering a birth. Most of the steps set out above also apply to registering a death and those that are different are described in the paragraphs below.

A person wanting to register the death of a person must provide a copy of the deceased's identity card, the medical certificate (*reporte médico*) for the death if it occurred at a hospital, or a photocopy of the identity cards of two witnesses if the death occurred elsewhere.

The RNP Public Accountant stated that the deceased's full name; his or her identification number; and the date, time and place (the city, municipality, department, country) of the death are some of the information written on the death certificate. The name of the village or hamlet is also indicated.

According to the RNP website, a death can be recorded in the civil registry corresponding to the deceased's last place of residence, to the municipality where the death occurred or to the place where his or her birth was registered (Honduras n.d.d).

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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Honduras - Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores.

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