



Guide to Consular Protection and Services Outside Chinese Territory

What is consular protection

Consular protection refers to the situation that the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions in a receiving state will, in accordance with laws and regulations, which mainly include the customary international law principles, relevant international conventions, bilateral treaties or agreements and the relevant laws of China and the receiving state, reflect the request of a Chinese citizen or legal person when his/her legitimate rights and interests are violated in that state and urge the related authorities of that state to handle the issue in a fair and proper way, with a view to protecting the legitimate rights and interests of overseas Chinese citizens or legal persons.

Assistance that can be provided by consular officers to you

- to notify your family of the incident or casualties if an accident happens to you.
- to issue travel documents or homeward documents to Chinese citizens who have lost them or without any of them.
- Hong Kong residents who are eligible to apply for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Passport or Document of Identity for Visa Purposes may submit their applications and collect the issued travel documents through the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions.
- to visit you at your request when you are under detention, arrest or sentence.
- to recommend lawyers, translators or doctors to you in order to assist you in legal proceedings or in seeking medical treatment.
- to assist you in contacting your family when you are in financial difficulties for timely and necessary financial assistance.
- to provide consultation and necessary assistance for evacuating from a dangerous area in case an unexpected incident takes place in the receiving state.
- to assist you in locating your friends or family members who may be in distress or custody.

- to provide notarial and authentication services for Chinese citizens in accordance with relevant laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China and international treaties; and to handle registration of marriages between Chinese citizens provided that it does not contravene with the laws and regulations of the receiving state.

Assistance that cannot be provided by consular officers to you

- not to intervene in the judicial or administrative acts of the receiving state.
- not to partake in the arbitration or settlement of economic, labour and other civil disputes between you and others.
- not to get for you better treatment than what is given to local people when you are under medical treatment, detention or imprisonment.
- not to pay for your legal, translation, medical, hotel and travel (including air/sea/land travel tickets) costs, or any other expenses.
- not to apply for a visa for you.
- not to institute legal proceedings for you.

Obey the law

Chinese citizens outside Chinese territory should obey the laws and regulations of the receiving state and respect the customs and practices of the people in that state. They should strictly adhere to the permitted limit of stay granted by the state concerned as specified in their visas or permits of residence.

If you have anything stolen

You should immediately report the theft to the local police and request a copy of the police report. You may also contact the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions in that state so that money could be remitted to you by your family through the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions, or transferred to you via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

If you are detained or imprisoned

If you commit an offence, you should face the legal consequences. If you are detained or arrested for any charge of offence, you have the right to make a request to the authorities concerned for meeting the consular officers of the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions.

If someone dies

In the case that your relatives, friends or companions die abroad, the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions in that state may, at your request, authenticate the death certificate issued by the local authorities. The Chinese diplomatic and consular missions may also provide you with a list of companies engaging in funeral services.

Points for attention

- Consular officers are not allowed to act beyond the terms of reference of consular duties in providing consular protection and services to Chinese citizens.
- Relevant provisions lay down that fees are required for some consular services, such as the processing of various documents.
- If you wish to seek consular protection and services while overseas, you may make enquiries with the local government officials or police for the addresses and telephone numbers of the diplomatic representatives or consular organs of the People's Republic of China at that place. Such information is also available at the Hong Kong Immigration Department website at www.immd.gov.hk/eng/ or the Hong Kong Immigration Department Mobile Application. You may also make enquiries through the 24-hour hotline of the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the Hong Kong Immigration Department at (852) 1868.
- To provide timely and professional guidance and assistance to Chinese citizens in distress overseas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (MFA) has set up the Global Emergency Call Center for Consular Protection and Services and launched a 24-hour hotline (86) 10 12308 or (86) 10 65612308. The MFA emergency call center will, according to the actual circumstances and needs, refer assistance requests from Hong Kong residents to the Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit of the Hong Kong Immigration Department for handling and follow-up.
- For further information, you may visit the following websites:
 - Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/
 - Website of the "China Consular Affairs" cs.mfa.gov.cn (Chinese only)
 - Website of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region hk.ocmfa.gov.cn/eng/

Immigration Department
The Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region

(This guide is also available at the following hyperlink:
<https://www.immd.gov.hk/pdfforms/id907e.pdf>)