

HAITI RELIEF EFFORT

The Office of US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is doing everything possible to provide you with the most recent updates issued by federal agencies involved in the Haiti relief efforts such as the US Department of State (“DOS”), the US Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) including the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”), USAID, the Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”), the Department of Defense (“DOD”) and the Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”). For the latest updates directly from the US State Department, I encourage you to go to its website at www.state.gov/haitiquake/. If you would like assistance regarding a Haiti-related constituent matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (212) 688-7667, or email haiti@gillibrand.senate.gov.

U.S. CITIZEN INQUIRIES

To Report a Family Member in Haiti:

The U.S. Embassy in Port Au Prince has set up a task force at the Embassy that is taking calls as conditions permit. The Department of State encourages contacting the Department’s Haiti Task Force at 1-888-407-4747 and/or Haiti-Earthquake@state.gov regarding family members who are US citizens or legal permanent residents (“green card” holders).

The Embassy is working to identify U.S. citizens in Haiti who need urgent assistance and to identify sources of emergency help. U.S. citizens in Haiti are urged to contact the Embassy via email (ACSPaP@state.gov) to request emergency assistance. U.S. citizens in Haiti can call the Embassy’s Consular Task Force at 509-2229-8942, 509-2229-8089, 509-2229-8322, or 509-2229-8672. The State Department has also created a task force to monitor the emergency. People in the U.S. or Canada with information or inquiries about U.S. citizens in Haiti may reach the Haiti Task Force at 888-407-4747; Haiti-Earthquake@state.gov. Outside of the U.S. and Canada, call 202-501-4444. For further information and updates, please see the State Department’s Consular Affairs website (travel.state.gov). The State Department requests that your inquiries include the following information: your full name; date of birth; citizenship; time, date, and place of last known location; any contact information, such as a cell phone number or hotel/church, etc. number, where the person could be reached; your e-mail address (the Embassy is able to receive e-mails from U.S. citizens in country at this time).

To Learn More About How to File an Immediate Relative Petition or Humanitarian Parole, or Get Updates Regarding a Petition You Have Already Filed on Behalf of a Family Member:

The first step to learn more about USCIS and its services is to visit its website, <http://www.uscis.gov/haitianearthquake>, where it has consolidated all Haitian related web entries. Additionally, USCIS has expanded toll free live assistance at 1-800-375-5283, which has been extended until 11pm local time. This is a temporary change in response to the situation in Haiti. USCIS has also expanded the conversation about Haiti by establishing a USCIS’ official blog, “The Beacon,” <http://www.uscis.gov/blog/>.

Please note that the USCIS Port-au-Prince Office is currently engaged in assisting with the evacuation of American citizens and addressing the most urgent immigration related issues. More information on the Port-au-Prince Office found within the Mexico City District, please click on this link.

USCIS suggests people use only accredited legal representatives and groups for assistance with immigration matters — those vetted by the U.S. Department of Justice — that have experts available to give solid immigration advice and charge nominal fees or none at all. Please see the Department of Justice web site for a list of accredited representatives and groups: <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/statsub/raroster.htm>

INFORMATION ABOUT ADOPTIONS OF HAITIAN ORPHANS:

Update:

On January 22, 2010, the Government of Haiti informed the US Ambassador of new safeguards, under which the Haitian government must approve the departure of any orphan from the country. The US Embassy in Haiti consulted with Haitian government officials to establish the most efficient process for clearing departure of orphans whom the Embassy has approved for the humanitarian parole. During this time, USCIS continued to process all orphans that have been vetted for the humanitarian parole. On January 29, 2010, the Haitian Prime Minister signed the first list of 121 orphans who were in the adoption process prior to the earthquake.

Contact Information:

U.S. citizens with pending adoption cases in Haiti are requested to contact the Department of State at AskCI@state.gov for information about their adoption case. In your inquiry, please include: full name and contact information of parents, full name(s) of child(ren), date(s) of birth of child(ren) [if known], and the name and contact information of orphanage. You can find additional information about adoptions in Haiti at <http://adoption.state.gov/news/Haiti.html#>. DHS also encourages U.S. citizens with pending adoption cases in Haiti to send detailed information about their cases to HaitianAdoptions@dhs.gov.

For a helpful Q&A regarding adoptions, please see: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=8f712d86a8756210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=9cf75869c9326210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>

IF YOU WANT TO HELP:

Contributions/Donations

The State Department informs that, “the most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations.” Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Haiti is available at www.reliefweb.int, and at USAID: www.usaid.gov (use the keyword, “Donations”).

U.S. citizens who wish to contribute to the relief effort for Haiti after the earthquake, either online or by text message, can visit www.WhiteHouse.gov. The State Department helped set up a short code for those wishing to send immediate monetary assistance; one option is to text "[HAITI](#)" to "90999" and \$10 will be given automatically to the Red Cross, charged to your cell phone bill.

The Center for International Disaster Information's (CIDI), www.cidi.org, provides information about helping Haiti in its “Guidelines and FAQ,” which is helpful in answering questions about monetary and non-monetary donations. That website also has the Guidelines available in French and Kreyol. CIDI’s

hotline is 703-276-1914. For more information, please also see: http://www.cidi.org/reg_offr.htm; http://www.cidi.org/guidelines/guide_ln.htm; and <http://www.cidi.org/media/faq.htm>.

Volunteer Opportunities

According to the US Department of State, those wanting to provide assistance or expertise in Haiti are asked to contact the Center for International Disaster Information. The Center, operated under a grant from the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, has established a dedicated page to coordinate Haiti support at: <http://www.cidi.org/incident/haiti-10a/>. You may also call 703-276-1914.

HAITIAN CITIZENS IN THE U.S.

The US State Department advises that Haitian citizens in the U.S. should call the Haitian Embassy in Washington, D.C., 202-332-4090, or the Haitian Consulate in New York City, 305-859-2003.

Information About Temporary Protected Status (TPS):

According to the USCIS, temporary relief measures "will be made available to those individuals who are unable to return to their home country due to the destruction and humanitarian crisis in Haiti or are currently traveling in the United States." TPS is a temporary immigration status granted to eligible nationals of a certain country (or persons without nationality who last habitually lived in that country) designated by the Secretary of Homeland Security because that country has experienced temporary negative conditions, such as armed conflict or an environmental disaster, that prevent nationals of the country from returning safely or for the country to handle their return adequately. TPS beneficiaries are allowed to remain in the United States and can legally work for a set time period. (See Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 8 U.S.C. § 1254a.) USCIS will also expedite the processing of certain immigration applications.

See www.uscis.gov/haitianmemo for USCIS memoranda on TPS, www.uscis.gov for general information, and for specific information regarding TPS, please go to USCIS' webpage, <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.cb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnnextoid=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>. Please also note that USCIS has expanded the conversation about Haiti and TPS by establishing a USCIS' official blog, "The Beacon," which is <http://www.uscis.gov/blog/>.

USCIS suggests people use only accredited legal representatives and groups for assistance with immigration matters that have been vetted by the U.S. Department of Justice ("DOJ"), which have experts available to provide sound immigration advice and charge nominal fees or no fees. Please reference the DOJ's web site, <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/statpub/raroster.htm>, for a list of accredited representatives and groups.

For your reference, I have also listed links to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") of the Department of Homeland Security's ("DHS") website regarding Temporary Protected Status ("TPS"):

- Federal Register, dated January 21, 2010, confirming TPS for Haitian nationals: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-1169.htm>

- General link to Haiti page of USCIS' website, which includes Q & As for filing and clear guidelines regarding who should file which forms, at which addresses, and with which fees:
 1. In English: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
 2. In French: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=9aaa4f3d66446210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
 3. In Creole: [http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Humanitarian/Temporary%20Protected%20Status%20\(TPS\)%20&%20Deferred%20Enforced%20Departure%20\(DED\)/Temporary%20Protected%20Status/haiti-tps-creole.pdf](http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Humanitarian/Temporary%20Protected%20Status%20(TPS)%20&%20Deferred%20Enforced%20Departure%20(DED)/Temporary%20Protected%20Status/haiti-tps-creole.pdf)
- I-821 TPS: The application form for TPS (please note that Form I-765, work authorization application, must also be filed): <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=80283796f8a5d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnnextchannel=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
- Instructions in French for completing Form I-821: <http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Forms/Forms%20Static%20Files/i-765instr-french.pdf>
- Form I-765 work authorization application: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=73ddd59cb7a5d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnnextchannel=e54e60f64f336210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
- Tips for filing TPS, with a helpful chart describing who needs to file what, and what fees are involved:
 1. In English: http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-821_filing_tips.pdf
 2. In Creole: http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Humanitarian/Haiti%20Earthquake/i-821filing_tips_creole.pdf
- Questions and Answers: Requesting Waiver of Fees Temporary Protected Status Applicants: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=4e1879bdb1c66210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=9cf75869c9326210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
- Don't be a victim of immigration fraud brochure from USCIS:
 1. In English: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/USCIS%20fraud%20brochure.pdf>
 2. In Creole: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/USCIS%20fraud%20brochure.pdf>
- Fact Sheet: USCIS Warns of Immigration Scams Targeting Haitian Applicants for Temporary Protected Status: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=3449a57d86766210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=9cf75869c9326210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>
- Should you like legal referral lists to provide to TPS applications that USCIS provided at a briefing last week in New York, please contact my office at (212)688-7667.