



**United States Department of State**

*Office of Policy Coordination and Public  
Affairs for Consular Affairs*

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

March 11, 2019

Dear Medical Examiners/Coroners Association:

I would like to request your assistance to ensure that the United States complies with our domestic and international legal obligations when foreign nationals die in the U.S. Your cooperation allows us to insist on rigorous compliance by foreign governments with respect to U.S. citizens who die abroad.

All of our information and notification forms are online at [travel.state.gov/CNA](http://travel.state.gov/CNA). The consular notification team can be reached by telephone at 202-485-7703 or by email at [consnot@state.gov](mailto:consnot@state.gov). We can provide additional information and guidance, and if you think a training session would be helpful, please let us know. I have enclosed a fact sheet.

I appreciate your efforts in the best interests of all U.S. citizens, and welcome your support in helping the United States fulfill our international commitments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wallis Doerge".

Wallis Ann Doerge  
Program Manager  
Consular Notification & Access

Enclosure: Fact Sheet





## CONSULAR NOTIFICATION FACT SHEET for Medical Examiners and Coroners

The requirement to notify a consular officer in cases of deaths of foreign nationals is addressed in Article 37(a) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. Article 5 recognizes the functions of consular officers relating to deaths and estates.

### Definitions

**Foreign national:** any person who is not a U.S. citizen. Note that green card holders/permanent resident aliens are not U.S. citizens.

**Consul/consular officer:** foreign government official accredited by the U.S. Department of State to provide assistance on behalf of that government to that government's citizens in the U.S.

### When to Notify the Foreign Consul

If you become aware of the death of a foreign national in the United States, you must ensure that the nearest consulate of that national's country is notified of the death without delay. This permits the foreign government to make an official record of the death for its own legal purposes. For example, such notice helps ensure that passports and other legal documentation issued by that country are canceled and not reissued to fraudulent claimants. In addition, it helps ensure that the foreign national's family and legal heirs, if any, in the foreign country are aware of the death and that the death is known for estate purposes in the foreign national's country. Once notified of a death, consular officers may in some circumstances act to conserve the decedent's estate, in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable in the jurisdiction.

### How to Notify the Foreign Consul

Contact the decedent's embassy or nearest consulate. You can provide notification by email, fax or a phone call. You may use the *Suggested Fax Sheet for Notifying Consular Officers of Death or Serious Injuries*. This form is on our web page at [travel.state.gov/CNA](http://travel.state.gov/CNA). Phone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses for foreign embassies and consulates are also at [travel.state.gov/CNA](http://travel.state.gov/CNA). Keep a written record of the date, time and method of notification in the event questions regarding notification arise later, including a copy of the sent email or fax receipt.

### For Guidance and Information: Contact the CNA Team

Website	<a href="http://travel.state.gov/CNA">travel.state.gov/CNA</a>
Phone	202-485-7703
Email	<a href="mailto:consnot@state.gov">consnot@state.gov</a>