

EVACUATION CHECKLIST

Unaccompanied minors (children under 18 years)

- ❑ Decide if evacuating your children after a disaster (without being accompanied by a parent or legal guardian) is your family's safest and best choice.
- ❑ Talk to your child(ren) about their feelings and concerns about being evacuated.
- ❑ Ensure that the temporary caregiver, often a family member or close friend, is trustworthy and responsible.
- ❑ Make clear agreements with the temporary caregiver on who is responsible for what, how long your child will stay with them, and other expectations between the child, parents, and temporary caregiver.
- ❑ Put your child's important documents, such as birth certificate and passport, in a waterproof pouch they can safely travel with. Make copies of these documents and keep them with you.
- ❑ Create a file with personal critical information about your children, such as health considerations. Copies of this file should be provided to your child when travelling, the temporary caregiver, and border control.
- ❑ After a disaster, if you choose to evacuate your children, you will be asked to fill out and submit travel consent documents, available at evacuation points such as border control.
- ❑ If parents want to transfer legal guardianship temporarily to the receiving party The Court of Guardianship can facilitate this.
- ❑ Continue open communication with your child(ren) before and after evacuation to help them feel safe. Plan on how they can reach you once evacuated.
- ❑ Contact the Court of Guardianship with questions regarding evacuating your children after a disaster.

***In extreme situations where life is at immediate risk, full documentation may not be possible before evacuation. Still, every effort must be made to record at least basic details such as the child's and parent's names, date of evacuation and usual place of residence. Full documentation should be completed as soon as possible.**

THE INTERISLAND PROTOCOL

The six islands of the Dutch Caribbean have a long and close relationship. In the aftermath of a disaster, some families evacuate their children to relatives or close family friends.

The Ministers of Justice have signed an interisland protocol between Dutch Caribbean islands. This protocol will ensure better identification, protection, and support of children travelling between islands without their parents or legal guardians accompanying them in the aftermath of a disaster.

Before children are evacuated without being accompanied by parents or guardians, the Court of Guardianship must be informed.



COURT OF GUARDIANSHIP

The Court of Guardianship is the central authority for the protection of children and is part of the Ministry of Justice. Each island in the Dutch Caribbean has their own Court of Guardianship. They work together when needed, such as when children are evacuated after a disaster.

Court of Guardianship Sint Maarten

Address: E. Camille Richardson Street W-28

Phone: +1 (721) 542 4110

Emergency / Reporting: 918

Email: report2cog@sintmaartengov.org

St. Eustatius: +(599) 318 2814 | Saba +(599) 416 3283

Curacao: +(599) 9 461 6166 | Aruba: +(297) 522 1262

Bonaire: +(599) 715 8898

EVACUATING YOUR CHILD(REN) AFTER A DISASTER

The six islands of the Dutch Caribbean have a long and close relationship. In the aftermath of a disaster, some families evacuate their children to relatives or close family friends.



Only evacuate your child(ren) as a last resort

unicef
for every child



STEP 1: IS EVACUATION THE BEST OPTION?

If you are considering evacuating your child(ren), base your decision on what is best for them. Children are and often feel safest with their parents (or guardians). Being evacuated to another country will change their environment, including access to regular schooling and friends. Dangers of evacuating your child(ren) without being accompanied by parents include abuse and neglect.



STEP 3: MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

If you are sure that evacuation is the best option for your child(ren) due to a disaster, make the necessary arrangements. Ensure that the family or friends your child(ren) will, stay with are people you know well and trust. Make clear agreements with the hosting party and discuss expectations and responsibilities. You must also inform authorities and prepare several documents to evacuate your children legally.



STEP 5: INVOLVE AUTHORITIES

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the Court of Guardianship. They can advise you on the safe and legal steps to evacuate your children. After a disaster, when you sign the travel consent form at an evacuation point, the Court of Guardianship will be informed that your child is being evacuated. They will inform the Court of Guardianship on the receiving island.



STEP 2: TALK TO YOUR CHILD(REN)

Get together your family, including your children, and make a family disaster plan. Clearly outline the steps on what should happen in different emergency scenarios to keep everyone safe. Talk to your children about evacuation as a possibility. Tell them what they can expect and who they will be staying with. Allow them to share their concerns and ask questions.



STEP 4: PREPARE DOCUMENTS

Gather and make copies of important documents such as birth certificates and passports. Travel consent documents are required when a minor travels without their parents / legal guardian(s). This document will be available after a disaster at evacuation points, such as border control. See the checklist in this brochure for a full overview.



STEP 6: COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Maintaining open communication with your child is essential in preparation for and after evacuation. While they are evacuated, schedule regular times for them to be able to talk to you via phone or another device. Maintain communication with the appointed caregiver and Court of Guardianship and update them on any new developments.

