

## **Regulation of care, familial assistance and support obligations in favor of minors in The Bahamas**

The Family Services Unit of The Department of Social Services is responsible for the development of individuals capacity to/perform constructive life task and to enhance and strengthen family life. The Department of Social Services provides counseling and supportive services to the courts. Home investigation, are conducted to assist in completing relevant reports requested by the court.

- **Legislation**

The main legislative frame work relative to care, familial assistance and child support obligations is the Child Protection Act 2007. Part VI of this Act makes provision for the Care and Protection of Children. This includes section 62 which addresses Cruelty to Children, Section 63 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Section 64 Supervision and Care Orders. Part IV of this Act addresses Family Maintenance, Maintenance Rights and Duties of Members of the Family as between themselves. This includes section 33 which outlines the duty of a man to maintain his children and section 34 which provides for the duty of a woman to maintain her children. Part V of this Act outlines the Proceedings To Enforce Right To Maintenance this includes section 37, which makes provision for the mode of compelling performance of duties imposed by the Act.

There are no specific bilateral agreement addressing care, familial assistance and child support obligation. However, the Maintenance Orders Facilities For Enforcement Act Chapter 127 makes provisions for the enforcement in the Bahamas of maintenance orders made in England or Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland. This Act has been extended to include; Barbados , Bermuda, British Guiana, Leeward Islands, Grenada, St. Vincent, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad, British Honduras, Australia and New Zealand.