



UNITED STATES PERMANENT MISSION TO THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

No. 03-B

The United States Permanent Mission to the Organization of American States presents its compliments to the Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the Organization and has the honor to inform the Department of International Law of the enclosed updates from the United States related to the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory.

The Permanent Mission of the United States avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the office of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure:

As stated.

(Endorsed electronically)

Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the
Organization of the American States

Washington D.C. January 22, 2021

i. United States: <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/sigs/B-36.html>

d. United States: <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/sigs/b-46.html>

On January 21, 2021, the United States provided the following updated information regarding the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory and the Additional Protocol to the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory.

1. Pursuant to Article 2 of the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory and Article 1 of the Additional Protocol to the Inter-American Convention, letters rogatory that have as their purpose the taking of evidence shall be excluded from the rights, obligations, and operation of this Convention between the United States and another State Party. Therefore, the United States is a party to the Inter-American Convention for purposes of legal service of documents only.

2. In ratifying the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory, the United States accepts entry into force and undertakes treaty relations only with respect to States which have ratified or acceded to the Additional Protocol as well as the Inter-American Convention, and not with respect to States which have ratified or acceded to the Inter-American Convention alone.

3. Pursuant to Article 4 of the Convention and Article 2 of the Additional Protocol, the Government of the United States wishes to inform the Secretary General that the United States Department of Justice's Office of International Judicial Assistance is the Central Authority pursuant to the Inter-American Convention. For more information on the Office of International Judicial Assistance, please visit: <https://www.justice.gov/civil/office-international-judicial-assistance-0>.

The Office of International Judicial Assistance delegated the ministerial act of serving and transmitting documents in response to service requests submitted pursuant to the Inter-American Convention to a private contractor, ABC Legal Services. ABC Legal Services (ABC Legal) ceased using the name Process Forwarding International or PFI and thus all service requests should refer only to ABC Legal Services.

The current contract with ABC Legal is in force until January 31, 2025. The use of this private contractor to perform the service of judicial and extrajudicial documents function does not imply the designation of a new U.S. Central Authority for the Inter-American Convention, but rather reflects the contracting of certain activities conducted by the U.S. Central Authority, which remains the Office of International Judicial Assistance.

All requests for service on private individuals and companies should be transmitted to:

ABC Legal Services

633 Yesler Way

Seattle, WA 98104 USA

Telephone: (001) 206-521-9000

E-mail: internationalinfo@abclegal.com

Website: <https://www.abclegal.com/international/service-of-process-overview>

While the United States has made declarations under Articles 6 and 7 of the Convention, there is no fee for service requests submitted pursuant to the Convention. In addition to complying with the relevant requirements for the method of service chosen, service requests should include a contact email and

phone number so that ABC Legal can attempt to correct any defects or seek clarification before returning a request unexecuted, if needed. ABC Legal can accept requests for service by email or documents can be uploaded online through ABC Legal's website so long as the request is not voluminous: <https://www.abclegal.com/international-service-of-process/inter-american-convention>.

Countries not party to the Inter-American Convention (or the Hague Service Convention) may continue to send requests for service through the diplomatic channel, specifically to the Office of Legal Affairs, within the U.S. Department of State's Directorate of Overseas Citizens Services at this address:

ATTN: Judicial Assistance Officer

U.S. Department of State

Office of Legal Affairs, (L/CA/POG/GC)

SA-17, 10th Floor

2201 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20522-1710

Requests for service on the United States Government, which includes its departments, agencies, or instrumentalities, should be sent directly to the U.S. Central Authority, the Department of Justice's Office of International Judicial Assistance. For additional information, please visit:

<https://www.justice.gov/civil/service-requests>.

The United States notes there is no requirement under U.S. federal law that requests for service be sent to ABC Legal for execution. The United States has no objection to the informal delivery of such documents by members of diplomatic or consular missions in the United States, through mail, or by private persons – if effective under applicable law – provided no compulsion is used.