

Ask the U.S. Embassy

July 24, 2013

Minors must be accompanied by parent, legal guardian at interviews

Question: *My friend who resides in the United States would like for his 14-year-old son to visit him. Does he have to accompany the child to the interview?*

Minor children, meaning those under eighteen years old, must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian for their non-immigrant visa interview. Even if the child will be traveling with another family member who is not the parent, or with a group for an event or school trip, he or she must have a parent or legal guardian there during the interview. In the example outlined above, the father must be able to prove that he is in fact the child's parent. This can be done by adding his name to the birth certificate, or by providing other convincing evidence of their relationship to the Consular Officer during the interview. Additionally, the child could be accompanied to the interview by his mother if the father cannot come down from the United States.

If you are not the biological parent of a child wishing to travel to the U.S. on a non-immigrant visa, you will need to bring court documents showing that you have legal custody of the child, or adoption papers indicating that you are the adoptive parent. Even if the child is living with you but you are not the legal guardian or adoptive parent, the mother or father of the child will need to appear for the visa interview. If a parent or legal guardian does not appear with a minor child for the non-immigrant visa interview, the Consular Officer will not be able to complete the interview process, and you will have to reschedule for a time when the parent or legal guardian can accompany the child.