



ACCESS TO VITAL RECORDS

*Birth, Marriage, Divorce, and Death Certificates
& Police Records*

CAMEROON

About this document

Introduction

Established in 2018, the Vance Center's Keep Families Together (KFT) initiative connects pro bono lawyers abroad with legal service providers and immigration attorneys in the U.S. representing migrant individuals and families. Through this program, volunteer counsel assists in obtaining vital records, police and medical records, and other official documentation from migrants' countries of origin or transit to support the legal and administrative processes that lead to family reunification and long-term immigration relief.

Today, the KFT initiative collaborates with more than 150 law firms, pro bono clearinghouses, non-profit organizations, bar associations, and university legal clinics across five continents. Together, we have supported the legal representation of more than 500 individuals and families, contributing to numerous reunifications and durable forms of immigration relief.

As the immigration policy landscape in the U.S. continues to shift, legal service providers must adapt to address their clients' needs, and tools that can support overburdened and under-resourced service providers are more important than ever.

In 2025 alone, KFT received more than 186 requests for assistance. Looking ahead, we anticipate sustained demand for these services. As cases have increased, our team has noted that immigration attorneys frequently encounter some of the same questions and procedural barriers, many of them related to the essential vital records their clients need for their cases. These questions include: **how to obtain birth, marriage, and divorce certificates; how to secure death certificates; and how to access police records.**

The relevant information about how to access these documents is often fragmented, difficult to navigate, or not immediately accessible to practitioners, who have limited time to devote to these proceedings. This information gap has critical consequences – we know that delays or uncertainty in obtaining such documentation can materially affect the pace and outcome of immigration proceedings.

In response to this gap, the Vance Center has developed this practical reference tool covering an initial group of 31 jurisdictions for which we frequently receive requests. The guide includes countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The chapters for three countries (Brazil, India, and Mexico) include sub-sections with state-level information for a selection of states. This guide complements the Vance Center's previously published resource, [*Accessing Vital and Official Records in Latin America: A Guide for Immigration Practitioners*](#), published in March 2026. While that guide focused on 14 jurisdictions in Latin America and covered a broader range of procedures related to obtaining and correcting official records, this new version expands the geographic scope significantly and narrows the focus to the official documents most frequently requested in immigration matters.



The Guide covers:

- **Procedures to request and obtain birth, marriage, divorce, and death certificates**
- **Locating and obtaining criminal, police, or arrest records**

Each country chapter includes information about the appropriate authorities or agencies responsible for these records, the processes to request them, timing and associated costs, and other relevant information. When applicable, it also includes information about available digital or remote procedures that can enable practitioners to more efficiently assist migrant clients.

Access to these documents is often essential to ensure immigration processes can move forward. By providing more clarity around cross-border procedures, services, associated costs, and digital options, we hope this Guide will support immigration service providers to offer more timely, informed, and effective legal representation to their clients.

Note

This Guide is based on information compiled in early 2026. This information is for general reference only and is not legal advice. Requirements, fees, and procedures may change over time and may vary within regions of each country. Whenever available, we have included references to official sources so that attorneys may verify and obtain the most up-to-date information directly. Accordingly, this Guide should be used as a general reference tool, with the understanding that local regulations and administrative practices may evolve at any time.

This chapter covers Cameroon.

The full Guide with information on all 31 countries is available [here](#).

Acknowledgments

The Vance Center is grateful to White & Case LLP, which led and compiled the research that formed the foundation of this extensive guide, and coordinated production of this final work product. We are grateful to the individual attorneys and volunteers who supported the research that went into creating this Guide. Their contributions were essential in gathering accurate information, identifying current procedures in each jurisdiction, and ensuring that this Guide is useful and accessible to practitioners.



CAMEROON

Birth certificate

What is the government authority or agency responsible for issuing this document?	Civil registry office at the place of birth. <i>Source:</i> https://www.pagesjaunes.online/blog/proc%C3%A9dure-d-obtention-de-l-acte-de-naissance-au-cameroun
Can the document be obtained online?	No
Please provide the link.	Unclear from available sources.
Please provide a brief description of the process.	Unclear from available sources.
Must the application be done in person?	Yes
Can a third party apply on behalf of the person?	Yes
Must the third party be a lawyer or have a notarized power of attorney (POA)?	No
What are the typical documents or information required to request this certificate?	• Valid identification documents for both parents. • Full name and sex of the child. • Exact date and place of birth. • Names and occupations of the parents. • A certificate of recognition or declaration of paternity may be required if the child was born outside of marriage. • If available, a family register may also be presented. • Proof of residence may be required if the parents live in a different department. • Proof of parentage (parents' marriage certificate or a notarized declaration of parentage) to prove the parent-child relationship. • For newborns, a medical certificate from the hospital or clinic may be required.

	Source: https://www.pagesjaunes.online/blog/proc%C3%A9dure-d-obtention-de-l-acte-de-naissance-au-cameroun
Is there a fee to obtain the certificate?	No
How much is the fee?	Unclear from available sources.
What is the average time it takes to receive the document?	The timeframe may vary depending on the city office, but generally, it takes two to seven business days after submitting the required forms. Source: https://www.pagesjaunes.online/blog/proc%C3%A9dure-d-obtention-de-l-acte-de-naissance-au-cameroun
Is the certificate provided digitally, by mail or must it be picked up in person?	In person
Is the issuance centralized at the national level or is it handled locally (e.g., by municipality or state)?	Local
Please describe how to identify the appropriate local office.	Unclear from available sources.
Are there any known challenges to accessing this document (e.g., bureaucratic delays, corruption, limited online access)?	Each town hall has specific rules, particularly regarding opening hours. Source: https://www.pagesjaunes.online/blog/proc%C3%A9dure-d-obtention-de-l-acte-de-naissance-au-cameroun
Please list any methods for contacting the relevant agencies and organizations (e.g., WhatsApp, email, online contact form, telephone numbers, postal address, etc.).	Unclear from available sources.

Please share any additional information that may be helpful.	• Costs arise/increase in the case of a late declaration of the birth, or the parents are obliged to go through the Tribunal for a supplementary judgment. • Births declared after the deadline of 90 days may be registered at the request of the public prosecutor within six months of birth (Act No. 2011/011, article 32). • When a birth has not been declared within the six-month period, it cannot be registered by the civil registrar, but only by virtue of a declaratory judgment rendered by the competent court authority (Act No. 2011/011, article 33). • Ensure that documents are legible and in good condition. • <i>Sources:</i> ○ https://data.unicef.org/crvs/cameroon/ ○ https://www.pagesjaunes.online/blog/proc%C3%A9dure-d-obtention-de-l-acte-de-naissance-au-cameroun
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Marriage certificate

What is the government authority or agency responsible for issuing this document?	The Council (la Mairie or Commune) or Secondary Civil Status Center (Centre Secondaire d'Etat Civil) of the town where the marriage took place (place of residence or place of birth of one of the spouses). <i>Source:</i> https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html
Can the document be obtained online?	No
Please provide the link.	Unclear from available sources.
Please provide a brief description of the process.	Unclear from available sources.
Must the application be done in person?	Yes
Can a third party apply on behalf of the person?	Unclear from available sources.
Must the third party be a lawyer or have a notarized power of attorney (POA)?	Unclear from available sources.

What are the typical documents or information required to request this certificate?	• Identity cards of both spouses. • Marriage certificate if the couple is also married and the husband wishes to marry a second wife. • Publication certificate. • Certification of no impediment. • Certificate of single status (couple who has never been married). • Certificate of residence (to be verified). • Two witnesses per spouse (photocopy of identity card).
Is there a fee to obtain the certificate?	Yes
How much is the fee?	It varies by municipality.
What is the average time it takes to receive the document?	Usually, it can be obtained within one month of the publication of the intention to marry. <i>Source:</i> https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents It is also possible that it will be issued immediately if applied for on-site. <i>Source:</i> https://mairiedelavilledemaroua.celestecom.com/actes-de-mariage.html
Is the certificate provided digitally, by mail or must it be picked up in person?	In person.
Is the issuance centralized at the national level or is it handled locally (e.g., by municipality or state)?	Local
Please describe how to identify the appropriate local office.	Unclear from available sources.

Are there any known challenges to accessing this document (e.g., bureaucratic delays, corruption, limited online access)?	Unclear from available sources.
Please list any methods for contacting the relevant agencies and organizations (e.g., WhatsApp, email, online contact form, telephone numbers, postal address, etc.).	Unclear from available sources.
Please share any additional information that may be helpful.	• Marriage cannot be celebrated if the bride is under 15 years old or the groom is under 18 years old, unless dispensed by the President of the Republic on serious grounds. • A couple may seek a waiver from the State Counsel (Procureur) of their area to celebrate their marriage without having to wait for the one-month period after the publication. • The marriage certificate can be issued in the following cases: ○ To prove the authenticity of the civil union between two people. ○ To enable each spouse to exercise their rights and the rights of their children. ○ It may be required in the event of divorce or remarriage when applying for certain administrative documents. • Sources: ○ https://data.unicef.org/crvs/cameroon/ ○ https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents

- <https://mairiedelavilledemaroua.celestecom.com/actes-de-mariage.html>

Divorce certificate

What is the government authority or agency responsible for issuing this document?	The High Court of the place of residence of the parties or celebration of the marriage (English-speaking regions). <i>Source:</i> https://minjustice.cm/ova_sev/divorce-in-the-english-speaking-regions-of-cameroon/#:~:text=The%20competent%20Court%20to%20hear,of%20the%20indicators%20of%20divorce
Can the document be obtained online?	No
Please provide the link.	Unclear from available sources.
Please provide a brief description of the process.	Unclear from available sources.
Must the application be done in person?	Yes
Can a third party apply on behalf of the person?	Yes
Must the third party be a lawyer or have a notarized power of attorney (POA)?	Unclear from available sources.

What are the typical documents or information required to request this certificate?	The divorce petition must state the reasons for requesting divorce. Source: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents
Is there a fee to obtain the certificate?	Yes
How much is the fee?	1,800 CFA Francs
What is the average time it takes to receive the document?	Divorce cases can take a while (sometimes years) to result in a final judgment, especially when the couple has children. Source: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents
Is the certificate provided digitally, by mail or must it be picked up in person?	Unclear from available sources.
Is the issuance centralized at the national level or is it handled locally (e.g., by municipality or state)?	Unclear from available sources.
Please describe how to identify the appropriate local office.	Unclear from available sources.
Are there any known challenges to accessing this document (e.g., bureaucratic delays, corruption, limited online access)?	Unclear from available sources.
Please list any methods for contacting the relevant agencies and organizations (e.g., WhatsApp, email, online contact)	Unclear from available sources.

form, telephone numbers, postal address, etc.).	
Please share any additional information that may be helpful.	• Lawyers in any case can apply on behalf of the spouse. • Divorce decrees must be signed by the presiding judge and the Registrar-in-Chief (Greffier en Chef) (even if another Registrar was in attendance) at the place where the divorce was granted. • Only the High Court has jurisdiction over divorce. The divorce petition must state the reasons for requesting the divorce. • <i>Sources:</i> ○ https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html ○ https://primetimelawoffice.com/how-to-file-for-divorce-in-cameroon-step-by-step-guide/#:~:text=The%20Basics%20of%20Filing%20for,marriage%20has%20broken%20down%20irretrievably

Death certificate

What is the government authority or agency responsible for issuing this document?	Civil registry office (of the place of occurrence, burial, residence or birth of the deceased) <i>Source:</i> https://mairiedouala5eme.cm/la-mairie-au-service-du-citoyen/
Can the document be obtained online?	No
Please provide the link.	Unclear from available sources.
Please provide a brief description of the process.	Unclear from available sources.
Must the application be done in person?	Yes
Can a third party apply on behalf of the person?	Yes

Must the third party be a lawyer or have a notarized power of attorney (POA)?	No
What are the typical documents or information required to request this certificate?	• Name. • Profession and residence. • Relationship and home of the applicant. • Name, date and place of birth, sex, marital status, profession and residence of the deceased. • Date and place of death. • Cause of death. • Nationality. • Place of burial. • Names of both parents of the deceased. • Names, profession and residence of witness. • Date the certificate was drawn up. Source: https://www.bamenda1council.org/death-certification/?utm
Is there a fee to obtain the certificate?	Yes
How much is the fee?	It varies from municipality to municipality.
What is the average time it takes to receive the document?	Unclear from available sources.
Is the certificate provided digitally, by mail or must it be picked up in person?	In person.
Is the issuance centralized at the national level or is it handled locally (e.g., by municipality or state)?	Local
Please describe how to identify the appropriate local office.	It varies. Contact the Bamenda 1 Council here: https://www.bamenda1council.org/death-certification
Are there any known challenges to accessing this document (e.g., bureaucratic delays, corruption, limited online access)?	Unclear from available sources.

Please list any methods for contacting the relevant agencies and organizations (e.g., WhatsApp, email, online contact form, telephone numbers, postal address, etc.).	It varies. Contact the Bamenda 1 Council here: https://www.bamenda1council.org/death-certification
Please share any additional information that may be helpful.	• The death certificate is the first document to be obtained following a death by any person close to the deceased, and they must first have the death certified by a doctor before going to the town hall to make their declaration of death. • To draw up a death certificate, applicants must bring the national identity cards of the deceased and two witnesses; a request to the mayor; a type of death certificate signed by a doctor from Maroua (its territorial jurisdiction). These acts must be drawn up within 90 days following the death. • To issue a death certificate within three months of death, civil status officials rely on the hospital death record. After three months, officials require a declaratory judgment of death from the High Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) of the place of death of the individual. • Fetal deaths are not registered. • Under the 2011 law, penalties are provided for any person who is required to report a death and who, without legitimate reason, fails to do so or reports a false or inaccurate death. • Sources: ○ https://mairiedelavilledemaroua.celestecom.com/actes-de-deces.html ○ https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents ○ https://data.unicef.org/crvs/cameroon/

- <https://mairiedouala5eme.cm/la-mairie-au-service-du-citoyen/>

Police record

What is the government authority or agency responsible for issuing this document?	• Individuals born in the English-speaking zone or in the northern regions of Cameroon (Adamaoua, North and Extreme North): ○ Chief Court Clerk (Greffier en Chef) from the Ministry of Justice in Yaoundé, Department of Criminal Affairs and Pardon • Individuals born in any other region of the country must apply at the court of the jurisdiction where they were born in Cameroon. • Source: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/police-certificates/how/cameroon.html?utm
Can the document be obtained online?	No
Please provide the link.	Unclear from available sources.
Please provide a brief description of the process.	Unclear from available sources.
Must the application be done in person?	Unclear from available sources.
Can a third party apply on behalf of the person?	Yes
Must the third party be a lawyer or have a notarized power of attorney (POA)?	Yes
What are the typical documents or information required to request this certificate?	• A letter explaining the purpose for which the certificate is required. • Fully completed application form. • A copy of the applicant's passport. • A set of the applicant's fingerprints. • A detailed cover letter stating the period of stay in Cameroon and the need for the certificate.

	- Copies of the first three of the data pages of his/her passport, as well as the pages containing Cameroon visas, and entry and departure stamps. - Source: https://primetimelawoffice.com/how-to-apply-for-a-police-clearance-certificate-in-cameroon-step-by-step-guide/
Is there a fee to obtain the certificate?	Yes
How much is the fee?	The total cost of the issuance of an extract of the criminal record is XAF 2.000. Source: https://minjustice.cm/ova_sev/establishing-a-criminal-record-bulletin/
What is the average time it takes to receive the document?	Generally, the standard time for a B3 to be established is 24 hours. https://minjustice.cm/ova_sev/establishing-a-criminal-record-bulletin/
Is the certificate provided digitally, by mail or must it be picked up in person?	Unclear from available sources.
Is the issuance centralized at the national level or is it handled locally (e.g., by municipality or state)?	National
Please describe how to identify the appropriate local office.	Unclear from available sources.
Are there any known challenges to accessing this document (e.g., bureaucratic delays, corruption, limited online access)?	Unclear from available sources.
Please list any methods for contacting the relevant agencies and organizations (e.g., WhatsApp, email, online contact form, telephone numbers, postal address, etc.).	- Yaoundé's Court of First Instance. Source: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/police-certificates/how/cameroon.html?utm - Address: Palais de Justice Rue du Musée National (Ancien Palais Présidentiel) Phone number: +237 22 69 23 28 Source: https://yaounde.eregulations.org/Contacts/2?l=fr#

Please share any additional information that may be helpful.

- Police certificates are unavailable. In Cameroon, the Certificate of Non-Conviction (Extrait du Casier Judiciaire or Bulletin No. 3) reports on the police, court conviction and prison records of a person.
- When an individual needs a B3, he/she goes to the Court of First Instance of his/her place of birth and writes an application to request it. To show proof of identity, the individual will need a photocopy of the birth certificate or the national identity card. To attest to the authenticity of these two documents, two fiscal stamps worth FCFA 1.000 each shall be affixed on the documents. The Registrar will check if there is any condemnation or sentence laid on a person and worth mentioning on a B3. The form will be filled out with all necessary information mentioned on the document. The Registrar-in-Chief and the State Counsel of the Court sign the document.
- The B3 is valid for three months.
- *Sources:*
 - [https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal\(s\)%20/%20Color,\(s\)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Cameroon.html#:~:text=Divorce%20Certificates&text=Special%20Seal(s)%20/%20Color,(s)/Color/Format.&text=Procedure%20for%20Obtaining:%20Divorce%20decrees,Court%20and%20the%20lawyer%27s%20services.&text=Alternate%20Documents:%20There%20are%20no%20Alternate%20Documents)
 - https://minjustice.cm/ova_sev/establishing-a-criminal-record-bulletin/
 - https://minjustice.cm/ova_sev/establishing-a-criminal-record-bulletin/