



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organizacion Internacional para las Migraciones



This Programme is co-financed
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UK VOLUNTARY ASSISTED RETURN and REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME REFERRAL FORM FOR UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

Case Number

Date of Application:

FOR IOM USE ONLY

Please complete this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS**

Family Name/s

First Name/s

Date of Birth

Gender

Place of Birth

Nationality

Address in UK

Telephone

Referral Agency

Carers Name

Responsible Social worker

Telephone

FAMILY MEMBERS IN UK

Name	Relationship To Applicant	Address	Tel No.

FAMILY MEMBERS IN COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Name	Relationship To Applicant	Address	Tel No.	Date last Contacted

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES REGARDING YOUR STAY IN THE UK AND RETURN TO _____ (e.g. Special health needs, family circumstances etc.)



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VARRP – Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme

Guidelines for Unaccompanied Minors

IOM can assist Unaccompanied Minors to return voluntarily to their countries of origin under the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) and the Assisted Return for Irregular Migrants programme (AVRIM).

Following a multi-agency approach, IOM will identify and work within agreed best practices in preparing to assist the voluntary return of unaccompanied minors living in the UK who wish to be reunited with their families or key carers in their country of origin. IOM shall uphold the best interests of the child through working in cooperation with the legal guardians, the minors themselves and the families in the countries of origin. The following factors shall be considered among others:

- That the child is normally best cared for in his or her own family
- The wishes of the child
- The wishes of the parents (if they can be determined) or primary carers in the home country.
- The emotional and psychological needs of the child
- The past history of the child

If, upon consideration of all the above factors, voluntary return is deemed to be in the best interests of the child, IOM shall follow appropriate and agreed procedures both within the UK and in the respective country or origin.

For Asylum seeking children: If the unaccompanied minor considers returning home, but is unsure about making the decision, s/he and her/his social workers shall be referred to IOM London's partner agencies in the UK (CHOICES – Refugee Action, OPTIONS–YMCA Glasgow, North of England Refugee Service, and Safe Haven Yorkshire, WARS), who offer impartial advice on voluntary return.

Procedures

Additional to the general voluntary return procedure, IOM has special procedures for UAMs

1. An unaccompanied minor who wishes to return to the country of origin, under IOM London's programmes, will need to complete the general Application Form (for VARRP or AVRIM), the Declaration for Voluntary Return and a specific application form: Referral Form for Unaccompanied Children. This form includes additional information, such as details of the carer and/or family members in the UK and of the family in the country of origin.

All application forms including the form for the Reintegration Fund can be obtained by calling IOM London (Freephone 0800 783 2332 or 0207 233 0001) or visiting our website www.iomlondon.org. Further information and translated documents can also be requested or found on our website.

2. The referral form is completed by the responsible social worker/carer with a declaration of voluntary return signed by the minor and the legal guardian. Referrals should also include a short letter outlining details of the case and assistance requested. It is advisable that as many family and/or local contact details in country of origin as possible are provided.
3. Upon receipt of the application form, IOM London shall liaise with the responsible carer/social worker to assess the specific needs of each child.
4. IOM will send the completed VARRP Application Form to the Home Office for approval.
5. Upon receiving approval from the Home Office, IOM London will liaise with IOM offices and appropriate partner agencies in the country of origin to arrange a family assessment. The minor's family will be contacted to ensure that family/carer is ready to receive the minor and to provide the necessary assistance. The family assessment will be done according to the UK Social Services' requirements. The family assessment report will be then presented to the responsible Social worker or legal guardian in the UK for final discussion and approval of the voluntary return of the unaccompanied minor.
6. A written confirmation from the responsible social worker or legal guardian in the UK confirming their support for the minor's return and consider it to be in the best interest of the child is needed before IOM London proceeds with travel arrangements.
7. On the day of the departure IOM will assist the minor at the airport and if required will involve the airline for assistance during the flight. IOM can also provide an escort in certain circumstances. IOM or the partner agency makes sure that the UAM is met at the airport upon arrival and is reunited with the family or carer on arrival.
8. A family reunification declaration will signed by the family member to confirm the minor has been reunited with his/her family in the Country of Origin.

Reintegration Assistance (available only to VARRP applicants, for AVRIM applicants please discuss with IOM London)

Besides travel arrangements and advice throughout the application process IOM can also provide reintegration assistance to asylum seeking children after they return home.

- The aim of the Reintegration Fund is to provide financial support for activities that would benefit returnees, to facilitate a sustainable return to their country of origin.
- Reintegration assistance for children can be in the form of accessing training and education or help with purchasing school uniforms, books, equipment etc. IOM does not provide cash grants.
- If the young person has any specific needs please discuss IOM London.
- The applicant identifies what s/he would like to do or receive and IOM will then try and find a suitable activity in the country of origin.
- IOM London works very closely with over 100 offices worldwide to arrange reintegration activity.
- Everyone who is successful in their application to return home through IOM is eligible and encouraged to apply for reintegration assistance.

FAQs

1. *What happens to young people who just turned 18?*

They will be treated as adults and only need to follow the general VARRP application procedures. They will be able to benefit from all the assistance IOM offers.

2. *What if a child has been age assessed/ disputed and counts as an adult for the Home Office or Social Services?*

IOM will treat the person still as an unaccompanied minor, unless s/he states a different age to IOM. If there is no responsible social worker/carer assigned and the child is an asylum seeker, IOM will liaise with the Refugee Council's Children's Panel and IOM's partner organisations (CHOICES – Refugee Action, OPTIONS –YMCA Glasgow, North of England Refugee Service, Safe Haven Yorkshire and WARS).

3. *What happens, if the UAM has no family in the home country or the family can not take care of the child?*

- IOM and other partner agencies in the relevant country will investigate, if the child can be placed in a foster family or children's home. This information will be available before IOM makes travel arrangement, so that the minor and her/his social worker/carer can review the decision of return.

4. *How long will it take to organize the return travel?*

IOM always aims to meet the needs of returnees and to find the most appropriate way of return. The timeframe for the return will depend on various factors such as Home Office approval, the family assessment, obtaining travel documents, availability of commercial flights, and any special needs to be taken into consideration for the return travel.