

ACCION LEGAL

En la Corte Juvenil para el Condado de Anderson, Tennessee

Para Lucia Perez Morales, una Petición para el Nombramiento de Tutela de Juan Morales Perez ha sido presentada en la Corte Juvenil para el Condado de Anderson, Tennessee, por Juan Morales Ruiz. En la petición, se afirma que usted es la madre biológica de Juan Morales Perez y ha abandonado a Juan como no ha tenido ningún contacto con él ni le ha brindado apoyo financiero desde su llegada a los Estados Unidos en diciembre de 2024. Como tal, se le ordena responder a esta petición respondiendo a Michael Shao, el abogado de Juan Morales Ruiz, para el 30 de agosto de 2025.

Si no respondes por el 30 de agosto de 2025, se dictará una orden de desistimiento en tu contra. La orden nombrará a Juan Morales Ruiz como la guardiana de Juan Morales Perez. Además, se dictará que tú has abandonado a Juan y que no está en el mejor interés de Juan regresar a México.



Michael Shao, BPR #040622

Staff Attorney

Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, Office of Immigration Services

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Attorney for the Petitioner

IN THE JUVENILE COURT FOR ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

In re Juan Morales Perez,
a minor child,

Minor.

Juan Morales Ruiz,

Petitioner.

No.

J-39003/ 25-0658

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FILED AC JUVENILE COURT

SWORN PETITION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN

Juan Morales Ruiz (the "Petitioner"), by and through counsel and pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 34-2-101 *et seq.*, petitions this Court for an Order appointing him as the guardian of Juan Morales Perez (the "Minor"). If this Court grants the requested guardianship to protect the health and safety of the Minor, the Order will also be used for the secondary purpose of petitioning U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to grant the Minor Special Immigrant Juvenile status, as defined in 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(27)(J). In support of this Petition, the Petitioner states as follows:

THE PARTIES

1. The Minor was born on November 18, 2007, in Puerto Escondido, Mexico. As of the date of this Petition, the Minor is 17 years old and is not married. The Minor's current residential and mailing address is 108 King Street, TN, 37716.
2. The Petitioner, the Minor's biological father, was born on August 12, 1979, in Oaxaca, Mexico. As of the date of this Petition, the Petitioner is 45 years old. The

Petitioner's current residential and mailing address is 108 King Street, Clinton, TN, 37716. The Petitioner is the proposed guardian for purposes of this Petition.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated sections 16-10-101 and 34-2-101.
4. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 34-2-101.
5. The Petitioner, as a person with knowledge of the circumstances necessitating the appointment of a guardian, has standing to bring this Petition pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 34-2-102.

FACTS

6. The Minor was born in Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca, Mexico, on November 18, 2007.
7. The Minor's birth certificate includes the names of both of the Minor's biological parents, the Petitioner, Juan Morales Ruiz and Lucia Perez Morales. A true and exact copy of the Minor's birth certificate, along with a verified translation, is attached as Exhibit A.
8. Following his birth, the Minor resided with both of his biological parents in Oaxaca, Mexico.
9. In Mexico, it became increasingly dangerous for the Minor due to increasing crime and violence in the surrounding area.

10. Moreover, Mexico is a country that has numerous complaints of human rights issues, arbitrary imprisonment and killings, cruel and tortuous punishments, and government corruption. *See U.S. Dep't of State, Bureau of Democracy, H.R. and Lab., Mexico 2022 Human Rights Report (2022).*
11. As a result, in 2021, the Petitioner migrated to the United States in search of better opportunities, leaving the Minor with his biological mother.
12. After crossing the Mexican/ American Border, Petitioner arrived in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he resided for one year before moving to Clinton, Tennessee. While the Petitioner was in America, he talked to the Minor on the phone daily, and frequently sent money back to Mexico to help support the Minor.
13. Once the Petitioner migrated to the United States, it became increasingly more difficult for the Minor to attend school, and he lacked adequate structure and a capable caregiver.
14. Moreover, a member of a local gang accosted the Minor, and the Minor fled the country to avoid being a victim of a violent crime.
15. As a result, in November 2024, the Minor left his home in Mexico to migrate to the United States. The Minor traveled to the Mexican/ American border through a network of family and friends to the United States.
16. The Minor crossed the Mexican/ American border around November 24, 2024, and surrendered to immigration officials. The Minor was held in a facility operated by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee

Resettlement, Division of Unaccompanied Children Operations and released to the custody of the Petitioner on December 24, 2024.

17. Since arriving in the United States, the Minor has had little contact with his biological mother. Moreover, the Minor has not physically seen or received any financial support from his biological mother since he left Mexico.
18. The Minor has resided with the Petitioner since entering the United States. The Petitioner has enrolled him in school and made sure he attends classes appropriately. The Minor has adjusted very well to life in the United States.
19. The Minor currently attends Anderson County High School, and he enjoys his classes.
20. In the United States, the Minor is in a safe environment where he has access to better education, healthcare, and opportunities.
21. If the Minor returned to Mexico, he would be at a significantly high risk of being a victim of violent crime.

RELEVANT LAW

22. Congress created the Special Immigrant Juvenile classification to provide immigration relief to undocumented children who have suffered abuse, neglect, or abandonment. *See In re Domingo C.L.*, No. M2016-02383-COA-R3-JV, 2017 WL 3769419, at *2 (Tenn. Ct. App. Aug. 30, 2017).
23. For a minor to obtain the Special Immigrant Juvenile classification, a state court must make factual findings about the abuse, neglect, or abandonment of the

minor; the viability of the minor's reunification with family members in his country of origin; and the best interests of the minor. *Id.* at *3.

24. These factual findings are often made through guardianship proceedings. *Id.*

25. The Tennessee guardianship statute provides:

Subject to the court's determination of what is in the best interests of the minor, the court shall consider the following persons in the order listed for appointment of the guardian:

- (1) The **parent** or parents of the minor;
- (2) The person or persons designated by the parent or parents in a will or other written document;
- (3) Adult siblings of the minor;
- (4) Closest relative or relatives of the minor; and
- (5) Other person or persons.

Tenn. Code Ann. § 34-2-103.

26. The primary role of the court in a guardianship proceeding is to determine what is in the best interests of the minor. *In re Danelly C.*, No. M2016-02054-COA-R3-JV, 2017 WL 5901022, at *6 (Tenn. Ct. App. Nov. 29, 2017). "[I]t is not the role of [the] court to consider the purpose or motivation of the minor applicant or a parent, matters of immigration policy, or whether the minor is a 'worthy candidate' for [Special Immigrant Juvenile] status." *Id.* at *7.

THE PETITION

27. In consideration of the facts set forth above, and for the secondary purpose of requesting Special Immigrant Juvenile status pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(27)(J) with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Minor needs to be appointed

a guardian. This Court qualifies as a “juvenile court” as that term is defined in 8 C.F.R. § 204.11(a).

28. The Petitioner is the Minor’s biological father and is the proposed guardian for purposes of this Petition.

29. The Minor is currently in the Petitioner’s custody pursuant to the Verification of Release provided by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Division of Children Services. The Verification of Release is attached as Exhibit B.

30. The names, relationships, and addresses of the Minor’s closest relatives are as follows: (1) the Petitioner, Juan Morales Ruiz, the Minor’s biological father, currently residing in Clinton, Tennessee; and (2) Lucia Perez Morales the Minor’s biological mother, last known to be residing in Oaxaca, Mexico.

31. The Minor is unmarried and does not own any real or personal property.

32. The Minor lacks a willing and able caregiver in Mexico. Moreover, the dangerous conditions and high rate of violent crime in Mexico would make it dangerous for the Minor to live there. As a result, it is not in the Minor’s best interest to return to Mexico.

33. The Minor lives in a loving and stable home in the United States where he has a good relationship with the Petitioner. Moreover, the Minor has access to better education, healthcare, and opportunities. As a result, it is in the Minor’s best interest to remain in the United States.

34. The Petitioner requests the following areas of protection and assistance be included in the Court’s Order of Appointment: (1) all matters associated with the

medical treatment of the Minor; (2) all matters associated with the education of the Minor; and (3) all matters associated with the housing, care, and custody of the Minor.

35. The Petitioner further requests that the following findings be made by the Court and included in the Court's Order of Appointment: (1) that the Minor is legally placed by this Court with the Petitioner, as guardian, pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 34-1-101 *et seq.*; (2) that reunification of the Minor with her biological mother is not viable by virtue the mother's abandonment of the Minor, as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated section 36-1-102(1)(A)(i); and (3) that it is not in the Minor's best interest to be returned to her parents' previous country of nationality and residence, Guatemala.

WHEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing, the Petitioner respectfully requests:

- (a) That process issue as necessary upon the Minor;
- (b) That this Court set a date and time for the hearing of this Petition;
- (c) That this Court grant the Petition and appoint the Petitioner as the guardian of the Minor with such power and authority as this Court deems appropriate; and
- (d) That this Court grant any other relief to which the Petitioner may be entitled.

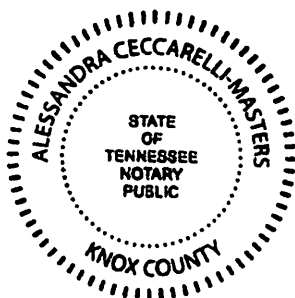
VERIFICATION

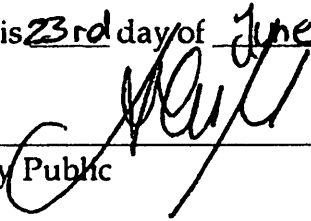
I, Juan Morales Ruiz, after being duly sworn in accordance with law, state that the foregoing Sworn Petition was translated to me in Spanish, and that to the best of my knowledge, all statements and factual allegations in the Petition are true and correct.



Juan Morales Ruiz

Subscribed, sworn to, and acknowledged before me this 23rd day of June, 2025



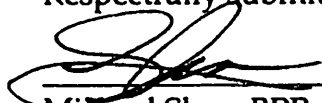


Notary Public

My commission expires

07/07/27

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Shao', is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Shao, BPR #040622

Staff Attorney

Catholic Charities of East Tennessee

Office of Immigration Services

119 Dameron Ave

Knoxville, Tennessee 37917

Telephone: 865-770-5734

mshao@ccetn.org

Attorney for the Petitioner

Exhibit A

Name:	JUAN	MORALES PEREZ	Sex: MALE	
	(First)	(Middle)	(Paternal/Maternal)	
Date of Birth:	NOVEMBER	18	2007	
	(Month)	(Day)	(Year)	
Place of Birth:	PUERTO ESCONDIDO, SAN PEDRO MIXTEPEC	JUQUILAW	OAXACA	MEXICO
	(Place)	(District)	(State)	(Country)
Father's Name:	JUAN MORALES RUIZ	NATIONALITY:	MEXICAN	
Mother's Name:	LUCIA PEREZ MORALES	NATIONALITY:	MEXICAN	
Date Birth was Registered:	23/04/2008			
Date Certificate was issued:	15/08/2017			
Place Issued:	PUERTO ESCONDIDO, SAN PEDRO MIXTEPEC, JUQUILA, OAXACA			
Custodian of Record:	MARIANO GUADALUPE DE LE CRUZ SOLANO			
Certified Copy:	YES			

I, Alejandra Osorio, swear that I am fluent in the Spanish and English languages: I am competent to translate from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English; I hereby certify that this translation is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge ability and belief.

ALEJANDRA OSORIO
Catholic Charities of East TN
Office of Immigrant Services
119 Dameron Ave
Knoxville TN 37917

FOLIO
1A20 0881084



ESTADOS UNIDOS MEXICANOS
EN NOMBRE DEL ESTADO LIBRE Y SOBERANO DE OAXACA

Y COMO OFICIAL DEL REGISTRO CIVIL,
CERTIFICO Y HAGO SABER QUE A LA FOJA NÚMERO 1 DEL REGISTRO CIVIL,
LIBRO NÚMERO 1 DE NACIMIENTOS DEL REGISTRO CIVIL
A MI CARGO, SE ENCUENTRAN ASENTADOS LOS DATOS SIGUIENTES:

OFICIALIA: 1 No. DE ACTA: 681 20318010800581D
FECHA DE REGISTRO: 23/4/2008 VEINTITRÉS DE ABRIL DE DOS MIL OCHO CURP

LUGAR DE REGISTRO: PUERTO ESCONDIDO, SAN PEDRO MIXTEPEC, JUQUILA, OAXACA

REGISTRADO

NOMBRE: JUAN MORALES PÉREZ

FECHA DE NACIMIENTO: 18/11/2007 DIECIOCHO DE NOVIEMBRE DE DOS MIL SIETE

LUGAR DE NACIMIENTO: PUERTO ESCONDIDO, SAN PEDRO MIXTEPEC, JUQUILA, OAXACA

HORA: 14:55 PRESENTADO: VIVO SEXO: MASCULINO CO'UPARECIO: AMBOS PROGENITORES

PADRES

NOMBRE: JUAN MORALES RUÍZ

NACIONALIDAD: MEXICANA EDAD: 28 AÑOS

NOMBRE: LUCIA PÉREZ MORALES

NACIONALIDAD: MEXICANA EDAD: 30 AÑOS

PERSONA DISTINTA DE LOS PADRES QUE PRESENTA AL REGISTRADO

NOMBRE: PARENTESCO: EDAD: AÑOS

EL ORIGINAL DE LA PRESENTE CERTIFICACIÓN TIENE AL MARGEN LAS SIGUIENTES ANOTACIONES:

SIN ANOTACIONES MARGINALES.

Se extiende esta certificación en cumplimiento del artículo 63 del Código Civil vigente en el Estado

OAXACA DE JUÁREZ, CENTRO. OAXACA
A 18 DE AGOSTO DEL 2017
O. OFICIAL DEL REGISTRO CIVIL, DOY FE

 DE LA CRUZ SOLANO
NOMBRE Y FIRMA

SELLO DE LA OFICIALIA DEL REGISTRO CIVIL	
OFICIAL DEL REGISTRO CIVIL DECANA OFICIALIA TITULAR	
ELABORÓ: <u> </u>	
MODIFICÓ: <u> </u>	
CÓPIA: <u> </u>	

5774

NOTAR QUE LAS ANOTACIONES EN LA PRESENTE / SON FUENTES RESPUESTAS DE LA OFICIALIA

Exhibit B



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)
OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT (ORR)
DIVISION OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN OPERATIONS (DUCO)
VERIFICATION OF RELEASE

VERIFICATION OF RELEASE

Name:	Juan Morales Perez	Aliases (if any):	
Date of Birth:	11/18/2007	A#:	221179083
Country of Birth:	Mexico	Eye Color:	Brown
Primary Language:	Spanish		

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has released the above named minor from Federal custody pursuant to section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and section 235 of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to the care of:



Name of Sponsor:	Juan Morales Ruiz		
Address:	108 King St		
City:	Clinton		
State:	TN	Zip Code:	37716
Primary Phone#:	8659639311		
Relationship to Child:	Father		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE SPONSOR CARE AGREEMENT

The above-named sponsor has agreed to the provisions set forth in the Sponsor Care Agreement, pertaining to the minor's care, safety, and well-being, and the sponsor's responsibility for ensuring the minor's presence at all future proceedings before the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice/Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). In agreeing to these provisions, the sponsor holds authority to consent to medical and mental health care on behalf of the child.

ORR Care Provider Name:	Heartland Intl Childrens RC
Discharge Date:	12/24/2024

THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: The purpose of this information collection is to provide unaccompanied children and their sponsors with official documentation showing that ORR released the child into the sponsor's care and custody. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.17 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a mandatory collection of information (Homeland Security Act, 6 U.S.C. 279). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this information collection is 0970-0552. If you have any comments on this collection of information please contact UCPolicy@acf.hhs.gov.