



Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans

January 22, 2010

Dear International Adoption Agency/Provider,

In response to the devastating earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in coordination with the U.S. Department of State recently announced a humanitarian parolee policy for orphaned children from Haiti in the process of being adopted by families in the U.S. This policy allows children which meet specific criteria to enter the country. More detailed information on the humanitarian parole policy and process is available at <http://www.dhs.gov/> and <http://www.uscis.gov>.

Because of the crisis nature of the situation in Haiti, it is not possible to guarantee (or it is highly unlikely) that all children coming as humanitarian parolees had a medical exam prior to departure from Haiti. Therefore it is very important that all children entering the United States as humanitarian parolees undergo a medical screening soon after arrival. The medical screening should include testing for infectious diseases as well as general health concerns. There is national guidance specifically for the domestic medical screening of orphaned children from Haiti developed by the Centers for Disease Control which health providers can follow. These guidelines along with the Minnesota state protocol which outlines the components of the domestic health screening offered to newly arrived refugees and parolees are available at www.health.state.mn.us/refugee.

The Minnesota Department of Health's Refugee Health Program oversees the domestic health screening which is offered to newly arrived refugees and parolees to the state. If your agency is working with families in the process of adopting a child from Haiti, we would strongly encourage families or health care providers to contact the MDH Refugee Health Program at 651-201-5414. Our program can help families find clinics with experience in doing medical screening exams for newly arrived refugees and parolees or offer clinical screening guidance to a family physician. If you or your agency has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann O'Fallon", is positioned above the typed name.

Ann O'Fallon
Refugee Health Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Health
ann.ofallon@state.mn.us
651-201-5414

Infectious Disease, Epidemiology, and Control • Immunization, Tuberculosis, and International Health
625 Robert St. N. • PO Box 64975 • St. Paul, MN 55164-0975 • (651) 201-5414

www.health.state.mn.us

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