

Application for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad

Section 84 Adoption and Children Act 2002

Name of court	
Case no./Serial no.	
Date received by the court	
Date issued	

Notes to applicants

- Do not use this form if you intend to apply to a court in England and Wales for an adoption order including a Convention adoption order.
- Before filling in this form, please read the guidance notes on completing the form.
- Please complete every Part. If you are not sure of the answer to any question, or you do not think that it applies to you, please say so.
- If there is not enough room on the form for your reply, you may continue on a separate sheet. Please put the child's full name, the number of the Part and the paragraph reference at the head of the continuation sheet.
- Please use black ink when filling in the form.

I/We the undersigned _____
(and _____)
intend to adopt _____

See Note 1

under the law of a country or territory outside the British Islands and therefore want to be given parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad and give the following details in support of my/our application.

I/We want my/our identity to be kept confidential and wish to apply for a serial number

Yes No

See Note 2

Part 1 About you

First applicant

a) Title

Mr Mrs Miss

Ms Other _____

b) My name is

First name(s) in full

Last name

Second applicant

a) Title

Mr Mrs Miss

Ms Other _____

b) My name is

First name(s) in full

Last name

See Note 3

c) My address is (including postcode)

c) My address is (including postcode)

d) My telephone number is

d) My telephone number is

e) My date of birth is

e) My date of birth is

f) My nationality is

f) My nationality is

g) My occupation is

g) My occupation is

See Note 4

h) I am

Male

Female

h) I am

Male

Female

i) My relationship to the child is

i) My relationship to the child is

See Note 5

j) My/Our solicitor in these proceedings is

Name of solicitor			
Name of firm			
Address (including postcode)			
Telephone no.		Fax no.	
DX no.			
E-mail address			

Domicile and residence

See Note 6

k) I am not /Neither of us is domiciled in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

and

I have not /Neither of us has been habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for a period of at least one year, ending with the date of this application.

Status

If you are applying for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad as a couple, please go straight to **Part 2 About the Child**. Paragraphs (l) to (r) do not apply to you

If you are applying to adopt for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad alone, please tick the box at (l) to (r) below that applies to your circumstances. **If you have ticked (l), (m), (q) or (r), please give the additional information asked for.**

- l) I am the partner of the child's
 Father Mother

If you have ticked box (l), please go straight to Part 2 About the Child. Paragraphs (m) to (r) do not apply to you.

See Note 7

- m) I am the partner (not the spouse or civil partner) of a person who is not the child's parent and I am applying alone for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad because:

If you have ticked box (m), please go straight to Part 2 About the Child. Paragraphs (n) to (r) do not apply to you.

See Note 8

(please give reasons below, continuing on a separate sheet if necessary)

- n) I am not married/I do not have a civil partner
or

See Note 9

- o) I am divorced/my civil partnership has been dissolved
or

See Note 9

- p) I am a widow/a widower/a surviving civil partner
or

See Note 9

- q) I am married/I have a civil partner, and I can satisfy the court that:

See Note 10

- my husband/wife/civil partner cannot be found
or

- I have separated from my husband/wife/civil partner, we are living apart and the separation is likely to be permanent
or

- my husband/wife/civil partner is not capable of making an application due to ill-health

or

- r) I am applying alone for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad in respect of my own child and I can satisfy the court that

See Note 11

- the other natural parent has died
or

- the other natural parent cannot be found
or

- by virtue of section 28 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, there is no other parent
or

- the other natural parent's exclusion from this application is justified
(please give reasons below)

Part 2 About the child

a) The child is a

Boy Girl

b) The child was born on

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

and is the person to whom the attached certified copy of the entry in the Register of Live Births/Register of Adopted Children relates

or To the best of my/our knowledge the child was born on or about

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

in (give place and country of birth)

--

See Note 12

c) The child's nationality is

--

d) I/we confirm that the child is not and has never been married or a civil partner

Yes No

See Note 13

e) The child has had his/her home with me/us continuously since

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

f) The child was placed with me/us for adoption by an adoption agency

Yes (If you ticked this box, please complete paragraphs (g) and (h) and then go straight to paragraph (j). Paragraph (i) does not apply to you.)

No (If you ticked this box, please go straight to paragraph (i). Paragraphs (g) and (h) do not apply to you.)

g) The child was placed with me/us for adoption on

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 by

Name of adoption agency	
Address (including post code)	

Name of your contact in the agency	
Telephone no.	

h) No other adoption agency has been involved in placing the child

or

The following adoption agency has also been involved in placing the child

Name of adoption agency	
Address (including post code)	

Name of your contact in the agency	
Telephone no.	

- i) I/we have notified in writing my/our local authority of my/our intention to apply for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad (give details)

See Note 14

Name of local authority	
Address (including post code)	
Date notified	
Name of your contact in the local authority	
Telephone no.	

- j) No placement order or freeing order has been made in respect of the child

See Note 15

or

- The following placement order/freeing order has been made in respect of the child:

Name of court	
Case number	
Type of order	
Date of order	

Care

- k) No local authority or voluntary organisation has parental responsibility for the child

or

- The following local authority/voluntary organisation has parental responsibility for the child:

Name of local authority or voluntary organisation	
Address (including post code)	
Name of your contact in the authority/organisation	
Telephone no.	

Maintenance

- l) No maintenance order/agreement or award of child support maintenance under the Child Support Act 1991 has been made in respect of the child

See Note 16

or

- The following maintenance order/agreement/award of child support maintenance has been made

Person liable to pay maintenance	
Address (including post code)	
Court and date of order	
Date of maintenance agreement/child support maintenance award	

About other orders or proceedings that affect the child

m) To the best of my/our knowledge, no proceedings relating to the child (other than any maintenance order as given above) have been completed or commenced in any court

◀ See Note 17

or

The following proceedings relating to the child have been completed/commenced (in addition to any maintenance order given above)

Type of order made (or applied for)	Date of order (or date of next hearing)	Name of court	Case number (or serial number)

Cases concerning a related child

n) To the best of my knowledge, no proceedings relating to a full, half or step brother or sister of the child have been completed or commenced in any court

or

The following proceedings relating to a full, half or step brother or sister of the child have been completed/commenced (please give details below and, if you were a party to any proceedings that have been completed, attach a copy of the final order)

Relationship to child (eg. sister, half-brother)	Type of order made (or applied for)	Date of order (or date of next hearing)	Name of court	Case number (or serial number)

Part 3 About the child's parents or guardian

The child's mother

a) The name of the child's mother is

First name(s) in full

Last name

b) Her address is (if deceased, please write 'Deceased' in the address box)

c) Her nationality is

The child's father

d) The name of the child's father is

First name(s) in full

Last name

e) His address is (if deceased, please write 'Deceased' in the address box)

f) His nationality is

g) Does he have parental responsibility for the child?

Yes No

If No, does he intend to apply for an order under section 4(1)(c) of the Children Act 1989 (a parental responsibility order) or a residence or contact order in respect of the child?

Yes No

See Note 18

The child's guardian

h) The name of the child's guardian is

First name(s) in full

Last name

i) His/Her address is

See Note 20

Parent/guardian consent to adoption

See Note 21

See Note 22

Note: You do not need to complete paragraph (j) if

- the child you intend to take abroad for adoption is the subject of a current placement order, the adoption agency has placed the child with you, and no parent/guardian of the child opposes the making of an order for parental responsibility adoption abroad;

or

- the child you intend to take abroad for adoption is the subject of a current freeing order.

Instead, go straight to Part 4 General. You should give the details of the placement order or freeing order in Part 2 About the Child above. Otherwise, please tick the box that applies to your circumstances and give any further information requested.

- j) The child's parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have consented to the making of an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad

or

- The child was placed with me/us for adoption by an adoption agency with the consent of each parent/guardian (and the mother's consent was given when the child was at least 6 weeks old), and no parent/guardian opposes the making of an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad

or

- The following parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child has/have not consented to the making of an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad:
(give name(s) below)

and I/we ask the court to dispense with his/her/their consent on the following grounds:
(please tick the grounds that apply)

- he/she/they cannot be found
- he/she is/they are incapable of giving consent
- the welfare of the child requires it.

You must attach a brief statement of facts (and two copies of the statement) setting out a summary of the history of the case and any other facts to satisfy the court that the grounds for your request apply.

IMPORTANT: The court will send a copy of your statement of facts to each parent or guardian of the child. If you intend to ask the court to keep your identity confidential, you should make sure that the statement of facts does not include any information that could identify you, where you live, or where the child goes to school or nursery.

Part 4 General

Child's name on making of the order

See Note 23

If the order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad is made,
I/We want the child to be known as

First name(s) in full

Last name

Health reports

See Note 24

Separate reports on my/our health and the
health of the child made by a registered
medical practitioner on (give date(s))

are attached to this application.

Declarations

I/We have not received or given payment or reward in respect of the proposed adoption
(except as follows:) (give details below)

To the best of my/our knowledge, only the person(s) or organisation(s) named in Part 2 of
this application have taken part in the arrangements for the child's adoption.

Part 5 Statement of truth

I believe that the facts stated in this
application are true.

I believe that the facts stated in this
application are true.

Signature of first applicant

Signature of second applicant

Print full name

Print full name

Signed

Signed

Date

Date

If you attend the court for a hearing

1. Do you/either of you have a disability for which you require special assistance or special facilities?

See Note 25

Yes No

If Yes, please say what your needs are below
(the court staff will get in touch with you about your requirements)

2. Do you/either of you want to use the services of an interpreter?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify which language
(court staff will get in touch with you about your requirements)

3. Are there any dates on which you know you will not be able to attend the court, or any particular dates that would especially suit you? If so, please give details below

Unavailable dates	Preferred dates

(Please note that, although the court will try to fit in with your preferences, it may not be always be possible to do so)

What to do now

Once you have completed and signed this form, you should take or send the form **and three copies** to the court, together with the court fee* and the following documents:

- a certified copy of the full entry in the Register of Live Births that relates to the child or, where the child has been adopted, a certified copy of the entry in the Adopted Children Register;
- if you are asking the court to dispense with the consent of any parent or guardian, a brief statement of the facts relied on in support of the request **and two copies of the statement**;
- a copy of any placement order or freeing order relating to the child;
- if you were a party to the proceedings, a copy of any other final order relating to the child that has effect and if possible, a copy of any maintenance agreement or maintenance award relating to the child;
- if you were a party to the proceedings, a copy of any final order relating to a full, half or step brother or sister of the child that has effect;
- reports by a registered medical practitioner on the health of the child and the applicant(s) covering the matters specified in the Practice Direction 'Reports by a registered medical practitioner ("health reports")', **and two copies** of the reports.
Note: you do not have to supply health reports if:
 - the child was placed with you for adoption by an adoption agency, or
 - he/she is your child, or the child of the other applicant, or
 - you are applying alone as the partner (including the husband, wife or civil partner) of the child's mother or father;
- where a parent of the child has died, a certified copy of the entry in the Register of Deaths;
- if you are submitting evidence of marriage or civil partnership, a certified copy of the entry in the Register of Marriages or the Register of Civil Partnerships;
- where your husband, wife or civil partner has died, a certified copy of the entry in the Register of Deaths;
- a copy of any decree absolute of divorce or decree of nullity of your marriage;
- in relation to a civil partnership, a copy of any dissolution order or nullity order of your civil partnership;
- any documentary evidence supporting the reasons why you are applying to for parental responsibility prior to adopting the child abroad without your husband, wife or civil partner, such as a decree of judicial separation;
- if your name as entered on the application form is different from the name shown on any evidence of marriage or civil partnership you are sending with your application, any documentary evidence to explain the difference.

*If you are not sure about the court fee payable for your application, or you think that you may be exempt from paying all or part of the fee, you should contact the court for information.

Application for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad (Form A61)

Notes on completing the form

Important

Do not use this form if the child you intend to take abroad for adoption is habitually resident outside the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

In these notes, any reference to a birth certificate, death certificate, marriage certificate or certificate of civil partnership means a certified copy of the entry in the Register of Live Births, the Register of Deaths, the Register of Marriages or the Register of Civil Partnerships, as appropriate. A photocopy is not acceptable. The birth certificate you send to the court for the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption must be a certified copy of the full entry in the Register of Live Births.

If you are attaching any order of the High Court or a county court to your application, it must be a sealed copy of the order (that is, a copy that has been stamped with the seal of the court). If you are attaching an order made by a magistrates' court, it must be a certified copy (a copy certified by the court officer to be a true copy of the original order), or a copy that bears the stamp of the originating court. An order issued by any other authority must be properly authenticated by that authority. If you are in any doubt about what is needed, please contact the court for assistance.

Take or send the completed application form, **and three copies**, to the court, together with the court fee and any documents you are attaching in support of your application. If you are not sure about the court fee payable for your application, or you think that you may be exempt from paying all or part of the fee, you should contact the court for information.

If you are attaching a statement of facts to your application (see note 22 below), please supply **two additional copies of the statement**. If you are attaching health reports (see note 24 below), please supply **two additional copies of the reports**.

Notes on the application form

Note 1

Enter the name of the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption, surname last. You must enter the full first name(s) and the surname of the child exactly as they are shown on the birth certificate (or, if the child has previously been adopted, the certified copy of the entry in the Adopted Children Register) you are sending with your application (see note 12 below).

Note 2

If you do not want your identity to be made known to the parents or guardians of the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption, the court will issue you with a serial number. Any documents sent to the parents/guardians will show the serial number, not your personal details. If you are required to attend the same court hearing, the court will make arrangements to ensure that your identity is protected.

Part 1 About you

Note 3

If the name you have entered is different from your name as it is shown on any evidence of marriage or civil partnership you are sending with your application form (for example, because you have changed your name by deed), please attach a continuation sheet explaining the reason for the difference, and a copy of any supporting documents (such as the deed).

Note 4

The occupation you give here will appear on the order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad. It is important that you enter the full title of your occupation (or former occupation if you are retired), for example, 'secondary school teacher' or 'ballet teacher', not 'teacher'; 'self-employed carpenter', not 'self-employed'; 'retired police officer', not 'retired'. Abbreviations or general descriptions such as 'self-employed', 'part-time worker', or 'retired', cannot be accepted. Please note also that it is not sufficient to enter that you are an 'employee' or 'worker' with any particular company, you must give your occupation. If you are unemployed or currently unable to work because of disability, you should give your last occupation. If you are a member of HM Forces, you should give your rank and/or profession.

Note 5

Enter your relationship to the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption, for example, step-parent, foster parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, other relative (please specify). If you do not currently have any relationship to the child, other than as prospective adopter, please enter 'none'.

Note 6

An order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad cannot be made if

- you are (in the case of two applicants, at least one of you is) domiciled in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man; or
- you (in the case of two applicants, both of you) have been habitually resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for a period of at least one year, ending with the date of your application.

The United Kingdom means England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

'Domicile' is normally taken to mean the place where you have your permanent home. 'Habitual residence' is normally taken to refer to usual, or customary, residence in a particular place. If you are in any doubt as to whether you meet these conditions, you should seek legal advice.

Note 7

If you are applying alone for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad and you are the partner (including husband, wife or civil partner) of the child's father or mother, you should complete paragraph (l) and then go straight to Part 2 About the Child. Paragraphs (m) to (r) do not apply to you.

Note 8

If you are applying for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad alone and you are the partner (but not the husband, wife or civil partner) of a person who is not the parent of the child you intend to take abroad for adoption, you should complete paragraph (m). Please give your reasons for applying alone. If there is not enough room for your reply, you may continue on a separate sheet. You should then go straight to Part 2 About the Child. Paragraphs (n) to (r) do not apply to you.

Note 9

If you are applying for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad alone and

- you have never been married/ had a civil partner, please complete paragraph (n);
- you are divorced, or your civil partnership has been dissolved, please complete paragraph (o) and attach a sealed copy of the Decree Absolute or the Dissolution Order to your application;
- you are a widow or widower or a surviving civil partner, please complete paragraph (p) and attach the death certificate of your deceased husband, wife or civil partner to your application.

Note 10

If you are applying alone for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad and you are married or you have a civil partner, you will need to satisfy the court that:

- your husband/wife or civil partner cannot be found, or
- you have separated from your husband/wife or civil partner, you are living apart, and the separation is likely to be permanent, or
- your husband/wife or civil partner is incapable of making an application due to physical or mental ill-health.

You must show on the application form which of these three grounds applies in your case by ticking the appropriate box.

You should attach your marriage certificate (or other evidence of marriage) or certificate of civil partnership (or other evidence of civil partnership) to your application, together with any other documentary evidence on which you propose to rely, such as a decree of official separation, or medical evidence of incapacity. You should also supply the name and address (if known) of your husband/wife or civil partner.

Note 11

If you are applying alone for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad in respect of your own child you will need to satisfy the court that

- the other natural parent has died, or
- the other natural parent cannot be found, or
- by virtue of section 28 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990, there is no other parent, or
- there is some other reason (which you must set out on your application form) justifying the other parent's exclusion from your application.

You must show on the application form which of these grounds applies in your case by ticking the appropriate box.

You should attach to your application any documentary evidence on which you propose to rely, such as the death certificate.

Part 2 About the child

Note 12

If the child has previously been adopted, a certified copy of the entry in the Adopted Children Register should be attached and not a certified copy of the full entry in the Register of Live Births. Where you are unable to attach a certificate, enter the place (including the country) of the child's birth, if known.

No application may be made in respect of a person who is aged 18 or more at the time of the application.

Note 13

The court cannot make an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad in relation to any person who is or has been married, or any person who is or has been a civil partner.

Note 14

If the child you intend to take abroad for adoption was not placed with you for adoption by an adoption agency, you must notify in writing the local authority for the area in which you live of your intention to apply for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad. You must give the local authority notice of your intention not more than 2 years, and not less than 3 months, before the date of your application to the court.

Note 15

Give details of the name of the court that made the placement or freeing order, the nature of the order, the case number and the date the order was made.

You should attach a copy of the court order to your application.

Note 16

If some person or body is liable to pay maintenance for the child under a court order, or a maintenance agreement or child support maintenance awarded under the Child Support Act 1991, give the name and address of the person or body liable to pay. In the case of a maintenance order, give the name of the court and the date the order was made; otherwise, give the date of the maintenance agreement or child support maintenance award.

If possible, you should attach a copy of any maintenance order or a copy of the maintenance agreement or maintenance award to your application.

Note 17

If there are earlier, or current, court proceedings relating to the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption (for example, proceedings for a care order, a contact order, a parental responsibility order or a residence order), give the name of the court, the nature of the proceedings and the date and effect of any order made, or the date of the next hearing if proceedings are current. You do not need to repeat the details of any placement order, freeing order, or maintenance order or agreement you have already given.

If you were a party to any proceedings that have been completed, you should attach a copy of the final order to your application.

Important: if you have previously applied for an adoption order in respect of the same child and the order was refused, you will need to satisfy the court that there has been a change of circumstances since you last applied, or that there is some other reason why the court should hear your current application. Please set out your reasons for making this application on a separate sheet, explaining why you think the application should be heard. Please put the child's full name, the number of the Part and the paragraph reference at the head of the sheet and attach it to your application form.

Part 3 About the child's parent(s) or guardian

Note 18

If the child has previously been adopted, give the names of his/her adoptive parents, not those of his/her natural parents.

Note 19

If the child's parents were not married to each other at the time of his/her birth, the child's father may have parental responsibility

- because he and the child's mother have married since the child was born;
- because he has a parental responsibility agreement with the mother, or has been granted a parental responsibility order, or
- because he registered the child's birth jointly with the child's mother (since 1 December 2003).

Give details of any court order or agreement in respect of parental responsibility in paragraph (m) of Part 2 About the Child.

Note 20

If the child has no guardian, enter 'not applicable'. Otherwise, enter the details of any person appointed to be the child's guardian by deed or will or otherwise in writing in accordance with section 5(5) of the Children Act 1989, or by an order made under section 5(1) or 14A of that Act. If the child has more than one guardian, please give the name and address of any other guardian(s) on a separate sheet, putting the child's full name, the number of the Part and the paragraph reference at the head of the sheet.

Note 21

If the child you are intending to adopt abroad is already the subject of a current placement order, the adoption agency has placed the child with you and no parent or guardian opposes the making of the order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad, you do not need to ask the court to dispense with the consent of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) to your application. You do not have to complete paragraph (j), but please ensure that you have entered the details of the placement order in Part 2, About the Child.

If the child you are intending to take abroad for adoption is already the subject of a current freeing order, you do not need to ask the court to dispense with the consent of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) to your application. You do not have to complete paragraph (j), but please ensure that you have entered the details of the freeing order in Part 2, About the Child.

You do not need to ask the court to dispense with the consent of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) to your application if:

- the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) has/have consented to the making of an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad, or
- the child was placed with you for adoption by an adoption agency with the consent of each parent/guardian (and the mother's consent was given when the child was at least 6 weeks old), and no parent/guardian opposes the making of an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad.

Please complete paragraph (j) showing which of these conditions applies in your case.

If the child's father does not have parental responsibility for the child, you do not need his consent to your application for an order for parental responsibility prior to adoption abroad.

Note 22

If you are asking the court to dispense with the consent of any parent or guardian, the court can only dispense with that person's consent if it is satisfied that:

- he or she cannot be found, or
- he or she is incapable of giving consent; or
- the welfare of the child requires it.

You must complete paragraph (j) indicating which of these three grounds applies to your request. The court will also require from you a brief statement setting out a summary of the history of the case and any other facts to satisfy the court that the grounds for your request apply. This statement is known as a 'statement of facts'. If a parent cannot be found, your statement of facts should give details of the steps taken to trace him/her. The statement of facts must be signed by your solicitor, or by you (both of you) if you do not have a solicitor.

You should attach your statement of facts, **and two copies of the statement**, to your application form. You should also attach any documents you are submitting in support of your statement.

Important: The court will send a copy of your statement of facts to each parent or guardian of the child. If you intend to ask the court to keep your identity confidential, you should make certain that the statement of facts does not include any information that could identify you, where you live, or where the child goes to school or nursery.

Part 4 General

Note 23

Please enter the name by which you want the child to be known following the adoption abroad.

Note 24

You do not need to send a report on your health (or the health of the other applicant, if there is one) or the health of the child with your application if:

- the child was placed with you for adoption by an adoption agency, or
- he/she is your child, or the child of the other applicant, or
- you are applying alone as the partner (including the husband, wife or civil partner) of the child's mother or father.

In any other case you must attach separate health reports in respect of each applicant and the child, **and two copies of the reports**. The health reports should cover the matters set out in the Practice Direction 'Reports by a registered medical practitioner ("health reports")', and must have been made no more than three months before the date of your application for an adoption order.

Special assistance or facilities for disability if you attend the court

Note 25

If you/either of you need special assistance or special facilities for a disability or impairment, please set out your requirements in full. The court staff will need to know, for example, whether you want documents to be supplied in an alternative format, such as Braille or large print. They will also need to know about any specific requirements you may have on the day of the hearing, such as wheelchair access, a hearing loop, or a sign language interpreter.

The court staff will get in touch with you about your requirements. It is important that you make the court aware of all your needs. If you do not, the result may be that the hearing has to be adjourned.