

# Shutts & Bowen Attorneys Return Mexican Child in Hague Convention Child Abduction Case

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Three Shutts & Bowen attorneys, Fort Lauderdale partner Rachel H. LeBlanc and Miami associates Vivian Bauza and Marcela Lozano, have secured a victory in a pro bono abduction case reuniting a Mexican child with his Mexican father.

The child, who was returned to Mexico last month, had been abducted by his Cuban mother and brought to Miami. The legal team also obtained an agreed order that ensures continued contact and visitation by the mother and affirms the Mexican court's primary jurisdiction over custody matters.

"These cases are very gratifying to take on, because we can help return children to their rightful homes and work to ensure their safety after their return," LeBlanc said.

Shutts & Bowen has handled a number of Hague Convention Child Abduction matters, referred to the firm by the U.S. State Department. The cases proceed on an expedited basis through federal court, typically lasting a few months.

The Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction is a multilateral treaty that seeks to protect children from the harmful effects of abduction and retention across international boundaries by providing a procedure to bring about their prompt return.

Rachel LeBlanc, who concentrates her practice in commercial litigation, has championed children in handling cases brought pursuant to The Hague Convention. She has handled all aspects of such cases, including filing petitions, obtaining temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions, participating in mediation, and conducting trials, and appeals. She has represented parents from many different countries, including Venezuela, Mexico, Canada, Colombia and England.