

# CRS Insights

Unaccompanied Alien Children: A Processing Flow Chart

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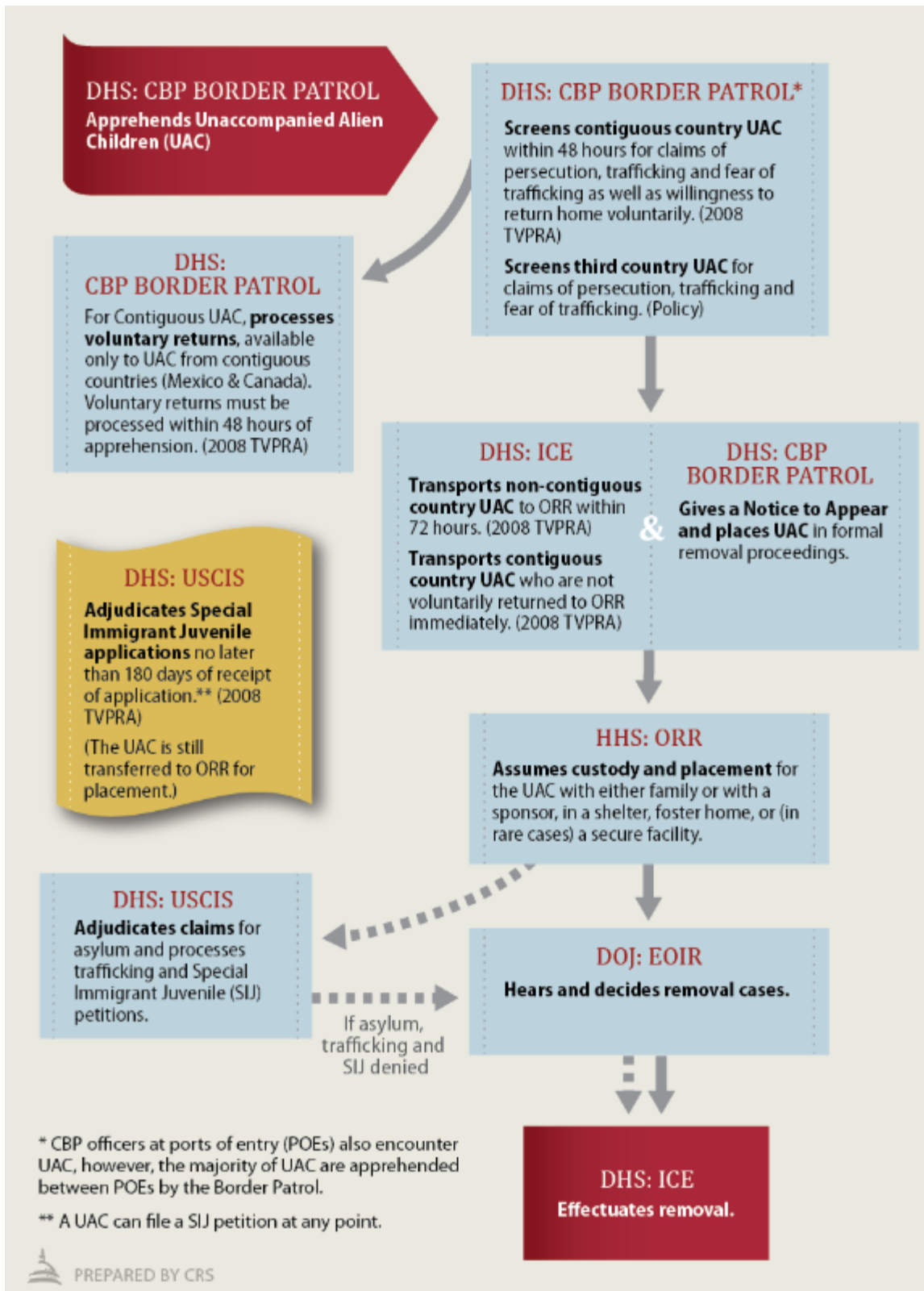
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Within the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, several agencies are involved in apprehending, processing, placing, and repatriating unaccompanied alien children (UAC). Customs and Border Protection (CBP) apprehends, processes, and detains the majority of UAC arrested along U.S. borders. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) physically transports UAC from CBP to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) custody. ORR is responsible for detaining and sheltering UAC who are from non-contiguous countries and those from contiguous countries (i.e., Canada and Mexico) for whom there is a concern that they may be victims of trafficking or have an asylum claim, or who do not desire to return to their country voluntarily, while they wait for their claim to be processed or for an immigration hearing. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is responsible for the initial adjudication of asylum applications and processes trafficking petitions filed by UAC. The Executive Office for Immigration Review (i.e., immigration courts) in the U.S. Department of Justice conducts the immigration proceedings that determine whether the UAC is allowed to remain in the United States or is deported to his or her home country. If a UAC is ordered removed or chooses to voluntarily depart from the United States, ICE is responsible for returning the alien to his/her home country. For an overview on this topic, see CRS Report R43599, [Unaccompanied Alien Children: An Overview](#).

Figure 1. Unaccompanied Alien Children

A Processing Flow Chart



**Acronyms used in the flow chart:**

**CBP—Customs and Border Protection**

**DHS—Department of Homeland Security**

**DOJ—Department of Justice**

**EOIR—Executive Office for Immigration Review**

**HHS—Department of Health and Human Services**

**ICE—Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

**ORR—Office of Refugee Resettlement**

**SIJ—Special Immigrant Visa**

**TVPRA 2008—Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 ([P.L. 110-457](#))**

**UAC—Unaccompanied Alien Children**

**USCIS—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**