

# Argentine court OKs sex change for teen

The Miami Herald  
Sep. 27, 2007

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina --

A 17-year-old Argentine has won a court battle to undergo surgery to become a female, the first decision of its kind involving a minor in Argentina, news reports said Thursday.

Ending a three-year legal battle, a court in the central province of Cordoba authorized the surgery earlier this week.

In Argentina, the surgery requires court approval because of laws against mutilation.

A judge in 2004 initially ruled the teenager must wait until age 21, but the parents appealed and persuaded a court panel, the reports said.

Courts have withheld the name because the teenager is still a minor and the local media have not published the teen's identity.

In the U.S., no court permission is necessary but most doctors are hesitant to operate on minors, said Denise Leclair, executive director of the International Foundation for Gender Education in Waltham, Mass.

An August court decision in Brazil required the public health system to pay for sex reassignment surgeries. At least eight other countries, including Canada, have similar policies.

But in most of Latin America, the surgery still requires a judge's permission, according to Alejandra Victoria Portadino, legal counsel with the Homosexual Community of Argentina.