

PART 306-5-Official Passports

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306-5.1 As a NOAA employee traveling to a foreign country on official business, am I required to obtain an official passport?

Yes. All NOAA employees traveling to a foreign country on official business **must** obtain an official passport and official visas if required, before leaving the United States. An official passport is not required for travel to Taiwan, Alaska, Hawaii, Johnston Atoll, Midway Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands of the U.S., Wake Island, Bermuda, Bahamas, Kwajalein, and all possessions of the United States. The NTO strongly urges employees to carry birth evidence when traveling to the before-mentioned destinations to avoid unnecessary problems. However, if you have an official or personal passport, you are expected to use your official or personal passport instead of birth evidence.

306-5.2 What is the lead-time requirement for processing an official passport?

The lead-time requirement for processing an official passport is 4 to 6 weeks and is dictated by the Department of State.

306-5.3 Do I need to provide a justification if there is not enough lead-time to process my official passport?

Yes. Passport applications submitted with less than 4-weeks lead-time **must** include an emergency justification letter addressed to the Department of State, Chief of Passport Services. The emergency justification does not guarantee that the foreign travel package will be processed in time for travel.

306-5.4 How do I apply for an official passport?

You may apply for an official passport in one of the following two ways: (If you expect to travel frequently, you may request a 48-page passport to accommodate visa stamps.)

1) “DS-11, Application for Passport,” is used if you have **never** been issued a passport (either personal or official), or if you have a passport that was issued **more** than 15 years ago. The NTO will send you a DS-11 form, and an original and a photocopy of a letter of authorization. You are required to apply in person at the nearest Passport Office, Clerk of the Circuit Court, or Federal District Court. You will need to take a completed, but not signed, DS-11 form, an original and a photocopy of a letter of authorization, two passport-size photographs (2"x 2"), and a birth certificate with a raised seal. At least 4 to 5 weeks is required for processing DS-11 forms (not including visas).

2) “DS-82, Passport Application by Mail,” is used if you have a passport (either personal or official) that was issued within the last 15 years. You will submit a completed and signed DS-82 form, two passport-size photographs (2"x 2"), and either a personal or official passport issued within the last 15 years to the NTO for processing. At least 4 weeks is required for processing DS-82 forms (not including visas).

306-5.5 What are the passport photo requirements?

Passport photos must be 2" x 2" (excluding white borders), and must have a white or off-white background. The applicant’s image must be centered in the photograph with a 1/2" space between the top of the applicant’s head and the top edge of the photograph.

306-5.6 What form do I use when I need to make changes to my official passport?

You will submit a “DS-19, Passport Amendment/Validation Application” to the NTO to correct a name and/or descriptive data in the passport, to add visa supplement pages to the passport, or to extend the validity of a limited passport. At least 4 weeks is required for processing DS-19 forms (not including visas).

306-5.7 What form do I use if my official passport is lost or stolen?

You must notify the NTO immediately if your official passport is lost or stolen. The NTO will send you a “DS-64, Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passport,” a DS-11 form, and an original and a photocopy of a letter of authorization. You are required to apply in person at the nearest Passport Office, Clerk of the Circuit Court, or Federal District Court. You will need a completed DS-64 form, a memo of explanation supported by police documentation (if possible), a completed, but not signed, DS-11 form, an original and a photocopy of a letter of authorization, two passport-size photographs (2"x 2"), and a birth certificate with a raised seal. Four to five weeks is required for processing DS-11 forms (not including visas).

306-5.8 Where do I obtain passport forms for official travel?

Passport forms may be obtained from the NTO by calling (301) 413-3060 or on-line at <http://travel.state.gov> . Passport forms **cannot** be photocopied.

306-5.9 What do I do with my official passport when I return from official travel?

Department of State security requirements dictate that all official passports be returned to the NTO for safekeeping in the official passport repository upon completion of foreign travel. Employees who accomplish frequent foreign travel, or are on foreign blanket travel orders, may retain official passports in a locked safe in their offices. **Official passports are the property of the Government, and are not the personal property of the traveler. Official passports must never be kept at home.**

306-5.10 What do I do with my official passport upon leaving Government service?

Upon leaving Government services, employees must return all valid or expired official passports to the NTO for disposition.

306-5.11 Can I keep my official passport for a souvenir?

Yes. Employees who wish to retain their official passport for a souvenir must return their official passport with a memorandum of explanation to the NTO. The NTO will forward the official passport to the Department of State for cancellation. After cancellation, the official passport will be returned to the traveler for a souvenir.