Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) are research reports on country conditions. They are requested by IRB decision makers.

The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIR. Earlier RIR may be found on the UNHCR’s Refworld website.

Please note that some RIR have attachments which are not electronically accessible here. To obtain a copy of an attachment, please e-mail us.

Related Links

- Advanced search help

6 December 2017

IND106024.E

India: Requirements and procedures to change one's name under the Tatkaal passport application scheme, including the difference between a major and a minor change of name; police verification of Tatkaal applications (2015-November 2017) Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

For information on the issuance procedures for passports, including on the Tatkaal passport application scheme, see Response to Information Request IND104840 of May 2014.

1. Requirements and Procedures to Change Name Under Tatkaal
The *Instruction for Filling of Passport Application Form and Supplementary Form*, available on the Passport Seva website of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, indicates that individuals can apply under the Tatkaal [Tatkal] system for minor changes in names and changes in names due to marriage or divorce, either for the production of a new passport or for a passport re-issuance (India n.d.a, 7, 9, 10). The same source states that residents of Jammu and Kashmir cannot apply for a passport under the Tatkaal system (India n.d.a, 8).

1.1. Major and Minor Changes in Names

According to the Passport Seva website's "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ), a minor change in name is a "change in name because of [a] spelling discrepancy between [the] passport and documents which phonetically do not result in [a] total change in name," while major changes in names concern "[c]ases other than minor change in name" (India 14 Nov. 2017a). The same source gives the following as examples of major changes in names:

- "Sandeep Sharma" to "Sandeep Kumar Sharma"
- "Sandeep Kumar" to "Sandeep Sharma" (India 14 Nov. 2017a).

A change in name from "Ritu" to "Ritu Thakur" is, according to the same source, a major change in name, provided it is not due to marriage (India 14 Nov. 2017a).

1.2 Documents Required to Request a Change of Name

According to the Passport Seva website, major changes in names cannot be processed through the Tatkaal passport application system, either for a new passport application or for the re-issuance of the passport and must be applied for under the "[n]ormal category" (India 14 Nov. 2017b; India 14 Nov. 2017c).

1.2.1 Change of Name when Applying for a New Passport

The information in the following paragraphs comes from an interactive webpage on the Passport Seva website titled "List of Documents Required for Fresh Passport Issuance":

In order to apply for a new passport through Tatkaal after a minor change in name or after a change due to marriage or re-marriage, adult applicants must provide:

- a "Standard Affidavit as per Annexure 'E'";
- a "Verification Certificate as per the specimen as per Annexure 'B'" or any 3 documents of the 16 "acceptable documents";
- a proof of present address in the new name;
- a proof of the date of birth in the old name.

Instead of providing a verification certificate or 3 of the 16 acceptable documents, senior citizens who request a minor change in name or a change in name due to marriage can provide, in their application for a new passport, a copy of their child's passport, with the page indicating the parent's name, provided that the child is above 18 years of age and lives abroad. Government, public sector and statutory body employees who change their names and apply for a new passport must provide, in addition to the documents listed above, the identity certificate mentioning the new name, together with the gazette notification of the applicant's department announcing that there has been a change in the name of the applicant (India 14 Nov. 2017b).

The *Instruction for Filling of Passport Application Form and Supplementary Form*, which includes "Annexures" E and B, is attached to this Response (Attachment 1). The list of the 16 acceptable documents, the list of acceptable documents for proof of address, and the list of acceptable documents proving the date of birth are attached to this Response (respectively, Attachments 2, 3, and 4).

### 1.2.2 Change of Name when Applying for the Re-Issuance of a Passport

The information in the following paragraphs comes from an interactive webpage on the Passport Seva website titled "List of Documents Required - Re-issue of Passport":

The documents that must be provided by applicants requesting a minor change of name or a change of name due to divorce when applying for a passport re-issuance under Tatkaal are the
Old passport in original with self-attested photocopy of its first two and last two pages, including the ECR [Emigration Check Required]/Non-ECR page (previously ECNR) and the page of observation (if any), made by [the] Passport Issuing Authority and validity extension page, if any, in respect of short validity passport.

A woman requesting a change in name due to marriage or re-marriage may additionally provide a "self[-]attested photocopy of the spouse's [p]assport" as an optional document.

Public employees requesting a change in name and the re-issuance of their passport must provide, in addition to the documents listed above for the relevant category of change of name, a "No Objection Certificate (NOC) (as per Annexure 'G')" or a "Prior Intimation Letter (PI) (as per Annexure 'H')," together with their new identification certificate showing that the name has been changed and the gazette notification from the applicant's department indicating that there has been a change in the applicant's name.

Retired government officials who request a change of name when applying for a passport re-issuance may provide, in addition to the documents mentioned above for the relevant category of changes of names, a pension payment order as an optional document (India 14 Nov. 2017c).

The Instruction for Filling of Passport Application Form and Supplementary Form, which includes "Annexures" G and H, is attached to this Response (Attachment 1).

2. Requirements and Procedures to Change Name under Tatkaal from Abroad

2.1 From Canada

The website of the High Commission of India in Ottawa indicates that there is "no provision for Emergency/Tatkal Processing of Passport in the High Commission [of India in Ottawa]" (India n.d.b). In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an official from the consular section of the High Commission of India in Ottawa explained, without providing further details, that, while Tatkaal is not available in the jurisdiction of Ottawa, other Canadian jurisdictions allow applicants residing in
Canada to use Tatkaal for passport applications, "depending on the case" (India 23 Nov. 2017). The same source stated that it was not possible to use Tatkaal for a change in name from Canada (India 23 Nov. 2017).

2.2 In the US

The website of the Embassy of India in Washington DC indicates that Cox & Kings Global Services (CKGS), a company that focuses on "serving [c]onsular sections of [d]iplomatic [m]issions" (CKGS n.d.a), is the company responsible for passport application services for the Embassy of India and the Indian Consulates in the US (India n.d.d).

The information in the following paragraphs comes from the "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) on CKGS's website:

The jurisdictions of Washington DC, San Francisco, Atlanta, New York, Houston and Chicago allow Indian nationals residing in areas covered by these jurisdictions to use the Tatkaal passport application scheme as an "[e]mergency service" available to applicants for "any type of passport service and it is subject to approval to apply under 'Tatkal' from the Embassy/Consulates of India in [the US]." A justification for requesting and using Tatkaal from any jurisdiction must be provided and CKGS will coordinate with the Consulate or Embassy for approval.

In order to apply for services under Tatkaal in the jurisdictions of Washington DC, San Francisco, New York and Atlanta, applicants must send an email to CKGS with "Tatkal Service Required" as a subject line [in the New York jurisdiction, the email must be sent to the Consulate General of India in New York] and give the following information in the email:

Name of Applicant
Passport Number
Email ID (must be contactable else we will not be able to reach you)
Contact number (must be contactable else we will not be able to reach you).

Applicants living in areas covered by the New York and Atlanta jurisdictions must additionally provide the following information in the email:

Reason / document scanned for opting [for the] Tatkal service
Remarks (if any).
Applicants living in areas covered by the Washington DC and San Francisco jurisdictions must attach a scanned copy of their valid current passport, a scanned copy of a document showing legal status, such as the passport's visa page, the green card, the "EAD" or the "I-797," together with a scanned copy of a proof of residence, such as driver's license, utility bill, State ID, rental or lease agreement, mortgage deed or a landline telephone bill. Applicants living in areas covered by the jurisdiction of New York must attach a copy of their passport's first and last pages, a copy of a valid US visa and a copy of a proof of their address. Those living in areas covered by the jurisdiction of Atlanta must attach a copy of their passport, a copy of their visa or green card and a proof of residence.

Applicants then need to specify on the application form, available online from CKGS, that they wish to use Tatkaal, indicate the state they live in, and provide, either through the mail or in person, the passport application form, the confirmation email approving the request to use Tatkaal, and all documents required by the Tatkaal application process. For applicants residing in the areas covered by the jurisdictions of Washington DC, Atlanta, New York, Houston and Chicago, required documents include a "[r]ecent [o]riginal Indian [p]assport," the passport of the spouse, should the applicant endorse the spouse's name, and "US [l]egal [s]tatus details." For the jurisdiction of San Francisco, required documents additionally include a proof of residence in the area covered by the jurisdiction (CKGS n.d.b).

2.2.1 Procedures to Change Name Under Tatkaal in the United States

The information in the following paragraphs comes from the "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) on CKGS's website:

For changes of names other than due to marriage, remarriage or divorce, applicants must provide the following documents in their passport application for either a complete change in name or a re-arrangement of their current name:

1. Clippings of two local newspapers or the Gazette notification of the concerned State Government, as the case may be
2. At least two public/school documents issued in the desired/applied changed name to ascertain that the applicant has actually changed his/her name.
An example of a complete change in name is a change from the name "Amit Sharma" to the name "Raj Kumar," while a change in name from "Amit Kumar Sharma" to the name "Amit Sharma Kumar" is a re-arrangement of one's current name.

Should the surname field on the passport be left blank and the passport holder's full name be displayed in the passport's "Given Name" field, an applicant who wishes to add his surname in the passport's relevant field must provide a "[d]uly [n]otarized [d]eedpoll [s]worn [a]ffidavit" along with the passport application.

A change of surname, from maiden to married, due to marriage or the hyphenation of one's surname by adding the spouse's surname require applicants to indicate on their passport application that they are married and that they wish to have their spouse's name. Applicants who wish to remove their former spouse's name from their passport due to a divorce must apply for a passport re-issuance, indicate their marital status in the passport's application and state that they wish to delete their spouse's name from their passport by ticking the appropriate box, before indicating that they wish to change their name (CKGS n.d.c).

In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a CKGS representative explained, without providing further details, that it is not possible to use the Tatkaal system for a change of name request in the New York jurisdiction and the areas it covers (CKGS 20 Nov. 2017).

3. Police Verification Under the Tatkaal

Information on pre- and post-police verification for passport applications under Tatkaal was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The Instructions for Filling of Passport indicates that the passport office decides whether a police verification is required when an applicant applies for a new passport or a passport re-issuance (India n.d.a, 1). According to the same source, in most cases, a pre-police verification "would be required" for the issuance of a new passport, unless, for example, the applicant is a government employee or a minor whose parents have valid passports (India n.d.a, 1). The same source states that
In most cases of re-issu[ance], depending on records available in the Passport Office system, police verification would not be required or only post[-]police verification would be required, exceptions being re-issu[ance] of passport in lieu of lost passport or complete change of name. (India n.d.a., 1)

According to the same source, under Tatkaal, a post-police verification is done in all cases (India n.d.a).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References


Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: India – Passport offices in Ahmedabad, Delhi, Gao, Mumbai, Passport Seva.

Internet sites, including: ecoi.net; India – Embassy in Paris; UN – Refworld; US – Department of State.

Attachments


Date modified:
2018-06-25