

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.

18 January 2007

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Colombia: Whether the holder of a Colombian foreign resident identity card (*Cédula de Extranjería*) can exit from and return to Colombia while the card is valid; documentation required and procedures followed to renew the card; documentation required and procedures followed by an individual who holds a temporary foreign resident card (*Cédula de Extranjería Temporal*) to obtain a foreign resident card
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In 24 November 2006 correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the Administrative Security Department (Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad, *DAS*) of Colombia provided the following information. She explained that Colombian authorities issue two different types of foreign resident identity cards (*Cédula de Extranjería*). The first, a temporary foreign resident card (*Cédula de Extranjería Temporal*), is issued to individuals who are granted temporary visas. The second, a foreign resident card (*Cédula de Extranjería Residente*), is issued to individuals who hold an indefinite visa. According to the Official, a temporary foreign resident card is valid as long as the visa is valid. The Official also noted that the foreign resident card must be renewed every five years (Colombia 24 Nov. 2006; *ibid.* 30 Nov. 2004, Art. 77, para. 3).

In a 9 November 2006 telephone interview, the *DAS* official provided the following information. She indicated that, while an individual with a temporary foreign resident card can leave the country for up to six months at a time, an individual with a foreign resident card can leave the country for up to two years at a time (see also Colombia 30 Nov. 2004, Art. 9). She also noted that the holders of either type of card should have no problem exiting and returning to Colombia as long as the card is valid. Furthermore, in 15 November 2006 correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Assistant Director (*Subdirector*) of the Foreign Residents Office (División de Extranjería) of *DAS* indicated that individuals who hold a valid foreign resident identity card only require a passport and visa to enter and exit Colombia.

According to an official at *DAS*, to obtain a foreign resident card, the applicant must submit the following: a photocopy of a resident visa; a registration fee of 120,000 Colombian pesos (COP) [approximately 61 Canadian dollars (CAD) (Canada 20 Nov. 2006)], which is to be paid to the *DAS* revolving fund (Fondo Rotario) at Bancafé; a certificate of blood group/Rh factor; four photos of the applicant measuring 3 cm x 4 cm; and a photocopy of his or her updated passport (Colombia 24 Nov. 2006). The Official also stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores) issues the resident visas (*ibid.*).

The Assistant Director of the Foreign Residents Office noted that, to renew the foreign resident card, the applicant must present the following: a photocopy of his or her updated passport if any changes have been made; two photographs of the applicant measuring 3 cm x 4 cm and taken against a blue background; and the registration fee of COP 120,000 [approximately CAD 61 (Canada 20 Nov. 2006)], which is to be paid at Bancafé, the central bank of Colombia, into Account No. 056-99020-3, Code 101 (Colombia 15 Nov. 2006).

To renew a temporary foreign resident card, the applicant must present the following: a photocopy of the new temporary visa issued either by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or a Colombian consulate; two photographs of the applicant measuring 3 cm x 4 cm and taken against a blue background; and the registration fee, which is to be paid at Bancafé (*ibid.*).

The Web site of Infomigrante, a project of the Fundación Esperanza that works to protect the rights of immigrants (n.d.a), indicates, without distinguishing between the requirements to obtain a temporary foreign resident card and a foreign resident card, that applicants must submit the following documents to *DAS* to renew their Colombian foreign resident identity cards: a valid passport, a photocopy of the applicant's visa (if the visa was

issued by a Colombian consulate, the individual must also present the valid entry stamp); a photocopy of his or her passport information, including passport expiry date; three photos of the applicant taken against a white background; and a photocopy of the receipt indicating that the registration fee was paid to the DAS revolving fund at Bancafé (Infomigrante n.d.b; see also Comfenalco 24 July 2006). In order for a foreigner to extend his or her visa, he or she must apply to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at least 30 calendar days before his or her current visa expires (ibid.).

According to Article 51 of Decree Number 4000 of 2004 (*Decreto Número 4000 de 2004*), a resident visa (*Visa de Residente Calificado*) can be issued either by the Internal Working Group (Grupo Interno de Trabajo), as appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or by the Consular Offices of the Republic (Oficinas Consulares de la República) (Colombia 30 Nov. 2004). Resident visas can be issued to foreigners who have held a temporary visa for five years in a row, who have legally resided in Colombia during this time, and who submit their request at least 30 calendar days prior to the expiration of their current visa ; exceptions are made only for [translation] "duly proven *force majeure* or acts of God" (ibid.).

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

- Canada. 20 November 2006. Bank of Canada. "Convertisseur de devise - taux du jour." <<http://www.bankofcanada.ca/fr/taux/convertisseur.html>> [Accessed 20 Nov.2006]
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- Comfenalco. 24 July 2006. Servicio de Información Local Medellín. "Cédula de Extranjería." <<http://www.comfenalcoantioquia.com/sil/tramite.asp?184>> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2006]
- Infomigrante. N.d.a. "Nosotros." <<http://www.infomigrante.org/content/section/14/248>> [Accessed 27 Nov. 2006]
- _____. N.d.b. "Cédula de Extranjería." <<http://www.infomigrante.org/content/category/11/25/270/>> [Accessed 20 Nov. 2006]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Source: The Embassy of Colombia in Ottawa did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Embassy of Colombia in Washington, United States Bureau of Consular Affairs.

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