

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#) > [Research Program](#) > Responses to Information Requests

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.

20 January 2012

PAK103835.E

Pakistan: Whether individuals can obtain a certified copy of a First Information Report (FIR) from abroad through a proxy, including where a proxy must go to obtain FIRs, and requirements and procedures
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Sources consulted by the Research Directorate provided conflicting information on whether it is possible to obtain a First Information Report (FIR) from abroad through a proxy, and on the requirements and procedures to do so (Canada 8 Sept. 2011; Advocate 7 Oct. 2011; Lahore High Court Advocate 28 Sept. 2011; Supreme Court Advocate 15 Sept. 2011; Pakistan 19 Dec. 2011).

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the High Commission of Canada to Pakistan indicated that a member of the High Commission's Anti-fraud Group consulted the Police Secretariat in Islamabad about obtaining FIRs and was told that "there are no explicit procedures in place for an overseas national to follow in getting a certified copy of an FIR by proxy" (Canada 8 Sept. 2011). An advocate of the Lahore High Court, also in correspondence with the Research Directorate, corroborated the Police Secretariat's statement that "there is no prescribed procedure for obtaining an attested copy of [an] FIR" (Lahore High Court Advocate 28 Sept. 2011). The Canadian High Commission official indicated that "regional offices may have their own procedures and requirements" (Canada 8 Sept. 2011). However, the Lahore High Court advocate stated that the procedures are "roughly" the same across Pakistan (28 Sept. 2011).

Ability of Proxies to Obtain FIRs

According to the Canadian High Commission official, the Police Secretariat stated that "anyone in Pakistan can obtain a certified copy of an FIR on behalf of anyone else" (Canada 8 Sept. 2011). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an advocate to the Supreme Court corroborated the statement that "FIRs are available to all" (Supreme Court Advocate 14 Sept. 2011). On 2 October 2008, in an interview between the United Kingdom's Border Agency and the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), "a Christian-based human rights organization in Pakistan," the NCJP stated that "'even the press can manage [to obtain] the copies of FIRs ...'" (UK 17 Jan. 2011, para. 19.31). Although the Lahore High Court advocate said that FIRs are public documents, he also stated that obtaining a copy of an FIR is possible, "though not always easy" (Lahore High Court Advocate 28 Sept. 2011). He indicated that a bribe usually facilitates the process, and that staff may stall the registration of an FIR until a bribe is paid (*ibid.*). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In contrast, however, an official at the High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa, as well as an advocate in Karachi, said that FIRs are not public documents (Pakistan 19 Dec. 2011; Advocate 7 Oct. 2011). Additionally, in correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Karachi-based advocate stated that "it is not possible for someone abroad to obtain a certified copy of an FIR through a proxy" (*ibid.*). According to him, "the only person who is entitled to get a copy (normally a carbon copy of the FIR) is the complainant. The Police authorities do not give a copy to anybody else" (*ibid.*). He also stated that it is "practically" impossible to obtain a copy of an FIR "by any process" and "by any person," and suggested that obtaining a copy could take several years and may escalate to the level of the Supreme Court (*ibid.*). He said that the inability to obtain FIRs through a proxy applies to all areas of Pakistan (*ibid.*). He added that there is a possibility that an uncertified copy of an FIR may be obtained by bribing the police (*ibid.*). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Where to Obtain FIRs

The Lahore High Court advocate indicated that, according to "police rules," there should be four copies of an FIR: the original copy, which is housed at the police station where the FIR was registered, a copy that is kept by the superintendent of police, a copy that goes to the concerned prosecutor's office, and a copy for the concerned magistrate (28 Sept. 2011).

According to the Supreme Court advocate, a copy of an FIR can be obtained from the police station in which the FIR was registered or from the office of the Senior Superintendent of Police (15 Sept. 2011). The Pakistani High Commission official (19 Dec. 2011) and the Lahore High Court advocate (28 Sept. 2011) both corroborated the statement that a copy of an FIR can be obtained from the police station where the FIR was registered. The Lahore High Court advocate stated that if a "foreign agency needs to get the FIR verified, a request can be sent to the concerned city police chief" (28 Sept. 2011.).

The Pakistani High Commission official indicated that Pakistan does not yet have a centralized system for FIRs (19 Dec. 2011).

Requirements and Procedures for a Proxy to Obtain an FIR

The Supreme Court advocate indicated that obtaining an FIR requires a fee, the FIR number, FIR date, and knowledge of which police station recorded the FIR (15 Sept. 2011).

The Canadian High Commission official stated that "a person need only appear, request the document on behalf of another, and they will receive a copy of the FIR certified with a wet seal by the office" (8 Sept. 2011). Although the official stated that, according to the Police Secretariat, a proxy does not need an affidavit or a notarized letter, he recommended that an overseas applicant sign and notarize a letter giving the proxy permission to obtain a certified copy of the FIR on his or her behalf (Canada 8 Sept. 2011). The Lahore High Court advocate corroborated the statement that a power-of-attorney letter is not required to obtain a copy of an FIR (28 Sept. 2011).

In contrast, the Pakistani High Commission official indicated that a power-of-attorney letter stating that the applicant authorizes the proxy to collect a copy of the FIR on his or her behalf is required (Pakistan 19 Dec. 2011). The official indicated that the applicant must go to a notary public to notarize the letter (ibid.). The official stated that the applicant must state the reason he or she needs the FIR in the power-of-attorney letter (ibid. 14 Sept. 2011). According to the official, after notarizing a power-of-attorney letter, the applicant must take the letter to the High Commission of Pakistan for attestation, which involves verifying the applicant's identity and signature, then adding a seal and a stamp on the document (ibid. 19 Dec. 2011). The High Commission for Pakistan in Ottawa charges 20 Canadian dollars for the attestation fee and takes "a couple of days" to process the attestation (ibid. 14 Sept. 2011). The official also indicated that the applicant would have to send the power-of-attorney letter to the proxy in Pakistan with a copy of his or her identity document (ibid. 19 Dec. 2011). The proxy would then take the letter with the attached copy of the applicant's identity document to the police station where the FIR was registered (ibid.). The proxy would then have to show his or her own personal identity document in order to obtain a copy of the applicant's FIR (ibid.). The official said that he has not yet received any requests to attest power-of-attorney letters to obtain an FIR (ibid. 14 Sept. 2011). He added that, outside of a proxy who adheres to the procedure for obtaining an FIR, police will not disclose an FIR to anyone that does not have something to do with the case (ibid. 19 Dec. 2011).

According to the US Department of State, depending on the type of a crime committed, a "party" other than the police might be in charge of filing an FIR (US 8 Apr. 2011, 19). The State Department also indicates that, at times, police have failed to register FIRs, even when "adequate evidence was provided unless the complainant paid a bribe" (ibid.). The *Daily Times*, a Lahore-based newspaper, indicates that police officers in the Islamabad Capital Territory routinely "discourage" complainants from filing FIRs (3 June 2011). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to the *Daily Times*, the filing of FIRs is discouraged because police officers are evaluated based on the number of cases that have been solved (3 June 2011). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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

Advocate, Karachi. 7 October 2011. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Canada. 8 September 2011. High Commission of Canada to Pakistan. Correspondence from an official to the Research Directorate.

Daily Times [Lahore]. 3 June 2011. "Delay in Registration of FIRs Becomes Police Stations Routine." <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011%5C06%5C03%5Cstory_3-6-2011_pg11_4> [Accessed 10 Jan. 2012]

Lahore High Court Advocate. 28 September 2011. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Pakistan. 19 December 2011. High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa. Correspondence from an official to the Research Directorate.

_____. 14 September 2011. High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa. Correspondence from an official to the Research Directorate.

Supreme Court Advocate. 15 September 2011. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

_____. 14 September 2011. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

United Kingdom (UK). 17 January 2011. UK Border Agency. *Pakistan: Country of Origin Information (COI) Report*. <<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/coi/pakistan/previous/report-0111.pdf?view=Binary>> [Accessed 13 Sept. 2011]

United States (US). 8 April 2011. Department of State. "Pakistan." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010*. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160472.pdf>> [Accessed 12 Jan. 2012]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact a senior lawyer who is also a Supreme Court advocate, and a legal officer with the United Nations Refugee Agency were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Asylumlaw.org, Embassy of Pakistan in Australia, Embassy of Pakistan in the United Kingdom, Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, European Country of Origin Information Network, Factiva, Islamabad Police Department, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, United Nations Refworld, United States Department of State.

[Click here for tips on how to use this search engine.](#)

Date modified: 2013-07-17 [Top of Page](#)

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.