

# 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 December 2012

### PAK104250.E

Pakistan: Requirements and procedures to obtain passports; multi-biometric electronic passports, including procedures for issuance within and outside the country, including Canada; manual passport procedures  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### 1. Overview

Sources indicate that Pakistan issues three types of passports: ordinary, diplomatic and official (Pakistan n.d.g; US n.d.). A diplomatic passport, which has a red cover, is issued to ambassadors, diplomats, the head of state, and government and federal ministers (ibid.). An official passport, which has a blue cover, is issued to members of the National Assembly, senators, provincial ministers, and judges of the Supreme and High Courts, among other government officials (Pakistan n.d.g). An ordinary passport, which has a green cover, is issued to all citizens of Pakistan (ibid.).

According to the website of the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports of the Ministry of Interior, machine readable passports (MRPs) [also called multi-biometric electronic passports (ibid. n.d.h)] are issued to all citizens of Pakistan (ibid. [2012]). The website indicates that MRPs are replacing the "manual" [manually read] passport system (ibid. n.d.g). According to the website of the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), Pakistan acquired the capability to issue multi-biometric electronic passports in 2004; the website does not indicate when they started to issue them (ibid. n.d.h). However, the Government of Pakistan indicates that some missions abroad issue only manual passports because of the absence of equipment to issue MRPs (ibid. n.d.a). Pakistan maintains four missions in Canada (ibid. 27 July 2012), but only the Consulate General of Pakistan in Toronto issues MRPs (ibid. n.d.c).

#### 2. Machine Readable Passports

NADRA indicates that MRPs include "[b]iometric features namely Facial and Fingerprint Impressions," and a "2D Barcode and Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) on the data page" (ibid. n.d.i). The passport also includes "watermark paper, security ink, 3 color intaglio printing [and] micro-lettering" (ibid.). Invisible personal information, such as the passport number and the name of the applicant, is featured on a photograph and can be viewed through a special lens (ibid.). The passport has an embedded radio frequency identification device (RFID) that prevents tampering (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

##### 2.1 Issuance in Canada

According to the website of the Pakistan Diplomatic Mission in Canada, only holders of the Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC), National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOP) or Child Registration Certificate (CRC) are eligible to apply for MRPs (Pakistan n.d.c). The website indicates that the MRPs issued by the consulate are valid for five years (ibid.). In order to obtain an MRP, an individual must submit, in person, the following documents to the Consulate General of Pakistan in Toronto:

- Original valid Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) / National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOP) / NADRA Child Registration Certificate (B-Form) and its photocopy.
- CNIC/NICOP of any married females must bear the name of her husband.
- Original and Photocopies of CNIC/NICOP/CRC, Canadian PR Card or Citizenship Card with Canadian Passport and First Four pages of Old Pakistani Passport.
- In Case Applicant is born outside of Pakistan. Original Birth certificate with copy is required for processing of MRP. It must be translated in English, if it is in any other language than [E]nglish.
- NADRA (B-Form) is only acceptable if applicant is under 18 years of age.
- For Applicant less than 18 years old. Copy and Original (CNIC/NICOP or Pakistani Passport) of both mother and father must be attached with application.
- Old (Previous) Pakistani Passport along with photocopies of first four (4) pages.

- Child whose name was endorsed on mother / father manual passport, should produce that passport in original and photocopy of first four pages and copy of the page where child was endorsed.
- Canadian Passport / PR Card / Landing Paper / Valid Status abroad along with photocopy. (ibid.)

The website indicates that the fee for a passport is C\$66 and the processing time is 35 days (ibid.). The fee for urgent processing is C\$175 and the processing time is indicated to be 15 days (ibid.). However, the website notes that the processing time may vary because MRPs are printed in Pakistan (ibid.).

## 2.2 Issuance in Pakistan

According to the website of the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports, in Pakistan, that department issues MRPs valid for 10 years (ibid. [2012]). Without specifically mentioning MRPs, media sources reported in August 2012 that Pakistan's new passports would be valid for 10 years (*The Nation* 26 Aug. 2012; *Dawn* 26 Aug. 2012). The website of the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports provides a list of the regional passport offices where individuals may submit their passport applications (Pakistan n.d.f). There are 6 offices in the federally administered tribal areas (FATAs), 6 in Sindh Province, 29 in Punjab Province, 13 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, 6 in Balouchistan Province, 6 in Azad Jammu Kashmir, 2 in Gilgit Baltistan and 1 office in Islamabad (ibid.). In order to obtain an MRP, an applicant must submit the following documents:

- Computerized National Identity Card and two copies;
- old passport and a copy;
- foreign passport and a copy, for persons who have dual nationality;
- Computerized Registration Certificate issued by NADRA and two copies; and
- bank receipt showing payment of application fee (ibid. [2012]).

Sources indicate that no application form or photographs are required for the MRPs (ibid. n.d.c; ibid. n.d.b). The website of the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports explains that an applicant must present himself or herself at one of the regional passport offices where the process consists of the following steps:

- Upon arriving at the customer service counter, staff will verify if an applicant has all the required documents and will guide him or her to the Token Counter.
- At the Token Counter, the applicant must present his or her CNIC, or Computerized Registration Certificate, if under the age of 18, and bank receipt for the applicable fee, following which a token will be issued to the applicant.
- The applicant then goes to the Biometric Capturing Counter at which impressions of the right thumb, right index finger, left thumb and left index finger are taken.
- The applicant then proceeds to the Picture Counter where his or her photograph is taken.
- Next, at the Data Entry Counter, the data entry operator will enter all the required data and the applicant will sign the form confirming accuracy of the data.
- The final step is an interview with the Assistant Director, who declares whether the application is allowed or overruled (ibid. n.d.i).

The fee for passport processing varies from 3,000 Pakistani rupees (PKR) [about C\$31.00 (XE 29 Nov. 2012a)] to 12,000 PKR [about C\$123.00 (XE 29 Nov. 2012b)], depending on the number of pages in the passport and the processing urgency (Pakistan [2012]). MRP normal processing time is 12 days and urgent processing is 5 days (ibid.). However, according to *Dawn*, a Karachi-based English-language newspaper, the delay in issuance of passports in Pakistan has become a "serious problem" (*Dawn* 19 Sept. 2012). Sources report the backlog of passport applications to be at least 200,000 (ibid.; APP 3 Dec. 2012). According to Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), an Islamabad-based news agency, delays were caused by the shortage of passport booklets (ibid.). Information on the results of government efforts to clear the backlog could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

## 3. Manual Passport in Canada

In order to obtain a new manual passport in Canada, citizens of Pakistan must submit the following documents to the nearest Pakistani mission:

- a completed application form;
- a photocopy of a document confirming applicant's status in Canada (Canadian passport, / Citizenship Card, Permanent Resident Card, Study Permit, or visa);
- three passport photographs;
- original Pakistani passport and a photocopy of the inside cover and pages 1, 2 and 3;
- original Pakistani National Identity Card and a copy (Pakistan n.d.d; ibid. n.d.e).

According to the website of the Pakistan Diplomatic Mission in Canada, manual passports will be issued only to holders of a CNIC, NICOP or CRC (ibid. n.d.d). If an applicant does not have one of these documents, he or she must apply for a NICOP at the time of submitting a passport application (ibid.). The processing fee for a manual passport is C\$66.00, and for urgent processing it is C\$175.00 (ibid.; ibid. n.d.e). Manual passports are processed within seven working days and urgent processing can be done in one working day (ibid.). Passport applications, along with required documents, fees and a self addressed envelope can be mailed to the mission (ibid. n.d.d). According to the website of the Pakistan Diplomatic Mission in Canada, applicants are also interviewed and decisions to issue manual passports are made on a case by case basis (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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

- Associated Press of Pakistan (APP). 3 December 2012. "Funds Released, Passport Office Endeavouring to Clear 0.2 mln Passport Backlog." <[http://app.com.pk/en\\_/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=217023&Itemid=2](http://app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=217023&Itemid=2)> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2012]
- Dawn*. 19 September 2012. Iftikhar A. Khan. "Passport Backlog 250,000." <<http://dawn.com/2012/09/19/passport-backlog-250000>> [Accessed 11 Dec. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. 26 Aug. 2012. Zulqemain Tahir. "New Passports to Be Valid for 10 Years." <<http://dawn.com/2012/08/26/new-passports-to-be-valid-for-10-years>> [Accessed 5 Dec. 2012]
- The Nation*. 26 August 2012. Amraiz Khan. "Passports Validity to Be Extended to 10 Years: Malik." <<http://www.nation.com/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/26-Aug-2012/passports-validity-to-be-extended-to-10-years-malik>> [Accessed 5 Dec. 2012]
- Pakistan. 27 July 2012. Consulate General of Pakistan, Toronto. "Diplomatic Mission in Canada." <<http://www.pakmission.ca/>> [Accessed 18 Dec. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. [2012]. Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. "Passport." <<http://www.dgip.gov.pk/Files/Passport.html>> [Accessed 16 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.a. Embassy of Pakistan in Madrid, Spain. "Passport." <<http://www.embajada-pakistan.org/services/passport.html>> [Accessed 16 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.b. Pakistan Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. "Machine Readable Passport." <<http://www.pakconsulatejeddah.com/consular-section-mrp-ppts.jsp>> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.c. Diplomatic Mission in Canada. "Machine Readable Passport (MRP)." <<http://www.pakmission.ca/Requirements/ReqMRP.htm>> [Accessed 19 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.d. Diplomatic Mission in Canada. "Manual Passport." <<http://www.pakmission.ca/Requirements/ReqManualPPT.htm>> [Accessed 19 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.e. Consulate General of Pakistan in Vancouver. "Passport." <[http://pcgv.org/consular-services\\_passport.shtml](http://pcgv.org/consular-services_passport.shtml)> [Accessed 19 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.f. Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. "Offices." <<http://www.dgip.gov.pk/Files/Offices.html>> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.g. Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. "Passport." <<http://www.dgip.gov.pk/Files/Passport.html>> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.h. National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). "Multi Biometric e-Passport." <<http://www.nadra.gov.pk/downloads/solutions/autoid-MRP.pdf>> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.i. Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. <http://www.dgip.gov.pk/files/Process.html>> [Accessed 16 Nov. 2012]
- United States (US). N.d. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs. "Pakistan Reciprocity Schedule." <[http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees\\_5455.html?cid=9713](http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_5455.html?cid=9713)> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2012]
- XE. 29 November 2012a. "Currency Converter Widget." <<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert/?Amount=3000&From=PKR&To=CAD>> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2012]
- \_\_\_\_\_. 29 November 2012b. "Currency Converter Widget." <<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert/?Amount=12000&From=PKR&To=CAD>> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2012]

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral Sources:** Attempts to contact lawyers in Pakistan and representatives of the following organizations were unsuccessful: Pakistan – Consulate General of Pakistan in Toronto, High Commission of Pakistan in Ottawa.

**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International; BBC; Council on Foreign Relations; *Daily Times*; *The Economic Times*; Emory University Law School; *The Express Tribune*; *The Hindu*; Factiva; Freedom House; *Frontier Post*; Institute for Human Rights, Finland; Muslim Women's League; *The Nation*; *Nyasa Times*; Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre; Pakistan – consulates general of Pakistan in Montreal and New York, Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, DC, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, National Assembly of Pakistan, National Reconstruction Bureau, Police; South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation; UN – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Refworld; US 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.