



Home Office

Prisoners

Version 8.0

This is guidance for His Majesty's Passport Office examination, Counter Fraud team, Customer Service Management team and Intelligence Hub staff about handling applications and queries from prisoners (including ex-prisoners or those out on licence) in the UK or overseas.

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About: Prisoners

This guidance tells HM passport Office staff about handling applications and queries from prisoners (detainees), including ex-prisoners or those out on licence, in the UK or overseas.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email Guidance & Quality, Operating Standards.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email Guidance & Quality, Operating Standards.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **8.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **17 October 2022**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to link to the Delivery addresses for passports and documents guidance, for how to return documents to a prisoner in detention.

Related content

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Prisoners

This section tells HM Passport Office examination, Counter Fraud team, Customer Service management team and Intelligence Hub staff, staff about applications from prisoners in the UK or overseas who are currently being detained and prisoners released on bail, remand, on conditions or out on licence.

Prisoners are eligible to apply and be issued with a UK Passport if they request us to do so, providing all HM Passport Office checks have been completed, and there are no risk indicators present.

Applications from prisoners in detention

If we are aware the customer is in prison, the passport must be sent to the governor of that prison for safe keeping until the prisoner is released. See Delivery addresses for passports and documents.

Applications from prisoners released on bail, remand, or conditions

For those who are released on bail, remand, or conditions, we will issue a passport unless the courts, police, etc have asked us not to do so as it is a condition of their terms that they do not apply for a passport.

These applications must be referred to the Counter Fraud team (CFT) as the prisoner's details are entered on the Watchlist, and CFT specific policies advise how these applications should be dealt with.

Applications from prisoners out on licence

Prisoners released from prison on licence, (that is prisoners who are subject to conditions on release), are entitled to request their current passport, held by HM Passport Office, to be returned to him or her. There is no obligation for HM Passport Office to ensure that they are meeting the conditions set. Prisoners released on licence who apply for a British passport will be treated as all other applicants.

Applications from prisoners overseas

All overseas applications for prisoners received in the UK must be referred for consideration to your QuEST using the standard process.

Application from prisoner with a full Watchlist match

If a full watchlist match is generated then the application will attract an automatic referral directly to CFT from Sopra Steria and will not require a case note to be completed.

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Repatriation and deportation

This section tells HM Passport Office Examination, Counter Fraud team, Customer Service management team and Intelligence Hub staff about the process of repatriation and deportation for detainees and how it relates to passport applications.

The UK, like other countries, allows prisoners to be repatriated to the UK with or without their consent if HM Passport Office is able to issue a valid travel document to the relevant foreign authorities to enable this.

Deportation is the act of expelling an individual from a country. Repatriation is sending an individual back to their country of nationality.

While fully valid passports are sometimes issued in exceptional cases, one way Emergency Passports (EPs) or Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) are preferred as these will be removed from the applicant on entry to the country.

The standard application process must be followed by the parties seeking the issue of any type of passport facilities to support deportation, the request will be made in writing by the foreign authority and submitted with the required supporting documents. The photograph and fee must also be supplied. British nationality must be correctly determined in all cases before issue. An observation must be entered stating that the EP, ETD, or passport was issued for deportation purposes as below:

ISSUED TO FACILITATE THE DEPORTATION OF THE PERSON NAMED ON THIS DOCUMENT

Any potentially sensitive cases where consent has not been obtained should be referred to Counter Fraud Team (CFT) senior executive officer (SEO) for advice before any action is taken.

Once issued, the EP, ETD, or passport must be provided to the foreign authority which applied for the document on the applicant's behalf.

Repatriation of prisoners

This part of the guidance only affects British nationals serving sentences in a foreign jurisdiction who have been repatriated to the United Kingdom to serve the remainder of their sentence.

From 3 October 2005, a process was implemented whereby British nationals serving sentences in a foreign jurisdiction will be repatriated to the United Kingdom to serve the remainder of their sentence. The prisoner will repay the cost of the repatriation. The prisoner's passport will be confiscated and forwarded to HM Passport Office who will securely retain the un-cancelled passport. The prisoner's passport that has been retained will only be returned once notification is received from His Majesty's

Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Wandsworth to confirm the costs have been recovered.

HM Passport Office will also add the prisoner's details to the watchlist.

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