# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent applications from the UK and Overseas</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Urgent Applications from the UK and Overseas</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countersignature</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic Standards Policy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forces Birth Certificates</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM Forces marriage certificates</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right of abode and settled status for Gurkhas and other members to HM Forces subject to service law</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Passports</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost, Stolen and Recovered Passports</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas Applications from HM Forces</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentication by Interview</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment Methods</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Procurement Card (GPC)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The payment will be processed by BPO</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment by cheque</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methods of payment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid and declined payments</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refunds due to excess payment</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This page covers standard and urgent application from HM Forces personnel (and those subject to service law) in the UK or oversea and explains how they should be dealt with.

From 1 October 2012 HM Passport Office took over responsibility for Armed Forces passport application from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). This means that applications from service personnel in the UK and overseas will be dealt with in the same manner. This guidance also applies to the dependents of Forces personnel resident overseas.

These applications are known as Her Majesty’s Armed “Forces” applications. They should not be confused with Diplomatic or Official passports, which are treated in different way.

The fee for these passports will be met by the MOD (this includes the fee for the Premium or Fast Track Service, upgrades and any additional costs for urgent overseas applications were courier service is required.

These applications will be subject to quality checks when randomly selected by the system.
Urgent applications from the UK and Overseas

Service personnel may require passports urgently and will submit applications via HMPO Her Majesty’s Passport Office counters in the UK. (Please see Tiered Application Service (TAS). The same assessment criteria as outlined in Non urgent Applications applies.

Overseas service personnel who require passports urgently will apply as follows:

- Urgent applications will be couriered at the applicant’s expense to HM Passport Office rather than via the BFPO system.

- The Unit will provide a letter confirming the urgency and requirement for the passport to be collected by courier (these should be scanned as supporting documents). These applications will be treated as urgent and will be processed immediately.

- Urgent applications will be streamed to the Forces team in Peterborough, where they will be examined and personalised in Local Print.

- The Fast Track service fee will apply and a dummy refund will be needed.

- Examiners will need to contact the Unit to confirm that the passport will be ready for collection and obtain details of the courier who will collect the passport.

- The Unit will arrange the courier service and advise the courier they should have the applicant’s full name and Unit address plus proof of identity.

The personalised passport and documents (if any) should be taken down to the counter area where it will be collected by the courier service.

A dummy refund should be set up for those urgent applications that have been submitted from overseas and the Fast Track fee has been submitted and allocated onto the system.
Non Urgent Applications from the UK and Overseas

Applications will be received in Sopra Steria marked PO Box 1238 from HM Forces in the UK and overseas (may be bulk or single applications).

Ministry of Defence (MOD) service personnel both in the UK and overseas and overseas dependents can apply for British passports for official business by post to PO Box 1238 from the UK and overseas. These will be dealt with by a dedicated team in the Peterborough Processing Centre. The applicant’s private address should be shown in section two of the application form, the unit address which should be shown in section eight of the application form will be the address used for the return of the passport and supporting documents (this applies to UK and overseas applications). HM Forces have been asked to ensure that they follow these instructions and have been warned that failure to do this may lead to delays in the processing time.

Application forms may be identified on one of the following ways:

- HM Forces BFPO address. This may be shown on the letter of introduction or itinerary letter (this letter should be scanned as a supporting document).
- General Procurement Card (GCP) payment mandate will be completed in pounds Sterling.
- Her Majesty’s Government (HMG) cheque in pounds Sterling.
Countersignature

Service personnel in the UK and overseas and dependents of service personnel based overseas are required to provide a countersigned form and certified photograph for all First Time Applications (FTA) in line with standard policy. An application with a countersignature that meets the standard countersignature policy criteria is acceptable. For Forces applications submitted which do not match our standard policy the following exception applies.

- Given that forces personnel might be new recruits or serving personnel with a high degree of mobility, obtaining a countersignature in accordance with standard policy may not always be possible. In view of this, and the fact that personnel undergo security clearance upon enlistment, they are granted certain privileges due to the nature of their employment.

- Service personnel and dependents may supply applications showing countersignatures with less than the standard two year criteria accepted by HMPO Her Majesty’s Passport Office. Applications received that are countersigned by officers of a rank of Captain and above, and with a minimum period of time for personnel where they are currently stationed may be accepted, (this can be for as little as weeks or months). This should only be authorised on the strict proviso that these applications have been submitted via PO Box 1238 or HM Passport Office counter with official confirmation.

- Applications that have been provided with a civilian or non-forces countersignature (i.e. by persons with personal knowledge of the applicant outside of their current employment) should be treated as non-forces applications in terms of length of time accepted and no exceptions should be made.
Photographic Standards Policy

The photographic standards policy requirements should be fully applied to service personnel (please accept a photograph where it appears they are wearing a uniform as the assumption is that they have given consent by wearing it.)
Forces Birth Certificates

Copies of entries of birth overseas made in the British Army & Royal Air Force Registers, and the Foreign Register of Births at Edinburgh should not be accepted for nationality purposes, as they only establish particulars of parentage, place and date of birth.

The national status of an applicant born overseas whilst their parent was serving in the Armed Forces is determined primarily by their date and place of birth and those of their parents. Applications must be examined in accordance with the appropriate nationality act(s). Please also see Birth Certificates-obtaining birth certificates from Ministry of Defence.

If the parent was serving in the Royal Air Force at the time of the applicant's birth overseas and the applicant wishes to confirm the parent’s birth and marriage, then they should be advised that they can obtain copies of relevant certificates by writing to the following address:

Department PMSN 4A2BRAF
Innsworth
Gloucestershire

If the parent was serving in the army at the time of the applicant's birth overseas and the applicant wishes to confirm the parent’s birth and marriage, then they should be advised that they can obtain copies of relevant certificates by writing to the following address:

Ministry of Defence
Government Buildings
Bourne Avenue
Hayes
Middlesex
UB3 1RF
HM Forces marriage certificates

Please see Passports: Marriage Guidance for HM Forces Marriage Certificates
Right of abode and settled status for Gurkhas and other members to HM Forces subject to service law

Please see the Immigration and Right of Abode-Settled status for Vietnamese Refugees and Gurkhas and Other members of HM Forces subject to service law.

A Crown Service letter may be accepted when it is submitted to support a 2(1) (b) nationality claim from overseas service personnel. Such letters should be submitted with the application and will be signed off by the Commanding Officer (this should be scanned as a supporting document).
Additional Passports

Additional passports for service personnel may be granted provided they are submitted through the Unit and include written confirmation that an additional (or second) passport is required for official duties. The letter should be signed by a rank of Commanding Officer or above.
Lost, Stolen and Recovered Passports

Applications from service personnel requesting replacement passports for lost or stolen passports should be treated in the same manner as standard requests for replacements. Files still need to be sought; LS forms need to be completed, etc.

Please see Lost, Stolen and Recovered Passports for full guidance.
Overseas Applications from HM Forces

Please see Applications - Applications from Persons Resident Overseas.
Authentication by Interview

Serving HM Forces service personnel in the UK and overseas applying for their first passport are no longer routinely required to attend an interview. This is because members of HM Forces have already been subject to identity checks by the Ministry of Defence as part of the recruitment and enlistment process. However service personnel dependents in the UK and overseas applying for their first passport interviewed in the normal way.
Payment Methods

There are various acceptable methods of payment for service personnel applications submitted by post and via HM Passport Office counters. These are as follows:

General Procurement Card (GPC)

General Procurement Card (GPC) is the agreed method of payment from overseas applications and the preferred method of payment for UK applications (urgent and non-urgent) and must be in pound Sterling.

Credit card mandates should be completed by the GPC holder of the relevant unit or base for UK applications and by Unit Welfare for overseas applications.

The payment will be processed by BPO

Please note that the payment will be allocated to the same mandate when block applications are submitted (i.e. one mandate for bulk applications).

Block applications may need to be separated by HM Passport Office Finance/Business Support as some GPC payment cards have an upper transaction limit. This is because Sopra Steria cannot perform this function due to security issues. As with any mandate payment issues, these will be dealt with initially by Business Support to try and resolve the issue.

HMPO Finance/Business Support should securely destroy the payment mandates once the payment has been successfully taken.

Payment by cheque

A small number of UK applications will be received with a cheque in pounds Sterling. These cheques should show a four digit reference number known as Her Majesty’s Government (HMG) number. This number is unique to a specific unit or base and should be printed on the front of each cheque. BPO will note the number on the form at the post opening stage.

Other methods of payment

Please note that cash and personal cheques can exceptionally be accepted (in these cases payment will be claimed back from the MOD by the individual)
Invalid and declined payments

Mandates where the payment has been declined or is invalid will be taken to Finance/Business Support by Sopra Steria and highlighted with a “D” or “I” (declined or invalid). Finance/Business Support will retry the payment by PDQ machine and should contact the card holder by telephone if this fails.

The debt should be passed to Durham finance if the payment still cannot be taken.
Refunds due to excess payment

Units may appear to provide excess payment (block or single applications), examiners should therefore check all of the payment screens within the block of applications before proceeding with any examination action in case fees have been incorrectly allocated at the cashiering stage. They should reallocate funds where appropriate, as units are unwilling to issue secondary payments to cover when an inappropriate refund has been issued by HMPO Her Majesty’s Passport Office.

HM Forces will only normally pay for a Standard passport.

Refunds must be paid by cheque in pounds Sterling to the unit and not the applicant whose applications shows excess money paid.

Refunds should be set up as follows:

Payment by cheque – Payee’s name should be replaced by the phrase “HMG PUB SUB ACC NO. . . . . . . . (adding the HMG number)

Payment by credit card – Payee’s name should be replaced by “GPC payment refunded back to card number (last 4 digits of card number only)

Note: Credit/debit card numbers should never be recorded or transmitted in full on AMS nor on Admin IT.

The address should also be changed to that of the unit as follow:

Officer Commanding (PSF/UPO/ROA) Unit or BFPO address Post code (if applicable)

The appropriate refund letter should be included with the supporting documentation (addressed to the unit rather than the applicant’s home address). A case note should be added to reference payment being made to the unit/credit card rather than to the applicant.