



Home Office

# Delivery addresses for passports and documents

Version 6.0

Guidance for His Majesty's Passport Office staff dealing with customers addresses on passport applications

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# About: Delivery addresses for passports and documents

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff why we need a delivery address and how to:

- correctly record a customer's address to prevent errors and incorrect deliveries of passports and supporting documents
- ask for evidence to use and record an alternative or 'care of' address
- change a customer's delivery address after they send in their application
- confirm an address for a third party or vulnerable person
- check a customer's address using Digital Application Process (DAP)
- update a customer's address on DAP
- when and how to use the Application Management System, alternative address field

This guidance must be used for deliveries of new passports and the return of supporting documents. This includes when we have refused the application because the customer has no claim, or the customer has withdrawn their application.

## 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 **6.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **29 September 2022**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to reflect the change in our sovereign from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to His Majesty King Charles III.

### Related content

[Contents](#)

# Delivery addresses

This section tells HM Passport Office staff working on applications from the UK or overseas what address the customer must put on their application and what to do if the customer's residential address is missing or incomplete or they ask us to use an alternative address.

HM Passport Office must make sure we send customers documents and new passports to a secure address and not to unauthorised third parties. We use address information to safeguard our customers, help prove their identity and prevent fraud. We use a combination of automated and manual examiner checks to make sure the customer's address is correct, and we do not:

- breach the Data Protection Act, as we as individuals and as an organisation have a legal responsibility to protect and store personal data
- compromise the customer's passport and supporting documents by authorising delivery to the wrong address
- overlook safeguarding and vulnerability concerns for cases where address information is protected for the safety of the customer
- negatively impact our reputation and our delivery partners, by causing distress or potential harm to the customer if valuable identity documents are lost or compromised

Customers who apply online are asked to give their residential (home) address for their delivery address. When the customer applies online the system will tell them what information they must give and populate it into the correct fields (preventing most format errors). For UK applications, the customer can input their post code and select their address from a list of validated UK addresses. International customers must type their address into their online application. As the customer inputs their address directly to their application there is no risk of a scanning error caused by character recognition technology.

We [scan paper forms onto the Application Management System \(AMS\)](#) to create an electronic application using optical character recognition technology. Examiners must check for scanning and spelling errors, missing information (such as a missing postcode or house number) or incorrect formatting if the customer applies using a paper form.

You, the examiner, must check the customer's address is correct and acceptable if the customer:

- applies using a paper form
- asks us to send their passport or documents to an alternative or care of address rather than their residential (home) address
- has an address which is [too long for DCS to show clearly on the AMS](#), for example, where AMS shows an abbreviated address with an ellipsis (3 dots)
- must have their documents returned to a:

- [British Forces Post Office address](#)
- Visa Application Centre (VAC)
- lives in a country where there are specific address layout or information needs (see Local Services and International Submissions Booklet for details)

## What address information we need from the customer

The customer must give us their residential (home) address in their application unless:

- they are in HM Armed Forces and are applying through the Armed Forces application route
- they provide a British Forces Passport Office (BFPO) address (for example, they work overseas for the British Armed Forces or the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office)
- they apply from the [Department of transport](#)

We must have evidence of the customer's overseas residency if they live in a group 2 or group 3 country. We use proof of residency evidence to build a picture of the customer's identity, not for checking we have the customer's correct address details. See Confirming identity.

You can use overseas residency evidence containing the customer's name and address as proof of their delivery address if needed.

## When the customer uses a business address or PO box number

Some customers in the UK or overseas may live at what appears to be a business address or for security reasons, use a post office box number or a mail hosting address in a business park. For example, they may live and work in a hotel or campsite, in a boat or they may live above a business.

If the customer's address appears to be a business address (not a post office box address) you must contact them by phone or email and ask if this is their usual residential address. If the customer confirms it is their residential address you must case note the details and accept the customer's address.

If the customer confirms a business address is an [alternative address](#) and not their residential address, [you must ask for their residential address in writing](#) and consider whether you have enough information to send the documents and passport to the business address.

If a customer gives us a [UK Post Office box address](#) or mail hosting address (these are usually located in a business park or trading estate) you must not accept it. Our delivery partners cannot deliver to these addresses in the UK.

Customers who use an [overseas post office box address](#) must send us evidence they use this address for all purposes. We must be happy it is a secure address and

their documents will not be compromised. This address evidence is needed even if the customer lives or wants their documents or passport sent to, a group 1 country.

## When we cannot use an overseas residential address

We do not send new passports or documents direct to the customer's home address if the customer:

- must collect their passport or documents from a Visa Application Centre (VAC)
- applied through a passport office in a British overseas territory

## Checking a change of address is genuine

You, the examiner, must be certain that any change or alteration to the address on the application is from the genuine customer. You must also consider if there are any vulnerability or risk indicators which would impact the intended passport holder. For example, for a child, is there a risk someone intends to abduct them.

We would not expect the customer to give us their residential (home) address and then ask us to send their new passport to an alternative address and their supporting documents to different alternative address. If this happens you must investigate further and consider if this is a potential fraud or vulnerability issue that must be referred to the Counter Fraud team or the Child Protection and Safeguarding team.

## Is the request genuine: adult applications

For adult customer's unless specifically mentioned in this guidance (for example, if we believe they are vulnerable) or where you have other concerns you can accept a request to change or amend an address and the evidence needed to support the change:

- in an email, from the customer's email address originally shown on the application
- in writing (with a wet signature) by post

If you have concerns about the application or the customer sends a letter in writing, you must confirm the signature is genuine before you agree to change the address.

As the information the customer's countersignatory or digital referee confirmed has changed (due to the new or alternative address) you must contact the customer's countersignatory or digital referee (using AMS letter template T200, see [DAP address issues: when to refer an application to AMS](#)) and ask them to confirm the new address. You must do this if:

- the customer is a first time adult and will not be having an identity interview
- you cannot confirm the customer's photo identity from their previous passport record on Main Index



## Is the request genuine: child and vulnerable adult applications

When dealing with applications for children or vulnerable adults you must consider if the claimed address, change of address or alternative address creates vulnerability and safeguarding concerns. The use of an address other than the residential address of the customer or parent on behalf of the child must be investigated.

You must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team, if you have any doubts about the request to change the address and these are not satisfied through consent and evidence from the customer and the digital referee or countersignatory.

For vulnerable adults (where a third party has applied on their behalf) and for all child applications, the request to change the address must be in writing (with a wet signature) and sent by post together with the evidence needed.

You must:

1. Consider if the claimed address, change of address or alternative creates vulnerability and safeguarding concerns.
2. Check the signature is genuine and get change or alternate address evidence before you agree to change the address.
3. Contact the digital referee or countersignatory (where one has been provided), using AMS letter T200 (see DAP address issues: when to refer an application to AMS), and ask them to reconfirm the customer's link to the new delivery address.

## Is the request genuine: checking with a countersignatory or digital referee

To help protect against fraud, identity abuse and abduction we reconfirm a change of address with the countersignatory or digital referee for:

- children
- vulnerable adults
- adults who cannot identify from our records
- adults applying for the first time who will not be attending an interview

As countersignatories and digital referees must have personal knowledge of the customer to be acceptable, they should, for example be able to confirm if the customer has moved, where they work or their relationship to another residential address.

If the countersignatory or digital referee cannot confirm the customer's new address you must:

- refer the application to Enhanced Application Checking (EAC) if you are processing on AMS
- complete additional checks (and decide if you need to **Refer for investigation**) if you are processing on the Digital Application Processing (DAP) system

## When we must send supporting documents to multiple people and addresses

There are occasions when we must return the customer's supporting documents to several different people. For example, when we need extra documents to confirm a signature is genuine or where parents are separated, and we must send some documents to one address and others to a different one.

You, the DAP examiner, must refer the application to AMS if you need to send supporting documents back to more than one address.

You, the AMS examiner, must make sure you return the correct documents to the right person at the address they provide. You must arrange for a typed address label to be manually generated (using IT) and place the documents into a separate envelope.

### Related content

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# When customers use BFPO addresses

This section tells HM Passport Office examiners about British Forces Post Office (BFPO) addresses. It includes how to deal with applications that have a BFPO address or want to change to a BFPO address and how to format BFPO addresses.

The British Forces Post Office (BFPO) is a UK postal organisation based in the UK, used by HM Forces, UK Visa & Immigration and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to send post to and from UK:

- Armed forces stationed overseas
- embassies and consulates
- Visa Application Centres (VAC)

BFPO addresses are identified by the first line of the address showing BFPO followed by a number. The number is set by BFPO and identifies the location of the embassy, consulate, VAC or overseas HM Forces base.

For our purposes the remaining part of the address will always be in Ruislip, Middlesex with a UK post code. Mail sent to this address is then sorted and dispatched throughout the world by the BFPO.

## When to refer a BFPO address to AMS

Examiners working on DAP (Digital Application processing) must refer all applications which have a BFPO address to the AMS (Application Management System).

## Updating a BFPO address in AMS

You must make sure you record the customer's packages as a UK delivery on AMS, if an overseas customer gives us a BFPO address to return their documents or new passport.

You, the AMS examiner, must:

1. Examine the application as normal (for example, using HM Armed Forces or Diplomatic and Official passports and observations guidance).
2. Open the customer's application at the fees screen on the Application Management System (AMS).
3. Put a tick in the correct fields to show the BFPO address is a UK postal address for:
  - supporting documents
  - passport delivery
4. Amend the fees on AMS if needed (for example, by creating a dummy refund if the customer's documents are sent to a VAC Local Service).

5. Complete the application as needed and [update the alternative address field](#) if necessary, checking you have the [correct formatting for a BFPO address](#).

Customer's working overseas for HM Armed Forces of the FCDO who apply privately, direct to us, may also use a BFPO address. If you need address evidence, for example for confirming identity or for proof of an alternative address you must ask for it. These people may send in a letter from their commanding officer or utility bills, tax or bank statements which use the BFPO address as evidence.

## How to format British Forces Post Office addresses

GOV.UK holds a list of BFPO addresses that shows different UK postcodes for each BFPO location. For example, Naples in Italy shows BF1 2AB. However as these are not physical locations in the UK our delivery partners cannot deliver to these addresses.

When dealing with a BFPO address, you must check the address is formatted correctly for our purposes and the postcode is correct. If you are dealing with an application on:

- the Diplomatic and Official Passport team you must use post code:
  - HA4 6DQ
- An examination team you must use post code:
  - HA4 6EP

You must use the address information and layout shown in the International submission route and Local Services information booklet if you are sending the customers documents to a Visa Application Centre (VAC) that uses the BFPO. For all other BFPO applications you must use the following layout and address:

Address line	Information needed
Line 1	BFPO [insert BFPO number and place]
Line 2	West End Road
Line 3	Ruislip
Line 4	Middlesex
Line 5	HA4 6EP

### Related content

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# When customers change their residential address

This section tells HM Passport Office examiners what to do if the customer changes their residential (home) address after they have sent us their passport application.

Customers occasionally ask us to change their delivery address after they submit their application. To make sure we do not compromise the customer's personal data by sending their passport and documents to an incorrect address we ask the customer to:

- send us evidence to prove they are:
  - the person who consented to the application
  - not an imposter trying to steal the customer's personal data
- confirm their link to the new address

We ask the customer to send us evidence of a change in address in this scenario to make sure a third party or other parent or guardian (in the case of parental disputes) cannot change the customer's delivery address without their consent.

## If the customer does not give us their residential address

If you become aware the customer has not given us their residential address or they have only given part of the address you, the examiner, must contact them and ask for it in writing (with a wet signature) by post. For example, we can confirm an address if we have a house number and postcode using the internet, but we cannot confirm the address if the customer has not given us their house or flat number.

## AMS: when the customer replies with their residential address

When the customer replies to your request for their residential (home) address, and you are working on the Application Management System (AMS) you must:

1. Check their signature is genuine.
2. Case note the customer's residential address and scan the customer's letter to the application as a permanent record.
3. Case note the checks you completed and your decision to accept or reject the information.

## DAP: when the customer replies with their residential address

When the customer replies to your request for their residential (home) address, and you are working on the Digital Application Processing system (DAP) you must:

1. Check their signature is genuine.

2. Case note the results of your check on the customer's signature and your decision to accept or reject the information.
3. [Manually edit the home address field in DAP](#) (DAP will add a case note to confirm the changes) if you are confident the customer is genuine.
4. Update the return delivery address for passports and documents if the customer needs to use an alternative delivery address and you are happy to accept the address.

## Applications returned from interview due to an address issue

Customer service officers (CSOs) may return an application back to examination if they discover during the interview the:

- customer moved to a new house after they applied
- address is incorrect (for example, there is a scanning error)
- customer did not know their address and more information is needed
- address given is not the customer's residential address

If you, the examiner, deal with an application that has been returned by a CSO you must investigate and ask the customer for the appropriate information you need. If you have concerns about the application, you must refer it to the Counter Fraud team.

## Evidence we need to change a residential address

If the customer moves home during the application process, they must send us confirmation and evidence.

Evidence a customer has moved address includes, for example:

- a utility bill or letter from the utility company
- written confirmation from the owner or occupier stating that the customer is resident there
- a letter from a bank or financial institution
- a letter from the local authority
- a tenancy agreement

## How to check change of home address evidence

If the customer asks us to change their home address you, the examiner, must check if you can deal with the application (for example, if the change in address means the application is now classed as an overseas application or where it cannot be processed in DAP). If you can continue to deal with the application, you must :

1. Check the customer's signature is genuine (where needed).
2. Check the evidence links the customer to the new residential address.
3. Add a case note to confirm your decision.

4. Add the new address to the:
  - [alternative address field in AMS](#)
  - alternative address field in DAP
5. Scan the customer's change of address evidence and letter in AMS.

## When the new delivery address is in another country or is a BFPO address

If the customer changes their delivery address to a different country, or applied from overseas but wants to use a British Forces Post Office (BFPO) you, the examiner, must:

1. Ask for change of address evidence.
2. Deal with the application using the appropriate overseas guidance for group 1, 2 or 3 countries.
3. Deal with the application on AMS if:
  - the application is one which cannot be dealt with on DAP (for example, the customer needs to use a BFPO address or they have moved to a group 3 country)
  - the change in country affects the delivery fee we charge the customer
4. Update the delivery address fields for the customer's supporting documents and new passport and:
  - Update the **Delivery** country in DAP using the drop down menu in the **Applications details, Contact and delivery tab** (if the application can be dealt with in DAP)
  - click on **UK Delivery** on AMS if the new address has changed from overseas to the UK and make sure the fees balance

## Changing an address after dispatch

If we have already returned the customer's supporting documents or authorised their new passport and they tell us to send them to a different address (for example if they have moved to a new house), you must:

1. Arrange to have the package redirected back to the office (if it has not been delivered).
2. Contact the customer and ask for the [evidence we need to change an address](#).
3. Add a case note or passport note to explain what has happened and what the next action will be.

If you discover the customer's address was incorrect (for example, due to a scanning or typing error) and the passport has already been authorised (but not yet delivered) you must:

1. Arrange to have the passport and supporting documents redirected to the correct address or back to HM Passport Office.
2. Record the correct address as a:
  - case note on the application in AMS
  - passport note on Main Index (if the application was processed on DAP)

If the customer's secure delivery package has already been delivered you must deal with the application using the guidance in Secure delivery: UK and international investigations.

#### **Related content**

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# When customers give an alternative or 'care of' addresses

This section tells HM Passport Office examiners working on UK or overseas applications how to check alternative or 'care of' addresses.

For most customers in the UK or overseas, we send their new passport and their supporting documents to their residential (home) address. If they ask us to send them to an alternative delivery address, we must check we have enough information before we agree. Our agreement will depend on the reason the customer wants to use an alternative address, the address used, and the evidence given.

Customers may give us a different (alternative) delivery address or a 'care of address' (for example a post office box address), as part of their original application (in a letter or written on a paper application form) or while their application is in progress. For example, they may have delivery problems or want the documents sent to their work address.

Whether the customer tells us about the alternative or 'care of' address when they make their application or later, they may need to send us extra evidence and confirmation. You, the examiner, must ask for the extra information based on what kind of address they want to use. You, must also consider if the request to change the delivery address identifies:

- risk indicators
- vulnerabilities for a vulnerable adult or for a child

In all cases if the customer tells us about an alternative or change of address after they have sent in their application, they must tell us why in statement. They must confirm they will be liable for replacing the new passport or supporting documents if they are lost after they have been delivered.

You must refer an application processed on Digital Application Processing (DAP) to the Application Management System (AMS) if the customer's request to change their address cannot be processed on DAP.

When you are satisfied with the address provided if you amend the address on the system you must:

- use the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
- [edit the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## What an alternative or 'care of' address is

An alternative or 'care of' address may be:

- where the customer is currently living (for example, the customer may be vulnerable and be staying in a homeless shelter or refuge)
- an alternative delivery address (for example, because their home may not be secure, and they need the documents sent to their work address)

If the customer tells us in a letter, email, phone call or on a paper application they want to use a 'care of' address, you must contact them and ask them to confirm their current home address in writing (if they have not already given it).

## What evidence we need for alternative or 'care of addresses'

We must ask all customers for more information, confirmation of their link to the alternate address and a statement, confirming they take responsibility for the documents if they are lost after delivery, if the address is:

- a business address
- an alternative or 'care of' address
- a [delivery address in a different country](#)

If you are unable to identify a customer or have doubts about why or where they want their passport redirected to, you must:

- refer the application for extra checks to Enhanced Application Checking (EAC) if you are processing on AMS
- complete additional checks (and **Refer for investigation** if needed) if you are processing on DAP

## When the alternative address is in a different country

A customer may apply for their passport from one country (for example, the UK or France), but give a delivery address in another country. If this happens the application must be dealt with using the Application Management System (AMS) if the change in address:

- affects the delivery fees we charge
- changes how we deal with their application (for example, if the case cannot be dealt with in DAP)

You, the AMS examiner, must ask the customer to explain in writing why they have changed their delivery address to a different country. You must send AMS system letter 269.

The customer must explain:

- how they will get their passport if it is delivered to a different country
- who the alternative address belongs to
- why they need to use an alternative address

You will need to deal with the customer's application differently depending on where they want their documents delivered to. If necessary, you must deal with the customer's application as a group 1, 2 or 3 country and ask for more supporting documents or extra fees before you complete their application.

You must ask the customer for evidence connecting them to the alternative delivery address if the customer asks us to send it to a:

- [different residential address](#)
- [business address](#)

## When we need parental consent to use an alternative or 'care of' address

Where the application is for a child and we are asked to deliver to an alternative address you must always get written consent from the person who gave parental consent to the application, (and check their additional consent is genuine) before you agree to the new address.

For example, you must do this if:

- a parent or guardian (who did not send in the application) asks you to send the documents back to an alternative address
- a parent or guardian asks you to use an alternative delivery address

For all child application (except those where the child is in care of social services or is at boarding school) you must contact the digital referee or countersignatory using AMS letter T200 and ask them to reconfirm the link to the alternative or new address. We do this because the information they confirmed on the application has changed.

## When a 'care of' address is used for a Premium counter application

Our Premium service is only available to customers who are in the UK at the time of the application (see Tiered Application Service: the service levels we provide). Customers who use our Premium service at a public counter usually collect their passport, but they still need to give us an address in the UK or the Republic of Ireland before we will accept their application.

Some customers who work overseas may take advantage of this service if they are visiting the UK. The address they give us must be:

- their residential address in the UK, Republic of Ireland or overseas
- the address where they are staying in the UK or Republic of Ireland, if they normally live or work overseas (for example, a friend or family members address, or hotel address)

If you become aware the customer lives and works overseas, you must:

1. Consider who submitted the application; was this:
  - the customer
  - a third party
2. Decide if there are any fraud concerns (for example, is the customer trying to avoid any overseas risk based intervention).
3. Decide if you need more information if the address given is a 'care of' address, (for example, a letter from the owner or occupier of the residential address they are staying at) .
4. Update the customers address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

You must reject the application if the customer is not in the UK at the time of the application. The customer must apply using the appropriate route.

## When the 'care of' address is another residential address

If the customer asks us to deliver their passport (or supporting documents) to an alternative residential address, where they do not live, you must ask for written confirmation from:

- the customer (if the alternative address was not given when they sent in their application)
- the owner or occupier stating they will accept delivery

The owner or occupier must also send us evidence to confirm their link to that address, for example a utility bill showing their name and address.

When you receive the letter from the customer (if one is needed), you must:

1. Check the customer's signature is genuine (where needed).
2. Check the address exists using online sources (where possible).
3. Scan the letter onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
4. Add a case note to record your decision.
5. Update the customers address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## When the 'care of' address is a UK or overseas post office box address

If the customer gives a UK or overseas post office (PO) box address or what is known as a mail holding address (usually identified as a business unit address in a trading estate) in place of a residential address, you must ask them why.

If the PO box address is their usual correspondence address for example, because they are in a [refuge or shelter](#), or live on a boat or barge, or their home address is

not secure, they must send us additional information. We need this to understand the customer's needs and make sure the customer is directly linked to the address they give us, and it is used for other purposes.

## UK PO box addresses

Our UK delivery service providers cannot deliver to a PO box or mail holding address in the UK. In all cases the customer must provide their residential address, if the residential address cannot accept mail, the customer must provide an alternative UK address without a PO box number. If the PO box is connected to a business address you must ask for their residential address (if they have one) and deal with the application using the [guidance for business addresses](#).

When you are satisfied with the address provided you must amend the address on the system using the [alternative address field on AMS](#) or by [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## Overseas post office box addresses

When the customer uses an overseas post office box address in place of a residential address for all their correspondence, you must ask them for:

- a utility bill or bank statement, it must:
  - be dated within the last 12 months
  - show the customer's name and correspondence (post office box) address

You must do this for all overseas applications including those from group 1 countries.

## When the 'care of' address is a refuge or shelter

When a customer asks us to deliver to a homeless shelter or refuge, they may give us a PO box address. As our delivery service providers cannot deliver to a UK PO box address you must ask the customer for an address we can use (for example, a relative or friend's residential address) and consider if we need more evidence to confirm their link, depending on the address they use.

When you receive the letter with a new address (if one is needed) from the customer, you must:

1. Check the customer's signature is genuine (where needed)
2. Check the address exists using online sources (where possible).
3. Scan the letter onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
4. Add a case note to record your decision.
5. Update the customer's address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## When the 'care of' address is a business address

If the customer asks us to deliver their passport (or supporting documents) to a business address, you must ask the customer for:

- written confirmation on letterheaded paper, they are employed at the address provided
- a name of a person at the address who will accept delivery

You must also explain that HM Passport Office takes no responsibility for documents lost after we have delivered them.

## How to check business address evidence

When you receive the customer's signed statement, you must:

1. Check the customer's signature is genuine (if necessary).
2. Check the address exists using online sources.
3. Check you have no concerns about the business (for example, using internet sources, check if it is an established company or does it appear to be a pop up).
4. Scan the letter onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
5. Add a case note to record your decision.
6. Update the customers address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## When the 'care of' address is a solicitor's office

The customer must give us their home address on the application, but we will return their documents to a solicitor if they tell us the solicitor is acting on their behalf.

If you have signed confirmation the solicitor is acting on the customer's behalf, you must:

1. Check the customer's signature is genuine.
2. Check the solicitor and address exists using online sources.
3. Scan the letter onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
4. Add a case note to record your decision.
5. Update the customers address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

## When the 'care of' address is a hospital, mental health facility or care home

Some customers may give a hospital, mental health facility or care home address as their home address if they are temporarily staying there (this includes what are

described as long term stays). Applications using these types of addresses could [indicate a vulnerable person](#) and you must check you have the correct information before you agree to change the address.

If the customer asks us to change the address from or to a hospital, mental health facility or care home you must check if the person asking to change the address is authorised to do so. If the customer is staying at one of these types of addresses you must get written confirmation from their doctor, ward or unit manager confirming this.

When you receive the letter, you must:

1. Check the address exists using online sources.
2. Scan the letter onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
3. Add a case note to record your decision.

If the customer tells us they cannot receive post at the address they give us you must ask for a different address and ask them to send us the necessary evidence.

## When the 'care of' address is a boarding school

If a child is at boarding school the parent or legal guardian may ask us to send the passport and documents to the school address rather than a home address.

You must ask the person consenting to the application to:

- confirm the boarding school address (with a wet signature) and send it to us by post
- ask the school to send us written confirmation on letterheaded paper giving a name of a person at the address who will accept delivery

When you receive the letter from the parent or guardian you must:

1. Check the parent's signature is genuine.
2. Check the address on the school letter exists using online sources.
3. Scan any letters onto the system (if the application is on AMS).
4. Add a case note to record your decision.
5. Update the customer's delivery address on the system by:
  - using the [alternative address field on AMS](#)
  - [editing the appropriate address fields in DAP](#)

Also see, [When the alternative delivery addresses is in a different country](#).

## When the 'care of' address is the countersignatory's or digital referee's

When the customer has put the countersignatory or digital referee's address as the 'care of' address you must:

- refer the application to Enhanced Application Checking (EAC) if you are processing on AMS
- complete additional checks (and **Refer for investigation** if needed) if you are processing on DAP

## When the customer is a prisoner in the UK or overseas

You must follow the Prisoner guidance if you receive an application from a customer using a prison address in the UK or overseas.

If we are aware the customer is in prison, the passport must be sent to the governor of that prison (or the relevant consulate office of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)) for safe keeping until the prisoner is released. The customer cannot have a change of address or use an alternative delivery address whilst they are still in custody without the consent of the prison governor.

You may need to send the prisoners passport to the FCDO consulate or embassy if the prison overseas does not accept courier deliveries. See Knowledge base.

## When there is a crisis situation

You must follow the Crisis situations – supporting our customers guidance if you receive an application from a customer who has applied for a passport following a crisis.

## When the address is for a Department for Transport application

If you receive an application with the Department for Transport instead of a residential (home) address, you must accept this and follow the additional passport guidance.

### Related content

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# Formatting the customer's address

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how to check a customer's address is displayed correctly, for UK and overseas addresses.

You, the examiner, must make sure the customer's address has all the necessary information to allow our delivery partners to deliver to the correct address. You may need to reformat the customer's address on the Application Management System (AMS), so it is displayed in a way which meets the supplier's needs or to re-add information removed by PAF.

Digital Application Processing (DAP) will display and print all customer addresses in a format acceptable to our secure delivery providers; you must not amend addresses on DAP simply to reformat them. See [DAP: when we do not need to reformat addresses](#).

Where we need to use the alternative address field in the Application Management System (AMS) or DAP you must make sure you have typed and formatted the address correctly.

## How to format a UK address

You, the examiner must make sure the customer's UK address is correctly formatted if:

- they applied using a paper form
- you [need to use the alternative address field](#) on the AMS
- you need to [amend the home or delivery address fields in DAP](#)

You must format a UK residential address as:

Address line	Information needed
Line 1	House or flat number and building name or street
Line 2	Street name (if house name given) or village
Line 3	Town
Line 4	County
Line 5	Post code

Provided the customer has given the [minimum necessary UK address information](#) there is no need to amend the customer's address, such as changing county designations or to correct widely known abbreviations such as Rd (Road), Grdn (Gardens) and Ave (Avenue).

## How to format Local Service addresses in AMS

You must make sure the delivery address is formatted correctly if the International submission routes and Local Services booklet tells you to:

- send the customer's documents and new passport to a UK Visa Application Centre (VAC)

For VAC addressed which use BFPO (British Forces Post Office address) you must make sure you [record the customer's packages as a UK delivery on AMS](#). The customer is not entitled to a refund of any delivery fee when we deliver to the UK.

## When to change AMS to record a UK delivery address

You must click on **UK Delivery**, on the fees tab on AMS, if the customer's home or alternative address is in the UK or they are using a BFPO address. You must do this to make sure the correct delivery partner collects and delivers the customer's package.

Changing an overseas application to a UK delivery may affect the fee recorded on AMS. If the customer must pay the overseas delivery fee (for example, if we need to return the documents to a UK Visa Application Centre (VAC)) you must process a 'dummy refund' on AMS to balance the fees. If you do this, you must add a case note explaining what you have done and why.

## How to format an overseas delivery address

You must format the customer's overseas address correctly if the application is processed on AMS, so our delivery partners have the correct information to deliver documents and passports in the customer's country of residence.

DAP automatically formats the customer's address correctly when they input the information online. However, you must make sure you format a customer's address correctly if you amend the details in the home or delivery address fields in DAP.

Many countries have specific in-country needs regarding their addresses, for example, Hong Kong, and Japan have specific formatting instructions. You must check the International Submission Routes and Local Service Information booklet for specific in-country instructions about overseas addresses.

You must use the alternative [address field in AMS](#) or [DAP](#) if the booklet tells you to:

- send the customer's documents and new passport to a UK Visa Application Centre (VAC)
- format an overseas application address in a specific way

## How to display overseas delivery addresses

As address formats differ throughout the world (for example, some countries do not have post or zip codes) it is important you use your judgement where there are no specific formatting instructions in the International Submission Routes and Local Service Information booklet.

Customer's from group 2 and 3 countries must provide address evidence as part of their application. You can use this information to re-format the address if necessary.

You must check the address shows a minimum of:

Address line	Information needed
Line 1	House or flat number and building name or street
Line 2	
Line 3	City, State or District
Line 4	Country
Line 5	Post code or Zip code (or leave blank if there is no post or zip code)

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# DAP: customer address issues

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how to deal with customer address issues in Digital Application Processing (DAP). It includes when to check a customer's address, when to complete the DAP manual address tracker and when to refer an application to the Application Management System (AMS).

Customers who apply online are asked to give their residential (home) address for their delivery address. When the customer applies online the system will tell them what information they must give and populate it into the correct fields (preventing most format errors). For UK applications, the customer can input their post code and select their address from a list of validated UK addresses. International customers must type their address into their online application. The customer must make sure the address they give us is correct.

We do not check the address the customer gives us if the customer applied online and the Digital Application Processing (DAP) system can automate their application. For example, we will automate the application if it is to renew an adult passport and there are no additional tasks for an examiner.

Some customers may give a business, alternative or 'care of' address in place of their home address in a covering letter, if they need to use a different address for any reason. If an application processed on DAP creates any examiner task, you (the DAP examiner), must check the customer's address appears to be a residential address. If the address is an [alternative address or care of address](#) or the customer has moved address you must deal with the application as described in this guidance.

## How to view addresses on DAP

The customer's home (residential) address, passport or document delivery address can be viewed on Digital Application Processing (DAP) from the **Application details, Contact and delivery tab**. The tab will show the customer's:

- phone number
- email address
- home address
- passport delivery address
- document return address

## DAP: when we do not need to reformat addresses

Digital Application Processing (DAP) displays customers names and addresses differently from AMS. You, the DAP examiner must not alter the customer's name or address unless:

- you are changing the information originally given (for example, if the customer has moved address or did not give us their residential address)

- you are inputting new or additional address information manually (for example, if the customer wants us to use an alternative address)

If you manually change the customer's overseas address on DAP you must check the International Submissions route and Local Service information guidance for any specific formatting issues.

In most cases you do not need to reformat an address or amend the customer's name in the address field. DAP:

- formats the customer's address correctly when they input it into their application
- automatically adds the name of the person making the declaration to the envelope (therefore children's names are not shown)
- does not abbreviate
  - the customer's name
  - long addresses
- shows titles of nobility correctly for the customer's envelope

## DAP address issues: when to refer an application to AMS

You must transfer a DAP application to AMS (the Application Management System) if the customer:

- changes their address and we must contact their digital referee to confirm the new address
- asks us to change their delivery address and that change would affect the delivery fees they pay
- has given a BFPO address
- when [we need to send supporting documents to multiple addresses](#)

You must add a case note when you transfer the application explaining the reason for the transfer and the action the AMS examiner must take, for example:

'Transferring application to AMS – customer requires delivery to a different country, unable to process on DAP'.

The AMS examiner will investigate the change of address and request the necessary evidence to process the application (as this change of address may affect the way we process their application and the fee they pay). The AMS examiner will use the alternative address field on AMS to amend the address where needed.

## DAP: updating the customer's address

If you need to update the customer's home address or send the customer's new passport or supporting documents to an address that is not their home (residential) address you must manually update the:

- **Home address**
- **Passport delivery address**

- **Document return address**
- delivery **Country** field for each address (if the customer wants their documents or new passport delivered to a different country)

You must manually update the customer's home, passport delivery or document return address fields on DAP, if this guidance tells you to. You must:

1. Click on **Edit** in the **Application details, Contact and delivery tab** to update the relevant field.
2. Change the delivery **Country** field if necessary.
3. Type the new address carefully to avoid mistakes.
4. Format the address correctly (check the International Submissions and Local Services information guidance for specific in country instructions).
5. Add a case note to:
  - explain why you have amended the address
  - record the evidence you have received
  - record the checks you have made to confirm the customer's request is genuine and the address exists

DAP will automatically record the original address given on the application and any changes you make to the system.

## When to record the customer's address on the DAP address tracker

You must record all addresses that you cannot accept onto the manual address tracker (separate to the DAP system) provided by the DAP project team.

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# AMS: checking address details

This section tells HM Passport Office examiners working on the Application Management System how to check address details on paper applications.

You, the examiner, must check the customer's address details if their application is processed on the Application Management System (AMS). You must check the address is acceptable for our purposes, (for example, reformatted where necessary) and if the customer has asked for an alternate or 'care of' address, you have the appropriate evidence.

You, must [make a manual intervention on an AMS application](#) and use the alternative address field to:

- display a customer's address in full if AMS has abbreviated it
- show the customer's name correctly:
  - on child applications
  - if they hold a title of nobility
  - if they have applied to change their name before they marry
- send the passport and supporting documents to:
  - a Local Service address
  - a British Forces Post Office (BFPO) address
  - a British overseas territory passport office
  - a new residential address (if the customer has moved to a new house)
  - an alternative or 'care of' address
- reformat an overseas address to allow our delivery partners to deal with the package

## AMS: online applications

Customers who apply online using Digital Customer Service (DCS) are asked to give their residential (home) address for their delivery address. When the customer applies online, the system will tell them what information they must give and populate it into the correct fields (preventing most format errors). For UK applications, the customer can input their post code and select their address from a list of validated UK addresses. International customers must type their address into their online application.

DCS replicates the details onto AMS, these applications therefore do not have scanning errors. However, as there is a limit to the number of characters in each field on AMS, DCS will:

- abbreviate part of the address to increase the capacity of each address line, for example, 'Road' will become 'Rd'
- add a series of dots ("...") to address line 1 or 2 if the address exceeds 30 characters

You must use the alternative address field for an online AMS application if:

- Digital Customer Service (DCS) added:
  - the customer's full address as a case note
  - a series of dots to tell you there is missing information

## AMS: paper applications

You, the examiner must make sure the customer's address is [correctly formatted](#) and free of spelling and scanning errors if they applied using a paper form.

For UK applications the customer must give us a minimum of their:

- house or flat name or number
- street name
- post code

For international applications the customer must give us a minimum of their:

- house or flat name or number
- building name (if applicable)
- street,
- city
- country
- zip or post code (if the country uses them)

You must contact the customer and ask for it if they do not give us the minimum information we need. We cannot accept information other than a UK postcode or street name (where the post code is provided) by phone. You must check the information given by the customer on the phone is correct using online reference sources such as Royal Mail post code finder.

If the customer does not give us their house or flat name or number, you must ask the customer to [confirm their residential address in writing](#). You must check the address evidence sent in confirms the customer's name and address. When you confirm the customer's address you must:

- update the address details on the Application Management System (AMS)
- add a case note to confirm where you got the information from
- scan the address evidence as a record on the application

## UK postcode checks

UK applications must have a postcode, we cannot complete the application without one. If there is no postcode on the application, you must contact the customer to confirm the correct information. If you are unable to contact the customer, you must use [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com) to find the correct postcode.



You must not issue a passport or return documents to an address in the UK without a post code. You must write or email the customer if you are unable to speak to them or confirm the address online and withdraw the application if the customer does not respond.

## Checking paper applications for scanning errors

We use optical character recognition technology to scan paper application forms, however it is not 100% accurate and mistakes do happen. If the customer sends in a paper application, you must check the address on screen matches the address the customer gave on their application.

You must check the address recorded on the Application Management System (AMS) against a paper application form. If you notice an obvious error (for example a spelling error or scanning error, or where PAF has removed part of the address), you must change the address on the system to the correct details.

You must add a case note to the application if you:

- check an address with the customer or an online address finder because you are unsure about a postcode, for example:
  - if a character in a post code could be a U or a V,
  - if a postcode contains a O in the inner part of the code (UK postcodes do not use O where it could be mistaken for a number)
- change any part of the customer's address on screen so it is different to the application form, for example:
  - to correct an obvious spelling error

You must decide if you need to record a data capture error if the application is on a paper form.

## PAF address matches on UK paper applications

We use Quick Arbitration & Selection (QAS) to check UK addresses and the electoral roll and prevent incorrect deliveries. AMS displays the result of the checks as a Postal Application File (PAF) match on the **Application** screen.

If AMS shows a Full PAF match this shows QAS has matched the customer's surname to the address on the application. You must check the postcode on screen against the application form, even if AMS has recorded a **FULL PAF** match.

A **No match** is where the QAS cannot find the address on its database, this could indicate a new building or an error by the customer. You must check the address shown on the application form against the details onscreen.

PAF match level	Explanation of match
Full	PAF has matched the customer's surname and address
Full-updated	some detail has been changed (for example, due to a scanning error) and a full match has been found

Partial	the address has been successfully matched
Partial-updated	some detail has been changed (for example, due to a scanning error) and a partial match has been found
No match	PAF could not find any match to the address given
Unmatched	matching did not take place

## What to check if PAF records No match or Unmatched

If the customer sends in a paper application form, optical character recognition technology may incorrectly scan, and data capture the customer's details, for example, because the customer's handwriting is unclear. If this happens PAF matches can indicate there is an error.

You must investigate a **No match** or **Unmatched** result by checking the address onscreen against the customer's paper application form for spelling or scanning errors.

As you have investigated and taken an action you must add a case note to the application to show you have investigated the PAF result.

## What to do if PAF changes the address

PAF will format correctly scanned addresses in a certain way. However occasionally the match will generate an address that is substantially different from the address shown on the application form, for example, it might change the post code, street name or house number or remove information given by the customer. Because of this you must investigate the PAF match if it:

- changes an address
- adds a shop or a business name to the address
- removes part of an address

You must always investigate if PAF changes an address. If PAF has removed part of the address (such as an estate name or village) you must re-add the information. If the address has been substantially changed by PAF you must phone the customer to confirm the address or if you are unable to speak to them, you must use external sources to confirm the postal address.

If the match adds a shop or a business name to the address. You must check with the customer that it is not a [business address](#) and is their residential (home) address. You must remove the business name from AMS if the customer tells you it is their home address.

If you cannot speak to the customer or confirm their address online, you must send them a contact letter and ask them to call us. If they do not reply within 10 days, you must mirror the customer's application.

You must case note the attempts you made to contact the customer and the results of that contact. You must say where you found the missing or incorrect information or if you have mirrored the application.

**Related content**

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# AMS: when we must use the alternative address field

This section tells HM Passport Office staff when they must use the alternative address field to reformat the customer's name or address, for applications processed on the Application Management System (AMS).

There are some instances where you, the examiner, must use the alternative address field to correctly display the customer's name or address for an application dealt with on the Application Management System (AMS). The name and address you enter in the alternative address field will appear on the delivery label and this will give the correct information so our couriers can deliver the packages.

## **Alternate address field: when the customer moves house**

You must use the alternative address field on AMS if the customer moves to a new house during the application process.

## **Alternate address field: when the customer has a 'care of' or alternative address**

You must use the alternative address field on AMS if the customer gives us their residential address but wants to use:

- a 'care of' or alternative address
- a business address
- an overseas post office box number

## **Alternate address field: formatting overseas addresses**

Some countries have certain formatting requirements which we can only meet by using the alternative address field. For example, you may need to amend a customer's address if they live in Hong Kong so it can be correctly delivered.

You must check the International Submission Routes and Local Service Information booklet for the latest information on addresses and formatting for each country.

## **Alternate address field: HM Armed forces applications**

If the customer applies using the HM Armed Forces route you must add the military unit address (a British Forces Post Office address) to the alternative address field.

## Alternate address field: applications from a BOT office

You must make sure you send the customer's new passport to the British overseas territory (BOT) passport office address and not direct to the customer.

You must select the relevant BOT territory from the drop down menu on the Fees tab in AMS. AMS will automatically update the alternative address field on AMS with the correct BOT office address.

## Alternate address field: Local Service applications

The customer must provide their residential (home) address on their application.

You must use the alternative address field if we must send the customer's new passport or supporting documents to a Local Service office for the customer to collect.

You must email the Local Service to tell them the documents are on the way.

## Alternate address field: when AMS limitations need manual intervention

You, the examiner, must make a manual intervention on an AMS application to:

- display a customer's address in full if AMS has abbreviated it
- show the customer's name correctly:
  - on child applications
  - if they hold a title of nobility
  - if they have applied to change their name before they marry

## Alternate address field: when the address is too long in AMS

Customers who complete their application online will use the Digital Customer Service (DCS) to enter their details. However, there is a limit to the number of characters that AMS can display and AMS may abbreviate part of the address (for example, Road to Rd) to maximise the available character space. These minor abbreviations are acceptable, and you do not need to correct them.

If however, the address exceeds 30 characters DCS will:

- add an ellipsis (a series of dots to address line 1 or 2 to tell you there is missing information)
- add the customer's full address as a case note to tell you there is missing information

You must add the customer's full name and address manually to the [alternative address field in AMS](#) if there is missing information.

## Alternate address field: for child applications in AMS

You must send the child's new passport to the person making the application, if the passport is for a child under 16 years old or is a young adult (16 or 17 years old) subject to a court order.

If you are returning a child's documents and new passport you must add (to the alternative address field) the full first name and surname of the person who applied for the passport and either one of the following:

- the child's home address
- the alternative address (for example, a social services business address)

## Alternate address field: titles of nobility in AMS

You must use the [alternative address field](#) to show the customer's name and title of nobility correctly on an AMS application .

## Alternate address field: change of name using a PD2 in AMS

You must use the [alternative address field](#) to show the customer's current name if they use a post-dated form (PD2) to change their surname, prior to their wedding or civil partnership. This will make sure the customer receives their documents in their current name and are able to sign for their documents if necessary.

### Related content

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# How to update the alternative address on AMS

This section tells His Majesty's Passport Office examiners how and when to create an alternative address on the Application Management System.

When you use the alternative address field in the Application Management System (AMS) you must make sure you add the customer's name to the name field. If you do not add the customer's name, it will not appear on the envelope and the package cannot be delivered by our delivery partners.

If you, the examiner, need to use the alternative address field on the Application Management System (AMS) you must:

1. Open the **Alternative Addresses** tab on the **Prepare Passport** tab on AMS.
2. Type in the **Send Passport To** field, the customer's:
  - first forename and surname in the names field
  - correct delivery address (making sure not to include any punctuation)
3. Check you have the correct details and have not made an error when typing the customer's name or address.
4. Check if you need to send the customer's supporting documents to the same delivery address as the passport or to the customer's home address and:
  - do not amend the **Return Supporting Documents To** section if the supporting documents must go to the home address
  - click on the **Copy Passport Return Address** button (located between the two fields) to send the supporting documents to the passport delivery address
5. Check if the alternative address is a UK or overseas address and click on **UK Delivery** if the alternative address is in the UK or is using a UK delivery system (for example British Forces Post Office, or Diplomatic bags).

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