



Home Office

Copyright and trademarks

Version 5.0

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff how to deal with passport photos and customer names that may be subject to copyright or trademark legislation and questions about the Crown copyright attached to our products

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About: Copyright and trademarks

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff how to deal with questions about:

- the Crown copyright attached to UK passports, application forms and public guidance
- customer names and photos that may be subject to copyright or trademark legislation

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 team.

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 team.

Publication

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

- version **5.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **18 August 2023**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has updated referee terminology.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Copyright and trademarked products

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about Crown copyright, photo copyrights, names that are trademarked or copyrighted

HM Passport Office must make sure that it does not breach copyright and trademark law.

What is a trademark

A [trademark](#) is a sign or symbol that separates a person's goods and services from those of their competitors. Trademarks are also known as the 'brand'.

What is copyright

[Copyright](#) protects a piece of work (for example, a document, symbol or picture) and stops others from using it without the copyright holder's permission.

Crown copyright

British passports, passport application forms and public guidance are subject to Crown copyright protection, under section 163 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

The Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), who manages Crown copyright, must give permission before a British passport and the Royal crest image on the front of a passport can be reproduced.

Application forms and public guidance can be reproduced if HM Passport Office is credited in the reproduction as the owner of the original documents. Anyone reproducing application forms and public guidance products must follow the guidance in the Open Government license provided by the [UK Government Licensing Framework \(UKGLF\)](#).

Requests to reproduce HM Passport Office products

The Reputation Management team works with HM Stationery Office to deal with all requests to reproduce British passports, passport applications and guidance, for example, when passports are used for entertainment purposes in television or theatre.

Requests to photocopy passports

Customers and staff do not have to get permission to photocopy a passport, if:

- HM Passport Office has asked for a photocopy of referee's personal data page (from their current passport) to confirm identity

- HM Passport Office asks for a photocopy of a customer's passport as part of our documentary needs and the original passport cannot be submitted for security, legal or practical reasons
- HM Passport Office takes a photocopy of a customer's passport, as part of the application process or when we are investigating an application
- a bank (or other institution) needs a photocopy to comply with anti-money laundering legislation (or an equivalent overseas) for identification purposes.

The Reputation Management team will help anyone asking about photocopying a passport. The National Archives also provides guidance about [photocopying British passports](#).

Passport photo copyright

It is the customer's responsibility to get approval to use a copyrighted photo in a passport (for example, a school photo).

If the photo is in line with our photo standards, you, the examiner, can assume the customer has been given consent.

Trademark and copyright names

HM Passport Office will not issue a passport in a name that may be subject to a trademark or copyright restriction. You must ask the customer to send in written evidence from the owner of the trademark or copyright:

- that gives their consent to the use of the name
- confirms that the name is not subject to a copyright or trademark restriction

If a customer cannot send in the evidence we have asked for, you must refuse to authorise a passport using a trademark or copyrighted name.

Related content

[Contents](#)