



Home Office

Authorisation and consent: what it is and who can provide it

Version 1.0

This guidance is for His Majesty's Passport Office staff it tells them what authorisation and consent for a passport application is and who can give it

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About: Authorisation and consent: what it is and who can provide it

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff about customer consent and official authorisation they will need to process passport applications and customer service requests. It tells them:

- why we need authorisation or consent to issue a passport
- what authorisation is and who can give it
- what consent is and who can give it

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 the 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 the Guidance team.

Publication

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

- version **1.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **20 November 2023**

Changes from last version of this guidance

We have reformatted this guidance, the content has not changed.

Related content

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Authorisation and consent

This section explains to HM Passport Office staff why it is important to have the correct official authorisation and customer consent when we deal with a passport application or question.

Before we process a passport application, HM Passport Office must make sure we have consent from:

- the intended passport holder
- a person with parental responsibility
- a legal guardian
- a nominated third party representative

We must check the person consenting to the application is allowed to apply on behalf of the intended passport holder and we will ask for additional consent to safeguard (protect) vulnerable passport holders.

To make sure we comply with legislation, we must ask for specific authorisation (for example, from a court order, another organisation or a UK government office) on some types of passport applications before we issue a passport.

When we need authorisation or consent to issue a passport

HM Passport Office needs the correct authorisation and consent to issue a passport when the:

- customer applies for a passport
- intended passport holder's personal details change
- intended passport holder needs others to agree to the passport application (for example, if the intended passport holder is under 16 years old or is 16 or 17 years old and is subject to a court order)

What authorisation is and who can give it

In addition to needing and checking consent for the passport application, HM Passport Office, in some circumstances, needs additional consent or official authorisation to issue a passport. Additional consent or official authorisation to issue a passport could come from:

- a court order
- a parent or guardian, when there is a:
 - caveat in place
 - change to the gender in the passport for anyone under 18 years old
 - change of name for a child

- a dispute between parents
- lost or stolen passport
- a school or youth organisation for a collective passport
- the Reputation Management team to issue a specimen passport
- the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office to issue a Diplomatic or Official passport or standard passport with a diplomatic or official observation
- UK law enforcement agencies

You, the examiner, must check the authorisation and additional consent provided is genuine before you deal with the customer's application.

What consent is and who can give it

For HM Passport Office purposes, we consider 'consent' to be from someone agreeing to the passport being issued by us. Someone with the authority to consent to a passport would be:

- a parent or guardian with parental responsibility (PR) for:
 - a child under 16 years
 - a child 16 or 17 years who is subject to a court order
 - a child between 16 and 18 years who has asked for the gender in their passport to be changed
- the intended passport holder who is over the age of 16 years and not subject to a court order
- a third party representative acting on behalf of a vulnerable adult or child (for example a friend, carer, social services manager, solicitor or someone acting in place of a parent)
- a government official who must give additional consent before a passport is issued (for example, a prison governor or a social service manager agreeing to the issue of a passport for a child in care,)
- someone with power of attorney for the intended passport holder

Consent given by third party representatives

Customers who are unable to complete an application themselves or use an X (in place of a signature) because they are unable to read or write, will need to ask a third party to complete it. If the customer is unable to complete the declaration, due to a physical or mental disability, the third party will need to sign or agree the application declaration. This applies to adult and child applications but does not apply to child applications where the adult is a parent who holds parental responsibility.

Third parties can be a member of the family, friend, carer, health professional, social services or solicitors.

When a third party completes an application on behalf of the intended passport holder or the parent of the intended passport holder, HM Passport Office must:

- understand why the intended passport holder (or parent with parental responsibility) cannot complete the application and ask for evidence to prove this
- confirm the third party's identity; and,
- confirm the third party is the most appropriate person to complete the declaration consenting to the application

To safeguard the intended passport holder, we will ask the third party to send us evidence that confirms they are the most appropriate person to submit the application.

The evidence required for third party consent and the customer's inability to sign their passport may be similar, but they are two different requirements. You must make sure you have suitable evidence for both.

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