



Home Office

Specimen passports

Version 6.0

This guidance explains what a specimen passport is and how His Majesty's Passport Office deals with requests for specimen passports

Contents

Contents.....	2
About: Specimen passports	3
Contacts	3
Publication	3
Changes from last version of this guidance	3
Specimen passports.....	4
Who receives and authorises requests for specimen passports.....	4
Specimen passports for entertainment purposes	4
Issuing a specimen passport	4
Maintaining a record of specimen passports	5
Returning specimen passports to HM Passport Office	5

About: Specimen passports

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff about specimen passports and who can get one.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think 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 **6.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **7 December 2023**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to remove how we issue specimen passports for entertainment purposes, as we no longer provide this service.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Specimen passports

This page tells HM Passport Office staff what a specimen passport is, who can get one and who authorises the request for a specimen passport.

A specimen passport is a passport issued to:

- other UK government departments
- foreign governments (foreign governments request it through the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office)

Government departments and overseas authorities use specimen passports for training, forensic comparison, or fraud detection purposes.

Specimen passports contain specific specimen data and holders' images. These passports are generated by HM Passport Office when a new passport model is introduced.

Who receives and authorises requests for specimen passports

All requests received by HM Passport Office for specimen passports (for any purpose) must be emailed to the [Document Technology team](#).

When an emailed request for a specimen passport is received, you, the Document Technology team member, must consider and authorise the request if it is appropriate. If authorised the passport will be supplied by the Document Technology team free of charge.

Specimen passports for entertainment purposes

Since 1 August 2023, HM Passport Office does not issue specimen passports for entertainment purposes. Customers must be directed to the National Archives document [Reproduction of the British passport information](#).

Issuing a specimen passport

HM Passport Office receives, from the printers, around 200 of each passport variant per print run (every 5 years) to be issued as specimen passports.

If the specimen passport request is approved, the Document technology team must:

1. Email the requestor to confirm the request has been approved or declined.
2. Post a specimen passport to the address provided or contact the person asking for the passport and arrange for them to collect it at the public counter in London.

Maintaining a record of specimen passports

You, the Document Technology team member, must keep a record of all specimen passports issued by HM Passport Office. This record will contain the:

- date of request
- details of person making the request
- UK government department or foreign government requesting the passports
- number of passports issued for the request
- passport serial numbers
- type of passport issued
- storage address and security classification
- receipt for the passport once they have been received by the requestor

Returning specimen passports to HM Passport Office

Specimen passports remain the property of HM Passport Office. Government departments and overseas authorities may retain specimens indefinitely for reference purposes.

Government departments (both UK and foreign governments) must advise HM Passport Office on any change of use or storage location by emailing the Document Technology team.

Specimen passports which are no longer required must be returned to the London Passport Office for the attention of the Document Technology Team at:

HM Passport Office
Verification Room (Basement Floor)
Warehouse K
2 Western Gateway
London
E16 1DR

Related content

[Contents](#)