



Home Office

Counter collections

Version 5.0

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office public counter staff how to deal with customers collecting their passports and documents from the counter

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About: Counter collections

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office, public counter examiners how to deal with customers who collect their passports or documents from the counter.

This guidance applies to:

- Premium service applications
- Digital Fast Track (DFT) applications, where the new passport is printed in local print rooms because the customer wants to collect their passport
- Urgent government business or compassionate (U&C) application

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 **5.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **16 February 2026**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated:

- in the [Collecting from the counter section](#) to tell counter examiners when and how they must retain a counter collect report and customer receipt for 6 months
- to add a new section called [Uncollected passports](#), (previously separate guidance) to tell counter teams how to deal with passports that have not been collected by the customer

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Who can collect from the counter

This section tells HM Passport Office public counter staff who can collect passports and documents from the counter.

A customer may need to collect their new passport from the public counter because:

- they have applied for a passport that must be collected from the counter, for example using the:
 - Premium service
 - Digital Fast Track (collect) service
 - Urgent government business or compassionate (U&C) service
- the higher executive officer (HEO) counter manager agreed the customer can collect their new passport when they applied using the fast track service

The customer or a suitable alternative person can collect a passport from the counter. A suitable alternative person is:

- a parent, when collecting a child passport (Digital Fast Track collect and U&C applications only)
- a third-party, which may include but not be limited to a:
 - friend or relative
 - personal assistant
 - agent or courier

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Collecting from the counter

This section tells HM Passport Office public counter staff, how to deal with a collection of a new passport and documents from the counter.

You, the public counter staff, must check the information held on our systems to carry out basic identity checks, before handing over any passports at the counter.

If a person arrives at the counter to make a collection, you must ask them to confirm:

- the passport holder's full name
- the passport holder's date of birth (if known)
- if they are collecting their own passport or one issued to someone else

If the person is a third party collecting a passport on the customer's behalf, they must also provide:

- documents to confirm their identity
- a signed letter of consent from the customer, giving them permission to collect the new passport on their behalf (this must be provided during the initial counter appointment and recorded on the application as a scanned document)

Checking the new passport exists on our passport records

Counter staff must check the new passport is showing on our passport records before handing the new passport to the customer (or a third party).

If the passport is not on our records, you must raise an incident on ITnow.

You must not hand a passport to a customer if the data is not showing on our passport records.

Checking the identity of the passport holder

If the customer is collecting their own passport, you must:

1. Ask the customer to give you their counter collection receipt.
2. Check the customer resembles the photograph on the new passport.
3. Provide the customer with a receipt for the passport they are collecting and ask them to sign it.
4. Attach the receipt to the copy of the counter collect report provided by the Local Print room.
5. Store the counter collect report and the customer's receipt in a secure location suitable for the storage of restricted level information, for a period of no longer than 6 months.

When you have confirmed the identity of the passport holder, you must [record the passport collection on Digital Application Processing \(DAP\)](#).

Checking the identity of a parent or third party

You must ask the person to confirm their identity by providing official documents, if the person is collecting:

- a child passport (Digital Fast Track collect or Urgent government business or compassionate (U&C) applications only)
- an adult passport on behalf of someone else (third party)

The identity documents must include their full name, date of birth and photograph. These may include, but are not limited to a:

- passport
- driving licence
- government or privately issued identity card

Third party collector

If a third party is making the collection on behalf of the customer, in addition to the checks above, you must also ask them to provide signed consent from the customer allowing them to collect the passport or supporting documents.

The signed consent must be dated and can be either:

- written
- a scan of a letter, sent by email

This signed consent must be:

- scanned and recorded as a document on the customer's application; and,
- provided at the initial counter appointment

You must follow Authorisation and consent guidance to check the consent provided by the customer.

You must not give the customer's passport or supporting documents to a third party unless you have signed consent from the customer.

If a third party is collecting the passport on behalf of the customer, you must:

1. Check the signature on the statement of consent belongs to the customer (see confirming identity guidance).
2. Provide the customer with a receipt for the passport they are collecting and ask them to sign it.
3. Attach the receipt to the copy of the counter collect report provided by the Local Print room.

4. Store the completed counter collect report and customer receipt in a secure location suitable for the storage of restricted level information, for a period of no longer than 6 months.

When you confirm the details provided match those on the passport, you must [record the passport collection on Digital Application Processing \(DAP\)](#).

You must tell the collector the customer is required to sign the passport on the observations page, in black ball point pen.

Collecting a child passport

If a person arrives to collect a child passport, in addition to the checks above, you must also ask them to provide the child's:

- name
- date of birth (if known)

A child's passport must only be collected by the person who has:

- parental responsibility
- been given signed consent to collect it, from the person with parental responsibility (see, Authorisation and consent)

If the person arrives to collect a child passport, in addition to confirming the collector's identity, you must:

1. Check the name and date of birth given against those on the passport.
2. Provide the collector with a receipt for the passport they are collecting.
3. Ask the person to:
 - sign the receipt
 - complete the child collection form inside the collection pack
4. Attach the receipt to the copy of the counter collect report provided by the Local Print room.
5. Check if the application was made online or by paper. For:
 - paper applications, compare the signature with the signature given at section 9 of the application form (in line with confirming identity guidance)
 - online applications, check the person collecting the passport is the person who completed the declaration online (in line with confirming identity guidance)
6. Hand the passport and any supporting documents to the person and ask them to check the passport details are correct, before leaving.

You must not hand over the child's passport or supporting documents if the person collecting the passport:

- is not the person who completed the online declaration
- does not have signed consent from the person who completed the online declaration

When you have confirmed the child's details, collector's identity and consent, you must [record the passport collection on Digital Application Processing \(DAP\)](#).

You must store the completed counter collect report and customer receipt in a secure location suitable for the storage of restricted level information, for a period of no longer than 6 months.

If you have doubts about the person collecting a passport

You must inform the counter manager immediately if:

- you have any doubts about the identity of the person collecting the passport
- the person tells you the personal details on the passport do not match those on the application

Recording the passport collection on DAP

When you have confirmed the identity of the collector and the details on the new passport are correct, you must record the passport collection on DAP.

To do this on DAP, you must:

1. Search for the customer's application.
2. Select the **Record passport collection** option from the **Appointment tasks** screen.
3. Select either the **Applicant** or **Someone on behalf of the applicant** option (according to who is collecting the passport).
4. Record the name of the person collecting the passport if you have selected the **Someone on behalf of the applicant** option.
5. Select the **I confirm that the new passport with the above number has been collected** option.
6. Select **Confirm and close**.
7. Select **Next application**.
8. Search for the customer's application again.
9. Confirm the **Record passport collection** option is no longer showing on the **Appointment tasks** screen (if the **Record passport collection** option is still showing on the screen, you must repeat steps 2 to 9).

When the **Record passport collection** option is no longer showing on the application, DAP has recorded the collection of the new passport.

You must now:

1. Hand over the new passport to the customer or third party
2. Store the completed counter collect report and customer receipt in a secure location suitable for the storage of restricted level information, for a period of no longer than 6 months.

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Uncollected passports

This section tells HM Passport Office counter staff what to do when a customer does not collect their passport from the counter.

New passports that customers are due to collect, must be stored securely in the counter collection cupboard. Uncollected passports will be held for 7 days to allow the customer to collect their new passport. After 7 days the nominated counter examiner will contact the customer to arrange collection.

Storing and recording uncollected passports at the counter

At the end of each working day, you the counter examiner, must complete a daily reconciliation record form, and send this to a counter manager. This form will record the:

- total number of passports in secure storage; and,
- details of each passport held in secure storage

You, the counter manager, must:

1. Print, sign and date a copy of the completed daily reconciliation record at the end of each day.
2. Check the total number of passports in the secure storage area match the number of passports held on the daily reconciliation record form, at the start of the next working day.
3. Send the details of any passports held in the secure storage area for 7 days, to a counter examiner to [arrange to contact the customer](#).
4. Store the completed daily reconciliation records in a secure location suitable for the storage of restricted level information, for a period of no longer than 6 months.
5. Destroy (using confidential waste) any daily reconciliation records completed more than 6 months ago.

You must inform a counter higher executive officer (HEO), if there are any discrepancies between:

- the number of passports held in secure storage at the start of the working day; and,
- the number of passports recorded on the daily reconciliation record from the end of the previous working day

You, the counter HEO, must:

1. Manually check the details of each passport in secure storage, against the daily reconciliation record, to find out which passport is no longer in storage.

2. Check the customer's application records to see if there are any passport notes added to record the collection of their passport.

If there are passport notes to confirm the customer has collected their passport, you must update the daily reconciliation report to show the passport is no longer in secure storage.

If there are no passport notes to confirm the customer has collected their passport, you must:

1. Raise a security incident for the missing passport.
2. Arrange for the missing passport to be cancelled and replaced, in line with the LSR examination: replacing lost, stolen and recovered passports guidance.

Dealing with uncollected passports

If the customer does not collect their passport within 7 days of their application being completed, the counter manager will tell a counter examiner to:

1. Remove uncollected passports from the counter collection cupboard.
2. Hand deliver them to the counter team responsible for contacting the customer and updating the log of uncollected passports (each Customer Service Centre (CSC) has their own printed log).

This team will take ownership of the uncollected passport, update the uncollected passport log and contact the customer to arrange collection or delivery.

The counter team responsible for updating the uncollected passports log and contacting the customer to arrange collection must:

1. Check the passports against the log of uncollected passports (each application processing centre has their own log).
2. Sign and print your name in the log, to confirm you received the passports from the public counter.
3. Return the log to the public counter member of staff.
4. Create an entry on the electronic uncollected passports log (found in your team shared folder).
5. Store the uncollected passport in the secure storage area.

Contacting the customer about their uncollected passport

You (the team responsible for the uncollected passports and contacting the customer) must:

1. Check our systems for any:
 - recent contact from the customer about rescheduling their collection
 - passport notes about the collection or delivery of the customer's passport
2. Update the uncollected passports log (confirming the customer is collecting their passport) if the customer has rescheduled their collection.

3. Hand deliver the passport to the counter collections area, ready for collection.

Where the customer has not rescheduled their collection, you must contact the customer by phone using the number on their passport application. If the customer:

- answers, you must ask them if they want to [collect their passport from the counter](#)
- does not answer (or there is no phone number) you must refer to [unable to contact the customer by phone](#)

Customer wants to collect their passport from the counter

If a customer wants to collect their passport, you must:

1. Tell the customer they must bring their receipt to the counter to allow access. If the customer does not have their receipt, you must give the customer's details to the security guard to allow access.
2. Add a passport note to the application, to tell the counter receptionist the customer is returning to collect their passport.
3. Update the uncollected passports log (confirming the customer is collecting their passport).
4. Hand deliver the passport to the counter collections area.

The counter collection area will hold the passport for another 7 days before it repeats the cycle.

Uncollected passports: unable to contact the customer by phone

If the customer does not collect their passport from the counter and you cannot contact them by phone, you must:

1. Send letter 020 (Uncollected passports first reminder letter) to the customer to ask, if they want:
 - to collect their passport
 - us to post them to the address on the application
2. Add a passport note to show what action you have taken.
3. Update the uncollected passports log to show the action you have taken.

If the customer replies to the letter, you must refer to:

- [Customer wants to collect their passport from the counter](#) - if the customer tells you they want to collect the passport
- [Customer wants us to post their passport](#) - if the customer tells you they want us to post the passport

If the customer does not reply to this letter after 14 days, you must refer to [unable to contact the customer: sending a reminder letter](#).

Uncollected passports: unable to contact the customer, reminder letters

If you have already sent the customer a letter 020 and they have not responded after 14 days, you must:

1. Send them letter 021 (Uncollected passports final reminder letter).
2. Add a passport note to show the actions you have taken.
3. Update the uncollected passports log to show what actions you have taken.

If the customer replies to the reminder letter, you must refer to:

- [Customer wants to collect their passport from the counter](#) - if the customer tells you they want to collect them
- [Customer wants us to post their passport](#) - if the customer tells you they want us to post them

If the customer does not reply to the reminder after a further 10 days, you must refer to [unable to contact the customer: customer does not respond to the reminder](#).

Uncollected passports: customer does not respond to reminders

If a customer does not respond to the reminder letter after a further 10 days, you must:

1. Check the uncollected passports log to confirm the customer has not made further arrangements to collect the passport.
2. [Destroy the uncollected passport](#).

Uncollected passports: customer wants us to post their passport

If the customer cannot collect their passport from the counter, you must ask the customer if they want us to post their passport. You must only offer this solution:

- if it is more than 28 days after the original counter appointment
- as a last resort if the customer (or a third party) is unable to collect the passport

You must only post a passport to the address the customer has given us on their application form. If their address has changed, you must refer to the 'secure delivery - change of address' section of the posting passports and documents guidance.

When you confirm the address with the customer, checking it matches the address on their application, you must:

1. Add a passport note to the application to tell the post room staff they must send the passport by post.

2. Update the uncollected passports log, confirming the post room staff must send the passport by post.
3. Put the passport inside a secure delivery provider envelope and seal it.
4. Add the customer's name and address to the envelope.
5. Deliver the envelope to the post room.

How to destroy uncollected passports

You, the counter examiner, must destroy the customer's uncollected passport if the customer does not reply to the reminders we have sent them after 28 days.

To destroy the uncollected passport, you must:

1. Cut out the personal details page.
2. Cut the passport into 4 equal pieces, making sure you cut through the photo.
3. Use an electronic shredder to destroy the personal details page separately from the passport pieces (if one is available). If a shredder is not available, you must put the personal details page and the passport pieces in a confidential waste bin.
4. Send an email to the Data Quality team, to ask them to cancel the passport on Passport Data Services (PDS).
5. Add a passport note to show the actions you have taken.
6. Update the uncollected passports log to show the actions you have taken.

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