

Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Card

The OCI Scheme was introduced by The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2005 in August 2005, and it was launched during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention held at Hyderabad in 2006.

1. Eligibility for OCI card:

Following categories of foreign nationals are eligible:

(a) A person of full age and capacity:

(i) who was an Indian citizen on or after 26.01.1950; Or

(ii) who was eligible to become an Indian citizen on 26.01.1950; Or

(iii) who belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947 (*i.e. Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Sikkim and Pondicherry*); Or

(iv) who is a Child/Grandchild/Great-grandchild of such a citizen;

OR

(b) A minor child of a person mentioned in (a) above; OR

(c) A minor child whose one or both parents are Indian citizen; OR

(d) Spouse of an Indian citizen/OCI Cardholder, and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of atleast 2 years immediately preceding the presentation of the application.

Applications for registration as OCI cardholder of a foreigner whose Indian spouse is not alive may be accepted by the Indian Mission and decision taken on case to case basis subject to the condition that the foreigner has not remarried another foreigner. If the foreign national gets remarried to another foreigner, the OCI registration will be immediately cancelled. In case of re-marriage to another citizen of India or an OCI cardholder, the foreign national will have to submit fresh application for registration as OCI cardholder. In such cases, fresh OCI card shall be granted on surrender of earlier OCI card. The foreign national children of such Indian national who is not alive will be entitled to registration as OCI cardholder on the basis of their Indian origin. Such children holding PIO card will also be eligible to apply for registration as OCI cardholder in lieu of PIO card.

Following persons are NOT eligible for OCI card:

a) Person, who or either of whose parents/grandparents/great-grandparents is or had been a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh or any other specified country.

b) Foreign military personnel, serving or retired.

c) A foreign national holding Diplomatic Passport.

2. Important Points:

a) **Processing Time:** 3-4 months from date of submission of applications in the Embassy.

b) **Collection of the OCI Card:** Applicant can come to the Embassy in person. Otherwise, the applicant can send a third party carrying Authorization letter issued by the applicant, Original receipt, and Applicant's passport provided the applicant is physically present in the country (Romania/Albania/Moldova).

c) If it is found that the registration as an OCI Cardholder was obtained by means of fraud, false representation or concealment of any material fact or the registered OCI Cardholder has shown disaffection towards the Constitution of India or comes under any of the provisions of section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955, the registration of such person will not only be cancelled forthwith but he/she will also be blacklisted preventing his/ her future entry into India.

d) The OCI Card has to be got re-issued **each time** a new passport is issued upto the age of 20 years and **once** after completion of 50 years of age. Re-issuance of the OCI Card is not mandatory each time a new passport is issued to an applicant whose age is between 21 and 50 years. For reissue of OCI card, the applicant may apply same online under OCI Miscellaneous Services.

e) In case of change of nationality of the OCI cardholder, he/she can be permitted to enter/exit on the strength of the OCI card and valid passport of the new nationality provided the new nationality is not that of Pakistan or Bangladesh. The OCI cardholder is advised to get his/her new nationality updated through OCI Miscellaneous Services.

3. OCI Miscellaneous Services: This service can be availed for re-issuance of OCI card / issuance of duplicate OCI card in the following of cases:

a) Issuance of new passport. *Re-issuance of OCI Card is not mandatory, if age of applicant is between 21 and 50 years.*

b) Change of personal particulars viz. Name, Father's name, Nationality etc. *In case of change of photograph without the change of the passport, a personal interview shall be taken by the Competent Authority before the grant of the service.*

c) Loss/damage of OCI card. A copy of the complaint filed with the police authorities should be enclosed. Personal interview of the applicant shall be taken by the Competent Authority before the grant of the service.

d) Filling of wrong personal particulars while submitting online application form
viz Name, Father's name, Date of Birth etc.

e) Change of address/occupation. In this case, new OCI card will not be issued. The applicant may take a print out of the new address/occupation after online submission and keep for record purposes. No fee shall be charged from the applicant.

Upon online submission of the Registration Form, print the form. The applicant has to sign the form, paste the photograph and append his signature in the box provided and submit application form along with the relevant enclosures and fee as mentioned in the instructions. The application can be submitted to the Indian Mission in whose jurisdiction the applicant is ordinarily residing irrespective of the fact whether the same Indian Mission/Post/Office has issued the original OCI documents or not. Each applicant shall submit separate application form.

4. HOW TO APPLY FOR OCI CARD:

- a) Visit **www.passport.gov.in/oci** and register online. While filling up the form, Surname and Given Name of the applicant should be same as appearing in the foreign Passport. Applicants are required to upload all the requisite self-attested documents, photograph and signature (*in the case of minors who cannot sign, left hand thumb impression*) along with the application.
- b) Application for minor has to be signed by both parents as well as an indication of their consent to the minor's application.
- c) Kindly ensure that all fields in the form are duly filled in and all necessary enclosures are attached before submission at the Embassy.
- d) One photograph. (*Please do not staple the photograph*). See requirement of photograph at **<https://passport.gov.in/oci/Photo-Spec-FINAL.pdf>**
- e) Certificates such as Birth, Marriage, Divorce etc. must be **apostilled**. If document is not in English language, its English translation must be provided.
- f) OCI application alongwith enclosures may be submitted at the Embassy on on appointed date and time. Schedule Appointment
- g) Applicant has to appear at the Embassy for biometrics. Applicants below 12 years of age or above 70 years of age will be exempted from biometrics capturing.
- h) Applicants may submit each application with related documents separately and not collectively for the whole family.
- i) The originals of the supporting documents have to be submitted by the applicants to the Indian Mission concerned for prior verification. If there is any deficiency in the application/uploaded documents/photograph, the Indian Mission shall inform the same to the applicant by email. The applicant may then submit the required documents to the Indian Mission, who will take necessary action to upload the same on the online system.
- j) After grant of registration, an OCI card in the form of booklet will be issued. This will serve as a life-long multiple entry visa to visit India.

5. Documents to be submitted with the application:

1. Proof of present citizenship.

- (a) Copy of present valid passport (*applicable in all cases*), with validity of minimum 6 months at the time of submission of application.
- (b) Copy of the Certificate of Registration of Citizenship/ Naturalization (*as the case may be*), for the present nationality of the applicant (*applicable in all cases*).
- (c) Cancelled/ Surrendered Indian passport with Surrender Certificate (*for those who have surrendered Indian passport in or after 2010*).

2. Evidence of Self/Parents/Grandparents/Great-grandparents:

- (a) Being a citizen of India on or after 26.01.1950; or
- (b) Being eligible to become a citizen of India on 26.01.1950; or
- (c) Belonging to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947 (*Puducherry, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Goa, Sikkim*).

These could be:

- (i) Copy of the Indian Passport; or
- (ii) Copy of the Domicile Certificate issued by the competent authority; or
- (iii) Copy of Nativity Certificate from the competent authority; or
- (iv) OCI Card/PIO card of parents/spouse along with the documents upon which the OCI/PIO card was issued; or
- (v) Any other proof substantiating the request such as Certificate of Residence or Place of Birth of Self/ Parents/ Grandparents from First Class Magistrate/ District Magistrate of the concerned place.

3. Evidence of relationship as Parent/Grandparent/Great-grandparent, if their Indian origin is claimed as basis for registration as OCI Cardholder.

If claiming OCI card on the basis of parent's Indian origin then applicant's Birth Certificate (where parents name is mentioned) is required. If claiming OCI card with grandparents' origin then submit applicant's Birth Certificate as well as parents' Birth Certificate (showing the parents' names clearly} thus establishing the relation with parents and grandparents

4. In case of minor child whose one or both parents are citizens of India.

(i) Copy of child's Birth Certificate

(ii) Copy of Indian passport of the parent(s), or Copy of the Domicile Certificate or Nativity Certificate issued by the competent authority in respect of the parent(s), or Any other proof substantiating the status of the parent(s) as being Indian citizen(s).

(iii) If the parents are divorced, court order of dissolution of marriage, which specifically mentions that the legal custody of the child is with the parent who is applying for the OCI card.

5. Evidence as Spouse of foreign origin of Indian national/ OCI Cardholder.

(i) Registered Marriage Certificate; and

(ii) In the case of spouse of an Indian citizen: Copy of the Indian Passport of the spouse, or Copy of the Domicile Certificate or Nativity Certificate issued by the competent authority in respect of the Indian spouse, or Any other proof substantiating the status of the spouse as being an Indian citizen.

(iii) In the case of spouse of an OCI Cardholder: Copy of the present valid Passport of the spouse, Copy of the OCI Card of the spouse and copies of the documents upon which the OCI Card was issued to the spouse

(iv) Declaration from the Indian/OCI cardholder spouse stating that in case of divorce/separation/death of foreign spouse, it is his/her responsibility to surrender the OCI card to the Government of India.

6. Proof of address of the place of application:

(i) Copy of the Electricity Bill/ Telephone Bill in Own/ Parents/ Grandparents/ Spouse name. If the above is in any other relative's name, undertaking from the relative stating that the foreigner is residing with him/her.

(ii) Lease License in case of tenants.

6. Benefits to an OCI Cardholder:

(i) Multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India for any purpose (*However OCI Cardholders will require a special permission to undertake research work in India for which they may submit the application to the Indian Mission/Post/FRRO concerned*).

(ii) Exemption from registration with Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) or Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) for any length of stay in India.

(iii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial, and educational fields.

(iv) OCI Cardholder shall be treated at par with NRIs in the matter of inter-country adoption of Indian children.

(v) OCI Cardholder shall be treated at par with resident Indian nationals in the matter of tariffs in air fares in domestic sectors in India.

(vi) OCI Cardholder shall be charged the same entry fee as domestic Indian visitors to visit National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries in India.

(vii) Parity with NRIs in respect of:-

a) Entry fees to be charged for visiting the national monuments, historical sites and museums in India

b) Pursuing the following professions in India: Doctors, Dentists, Nurses, Pharmacists; Advocates; Architects; Chartered Accountants

c) To appear for the All India Pre-Medical Test or such other tests to make them eligible for admission.

(viii) State Governments should ensure that the OCI Card is treated as proof of identity for any services rendered to OCI cardholder. In case proof of residence is required, OCI Cardholder may give an affidavit attested by a notary public stating that a particular/specific address may be treated as their place of residence in India and may also in their affidavit give their overseas residential address as well as e-mail address, if any.

OCI Cardholder is NOT entitled:

a) To vote in elections,

b) To be a Member of Parliament, or State Legislative Assembly, or State Legislative Council,

c) To hold Constitutional posts such as President, Vice President, Judge of Supreme Court or High Court etc.

d) For appointment to public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of any State except for appointment in such services and posts as the Central Government may specify.

Further, the OCI Cardholder cannot acquire agricultural or plantation properties in India.