

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) scheme was introduced in August 2005. The scheme provides for registration as Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) of all Persons of Indian Origins (PIOs) who were citizen of India on 26th January 1950 or thereafter or were eligible to become citizens of India on 26th January 1950 except who is or had been a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh or such other country as the Central Government may, by notification in the official gazette, specify.

ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION OF OCI CARD:

Following categories of foreign nationals are eligible for registration as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI):

1. Who was a citizen of India at the time of, or at any time after the commencement of the Constitution of India i.e. 26.01.1950; or
2. Who was eligible to become a citizen of India on 26.01.1950; or
3. Who belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947; or
4. who is a child or a grandchild or a great grandchild of such a citizen (In case of South Africa, descendants upto 7th generation of Person of Indian Origin); or
5. Who is a minor child of such persons mentioned above; or
6. Who is a minor child and whose both parents are citizens of India or one of the parents is a citizen of India; or
7. Spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or spouse of foreign origin of an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application is also eligible for registration as OCI cardholder.

BENEFITS TO AN OCI CARD HOLDER:

An Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card provides a lifelong, multiple-entry visa for visiting India, eliminating the need for visa renewals or FRRO registration. It grants parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in economic, financial, and educational fields, including the ability to live, work, and own non-agricultural property in India. Detailed benefits are available at the following link: <https://ociservices.gov.in/onlineOCI/#benefit>

BENEFITS TO WHICH OCI CARDHOLDER IS NOT ENTITLED TO:

The OCI Cardholder is not entitled to vote, be a member of Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council or Parliament, cannot hold Constitutional posts such as President, Vice President, Judge of Supreme Court or High Court etc. The OCI Cardholder shall not be entitled 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, by special order, in that behalf, specify. Further, the OCI Cardholder cannot acquire agricultural land or farmhouse or plantation properties in India.

CANCELLATION OF OCI REGISTRATION:

If it is found that registration as an OCI was obtained by means of fraud, false representation or

concealment of any material fact or the registered OCI has shown disaffection towards the Constitution of India or comes under any of the provisions of section 7D of the Citizenship Act, the registration of such person will not only be cancelled forthwith but he/ she will also be blacklisted from visiting India.

RENUNCIATION OF OCI

Renunciation of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) is a formal process by which an OCI cardholder voluntarily gives up their OCI status. If an overseas citizen of India, who is of full age and capacity, submits a declaration renouncing their OCI status in the prescribed manner, the Central Government will register this declaration. Upon registration, the individual ceases to be an OCI cardholder. Additionally, any minor child registered as an OCI cardholder under that person will also lose OCI status automatically upon the parent's renunciation.

ADVISORY FOR PIO CARD HOLDERS

The deadline of conversion of PIO to OCI (31 December 2025) has not been extended by Govt. of India. Accordingly, The PIO to OCI conversion facility is no longer available and hereby advised to apply for fresh OCI registration as per extant guidelines.

HOW TO APPLY AND DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

- Applications for New OCI can be filled and printed from the OCI application website: <https://ociservices.gov.in/>. Uploading of photograph, signature, and all supporting documents on OCI portal by the applicant are mandatory. In case of minor applicant, his/her thumb impression (left hand thumb) or signature (if minor can sign, signature is mandatory) should be provided in BOX.

Documents required for OCI Application:

1. Adult Applicant:

- Dully filled in and signed OCI application form (signature should match with that in the passport)
- Self-attested copy of Foreign Passport held (validity of passport should be more than 6 months)
- Two recent colour photographs
- Copy of Naturalisation regarding granting of citizenship issued by the concerned Foreign Government (if applicable)
- Copy of Indian Passport (first and last page) (if ever held Indian Passport)
- If married, marriage certificate (Apostilled) and also Passport copy of spouse
- Proof of Employment/Occupation
- Proof of Residence
- Police Clearance Certificate from local authority (not required for applicants below 15 years)
- Letter/No Objection Certificate from the Government if the applicant is working in a local Government Organisation.
- OCI applicant is required to surrender his/her Ration Card and Voter ID Card before applying for OCI Card and undertaking to this effect must be uploaded online along with other documents

2. Minor applicant:

In addition to the aforementioned documents, the following additional documents must be

submitted:

- Copies of parents' passports
- Unabridged birth certificate of the minor (if the birth certificate has been issued by a foreign government, it needs to be apostilled)
- Marriage certificate of the parents (if the marriage certificate has been issued by a foreign government, it needs to be apostilled)

Proof of Indian Origin:

All OCI applicants are required to provide proof of Indian origin which will be the basis for the OCI application. Attach copies of the documents mentioned in the category that applies to you.

3.1 Former Indian citizens who already have a surrender certificate:

- Copy of first/last page + observations in cancelled Indian passport
- Copy of surrender certificate
- Copy of naturalisation certificate

3.2 Persons born to Indian-origin parents and never held Indian passport:

- Copy of first and last page + observations in previous/current Indian passport of parents, or other documents from parents that establish connection to India
- Unabridged Birth certificate of applicant (Apostilled)
- Parents' marriage certificate (Apostilled)

3.3 Persons of Indian origin who do not have copies of Indian passport:

- Unabridged Birth certificate of applicant (Apostilled)
- Unabridged Birth certificate of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents (Apostilled) or
- Documents that prove connection to India (birth/death certificate, proof of Indian origin of parents, domicile/nativity certificate etc. issued by Govt. of India) or
- Proof of the applicant's parents / grandparents/ great-grandparents or so on having Indian Nationality/Indian Descent (Pass to Indian or old birth certificate or death notice or return of birth or declaration of marriage or ship list issued by Department of Archives, South Africa)
- In cases, where the applicant's father/grandfather/great grandfather arrived in South Africa by Ship, then he/she may seek the help of Department of Archives in South Africa. Records can also be accessed at www.national.archives.gov.za, for guidance for accessing the website.

Documents required for foreign-origin spouse of current or former Indian citizen:

In case any foreign national applying for the OCI card by virtue of being married to an Indian national or an Indian origin, the following documents are mandatorily to be submitted along with the above-mentioned documents:

- The marriage must have been registered at least two years prior to submitting the application.
- Unabridged birth certificates of applicant (Apostilled)
- Birth certificates of his/her parents, grandparents and great grandparents
- Marriage certificate (Apostilled)
- Spouse's Indian Passport/OCI Card
- The applicant and the spouse should give a joint affidavit stating that their marriage is still existing and that they have not got/sought divorce and that they are still living as husband and wife. Signatures on the Joint Affidavit should be done by both the husbands

and wife in the presence of the Consular Officer at the High Commission.

Note: OCI Cards issued to foreign spouse applicants are valid for an initial period of 5 years only. Thereafter, renewal shall be subject to a fresh investigation and a personal interview with both husband and wife at the concerned Indian Mission/Post/FRRO. Any OCI cardholder of foreign origin having an OCI card by virtue of his/her spouse being an Indian National or OCI cardholder shall cease to be so if he/she indulges in a live-in relationship with any other person in the nature of marriage.

UPDATION OF PASSPORT PARTICULARS ON THE OCI CARD (including e-OCI Card registration):

- The requirement of re-issuance of the OCI card on obtaining a new passport after attaining the age of 20 years has been dispensed. However, such OCI cardholder need to update their passport particulars on the online system under OCI Miscellaneous services and also give their biometric information to the Indian Mission/Post or FRRO concerned at the time of updation of the details of the online system or at the immigration post at the time of first entry or departure, as the case may be, after such updation of the details.
- All OCI cardholder has to upload a copy of the new passport containing the photo of the passport holder and also a latest photo on the online system under OCI Miscellaneous services. These documents may be uploaded by the OCI cardholder within three months of receipt of the new passport. This service will be provided on gratis basis.
- Updation of passport details by an OCI cardholder after three months of receipt of the new passport will be processed by charging a fee of US Dollar (\$) 25.

RE-ISSUANCE OF OCI CARD

OCI cardholder need to apply for re-issuance of OCI card under OCI Miscellaneous services in case there is any change in personal particular including change/correction in name(s), nationality, marital status etc.

NOTE:

- The originals of the above documents also need to be produced at the time of submission of the application at the High Commission of India, Pretoria.
- The OCI applications would not be processed if the originals documents including passports are not submitted for verification.
- Biometrics of applicants aged between 12 to 70 years will be captured at the application stage while verifying the documents.
- All documents/certificates issued by any foreign authority/government (other than Government of India) will be accepted only if they are apostilled.
- The High Commission reserves the right to call for additional documents as considered necessary.
- Postal applications are not accepted.
- Both parents are required to be present along with the minor.
- Please note that the names should be exact in all the documents, otherwise if the spelling is different, a letter has to be obtained from the concerned Home Department that the persons mentioned in the document/s are same.
- Fees would not be refunded in case OCI is not granted.
- The Indian Citizenship Act, 1955, does not allow dual citizenship. Holding Indian Passport / acquiring Indian Passport / travelling on Indian passport after acquisition of foreign citizenship constitutes an offence under the Indian Passport Act, 1967, and

attracts penalties. Under the Indian law, Persons of Indian Origin who have acquired foreign Nationality are required to renunciate their Citizenship and get Indian passports cancelled at the nearest Indian Mission/Post within 3 months after acquisition of foreign citizenship and obtain Surrender Certificate. Delay in surrender Indian passport may attract penalties.

- For detailed information on OCI scheme please visit:

(i) www.ociservices.gov.in

(ii) <https://www.mha.gov.in/MHA1/OCI.html>