

# Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme

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To respond to a longstanding demand of persons of Indian origin who are now nationals of other countries, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India had announced, on the occasion of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2005, the Government of India's intention to grant dual citizenship to such nationals of certain countries, the laws of which permit such a facility for their citizens. This has now been given legal backing by the Indian Parliament with the approval of Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2005. The Scheme is called "Overseas Citizenship of India".

## 2. Overseas Citizenship of India

Under the said scheme, a Registration Certificate, like an Indian passport though in a different colour, will be issued to the applicant.

A multiple entry, multi-purpose OCI 'U' (Universal) visa sticker will be pasted on the applicant's foreign passport.

These two documents will have the applicant's photograph, and all the necessary security features.

## 3. Eligibility criteria:

A foreign national, who

- was eligible to become a citizen of India on 26.01.1950, or
- was a citizen of India on or at any time after 26.01.1950, or
- belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947,

and his/her children and grandchildren, are eligible for registration as Overseas Citizens of India (OCI), provided his/her country of citizenship allows dual citizenship in some form or other under the local laws.

The minor children of such persons are also eligible for OCI.

**N.B. Minor children are NOT eligible for OCI in case both parents are Indian nationals**

However, if the applicant had ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, he/she will not be eligible for OCI.

## 4. Application form and procedure:

a) A family consisting of two spouses and up to two minor children can apply in the same Form i.e. **Form XIX**. (Please consult check list before submitting OCI FORMS at Consulate)

The form can be downloaded from the Ministry of Home Affairs website at [www.mha.nic.in](http://www.mha.nic.in).

b) The OCI Application is in two parts, Part A and Part B. **Part A may be filled up and submitted online by the Applicants by visiting this link <https://ociservices.gov.in/>** . It can be accessed by selecting 'individual' box given in the beginning of the OCI application form. Each applicant has to fill in Part-A and the filling in of the 'Fields' marked with \* is mandatory.

On submission of Part A, a web file number will be generated online. This will be a dummy number, which will feature in the printout of Part A. It will be subsequently used by the High Commission as a reference number for the application.

**Part A is tamper proof**, i.e., once Part A has been submitted online the applicant cannot make any changes in it.

**Applicants not wishing to register themselves online can take a printout of the application form and fill Part A either by hand (IN NEAT BLOCK LETTERS) or type in the entries.**

c) Part A of the application is meant for all members of the family, not exceeding four including the applicant. It is in ZIP format, and can be accessed by selecting 'group' in the OCI application form. It is to be downloaded either by using the 'evaluation version' or saved on a floppy/ CD ROM in MS Word format. Part B of the form should be filled either by hand in legible CAPITAL LETTERS or typed. Additional sheets can be used in case the space provided in the OCI application form is insufficient.

#### **Part B cannot be filled in online**

d) The following documents should be enclosed with each application:

1. 5 additional stamp size (35mm x 35mm) photographs of each applicant.
2. Proof of the foreign citizenship of each applicant, such as Citizenship Certificate and a Uzbek passport.
3. Evidence of self or parent(s) or grandparent(s)

(i) having been eligible to become a citizen of India at the time of commencement of the Constitution of India on 26th January, 1950; or

(ii) belonging to a territory that became part of India after 15th August, 1947; or

(iii) being a citizen of India on or after 26th January, 1950.

As proof thereof, the following documents should be submitted: -

- (i) Original Indian passport and 2 copies thereof (or)
- (ii) Any other proof acceptable to the Consular Officer.

In the case of children born in Republic of Uzbekistan, if the applicant is claiming eligibility on the basis of the Indian citizenship of his/her parent(s)/ grandparent(s), he/she will also have to submit proof of his/her relationship with such a person ( such as birth certificate mentioning name of parent). Please note that all the minors who cannot sign their applications must put their thumb impressions (right for boys and left for the girls) in the space provided.

4. Original and two copies of work/stay permit issued by the Uzbek Immigration authorities for those who earlier had an Indian passport. If original has been lost, a duplicate may be obtained from Uzbek authorities.

5. Persons of Indian origin, born in Republic of Uzbekistan and applying for OCI on the basis of their parent(s)'s initial Indian citizenship, should produce their parent(s)'s work/stay permit(s). If original has been lost, a duplicate may be obtained from Uzbek authorities.

6. PIO card holders should bring along the original of their PIO card, and submit two copies of the same with their application.

**e) Payment of the fee of USD 275/- for each applicant excluding ICWF charges of USD 3/ for each applicant. The fee has to be paid only through cash to "The Embassy of India, Tashkent".**

f) The application form, completed in all respects along with enclosures, should be submitted in duplicate to the Embassy of India, Tashkent. Applicants may deposit their applications at the counter. ***The applicant should arrive in the Embassy between 10.00 am to 12.30 p.m.***

The applicant should bring their Uzbek passport and the receipt at the time of pickup.

If the applicant is in India, he/she can apply to the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata or Amritsar or Chief Immigration Officer (CHIO) Chennai or to the Under Secretary, Citizenship Section, Foreigners Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Jaisalmer House, 26 Mansingh Road, New Delhi - 110011.

After checking all the relevant details, the Embassy of India, Tashkent will issue an acknowledgement, and the number mentioned thereon (the file number) or the reference number can be used for online status enquiry at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) website [www.mha.nic.in](http://www.mha.nic.in).

## **5. CHECKLIST FOR OCI APPLICATION**

## **THE FOLLOWING ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED**

- (i) Uzbek Passport
- (ii) Previous Indian Passport
- (iii) Stay/Work Permit
- (iv) Citizenship Certificate
- (v) Detailed Birth Certificate (in case of birth outside India)
- (vi) Five (5) photographs (identical)
- (vii) Two sets of Application Forms (duly filled in)
- (viii) Fee of USD 275/- for each applicant excluding ICWF charges of USD 3/ for each applicant

## **PLEASE MAKE TWO SETS OF APPLICATIONS AS UNDER:**

- (I) Form "A" of the main applicant
- (II) Form "A" of the spouse (if applicable)
- (III) Form "A" of the first child (if applicable)
- (IV) Form "A" of the second child (if applicable)
- (V) Form "B" duly signed by applicant and spouse
- (VI) Photocopies of Uzbek Passport, Indian Passport, Stay/Permit and Citizenship Certificate of the first applicant along with the same for spouse and children and Detailed Birth certificate of children, if born in Uzbekistan.
- (VII) In case of minor children, please use right thumb impression for boys and left thumb impression for girls
- (VIII) Paste (**DO NOT STAPLE**) one photograph on each form and attach three additional photographs on the left top corner of the form.

## **PLEASE MENTION DATE AND METHOD OF ACQUIRING UZBEK CITIZENSHIP AT COLUMN NO. 19 OF THE APPLICATION**

**Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted**

### **6. Procedure for granting registration:**

After preliminary scrutiny, prior approval of MHA, New Delhi shall be required before grant of registration. MHA may approve or reject the grant of registration within 180 days from the date of the receipt of the application. If the grant of registration as OCI is approved by MHA, the Indian Mission/Post shall register the person as OCI.

If the application is filed in India, registration shall be granted by MHA by following the above procedure.

After grant of registration, a registration certificate in the prescribed format will be issued.

### **7. OCI registration for PIO card holders:**

**PIO cards will be accepted as valid travel documents till 31.12.2023 along with valid foreign passport. If in the meantime any deadline is notified by International Civil Aviation Organization thereby making PIO card invalid, then PIO card holders may have to obtain appropriate visa from the Indian mission.**

Valid PIO card holders can convert PIO card to OCI cards. PIO card holders who are otherwise eligible for registration as OCI may apply in the same Form and they will be considered for grant of registration in the same manner as other applicants.

**8. OCI registration for persons who have applied on the earlier prescribed application form:**

All such applications will be considered for grant of OCI on the same lines as in para 3 above without seeking fresh application and fees.

**9. Cancellation of OCI registration:**

If it is found that the registration as an OCI was obtained by means of fraud, false representation or the concealment of any material fact, or that 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 for entry into India.

**10. Benefits to OCI:**

The following benefits will accrue to an OCI:

- (i) A multiple entry, multi-purpose lifelong visa for visiting India.
- (ii) Exemption from registration with the local police authorities for any length of stay in India.
- (iii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of economic, financial and educational fields, except in relation to acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties.

Any other benefits to OCIs will be notified by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) under Section 7B (1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

**11. Benefits an OCI is not entitled to:**

The OCI is not entitled

- to vote;
- to be a member of a Legislative Assembly or of a Legislative Council or of Government of India;
- to hold Indian constitutional posts such as that of the President, Vice President, Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court etc.

He/she cannot normally hold employment in the Government.

## 12. Help Desk

For any clarification/query on the scheme, please visit the website [www.mha.nic.in](http://www.mha.nic.in) or contact Citizenship Section, Foreigners Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Jaisalmer House, 26 Mansingh Road , New Delhi-110011.

### Press Release on OCI

The following OCI guidelines have been in force since 2005:

OCI card needs to be re-issued each time a new passport is acquired by the cardholder up to the age of 20 years.

OCI card is required to be re-issued **once** on acquiring a new passport after completing 50 years of age.

Re-issuance of OCI card is **not required each time** a passport is issued to a cardholder between 21 and 50 years of age.

2. This is to inform that Government of India has decided to grant temporary relaxation till 30th June 2020 in the following cases:

In case an OCI card holder below the age of 20 years has not got the OCI card re-issued on change of passport, he/she may travel on the strength of his/her existing OCI card bearing old passport number subject to the condition that along with the new passport, the OCI cardholder carries old passport mentioned in the OCI card.

In case an OCI card holder who has attained the age of 50 years and has got his/her passport renewed subsequently but has not got his/her OCI card re-issued on renewal of his/her passport, he/she may travel on the strength of the existing OCI card along with the old and new passports.

3. It is, however, advised that OCI cardholders may take steps to comply with the existing OCI guidelines in Para 1 above and renew their OCI cards as required by the rules.

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme**

#### **1. Who is eligible to apply?**

A foreign national, who was eligible to become citizen of India on 26.01.1950 or was a citizen of India on or at any time after 26.01.1950 or belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947 and his/her children and grandchildren, provided his/her country of citizenship allows dual citizenship in some form or other under the local laws, is eligible for registration as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI). Minor children of such person are also eligible for OCI. However, if the applicant had ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, he/she will not be eligible for OCI.

## **2. Who was eligible to become Citizen of India on 26.01.1950?**

Any person who or either of whose parents or any of whose grand-parents was born in India as defined in the Government of India Act, 1935 (as originally enacted), and who was ordinarily residing in any country outside India was eligible to become citizen of India on 26.01.1950.

## **3. Which territories became part of India after 15.08.1947 and from what date?**

The territories, which became part of India after 15.08.1947 are:

- (i) Sikkim from 26.04.1975
- (ii) Pondicherry from 16.08.1962
- (iii) Dadra & Nagar Haveli from 11.08.1961
- (iv) Goa, Daman and Diu from 20.12.1961

## **4. Can the spouse of the eligible person apply for OCI?**

Yes, if he/she is eligible in his/her own capacity.

## **5. Can the children of parents, one of whom is eligible for OCI, apply for OCI?**

Yes.

## **6. How can OCI applicant apply?**

The applicant shall submit the application form online ( <https://ociservices.gov.in> ) and upload all the requisite documents, photograph and signature (in the case of minors who cannot sign, left hand thumb impression) along with the application.

## **7. Can the application form be filled and submitted on line?**

Yes, and the printout of the application have to be submitted by hand to the Indian Mission/Post.

## **8. What documents have to be attached with the application?**

The following documents shall be enclosed with each application:

All applicants should bring Original documents i.e. foreign & Indian passports etc. which will be returned to them after verifying.

(1) Four additional stamp size photographs for each applicant (50x50 mm).

(2) Proof of citizenship of each applicant, such as Uzbek passport.

(3) Evidence of self or parents or grand parents

(a) being eligible to become a citizen of India at the time of commencement of the Constitution; or

(b) belonging to a territory that became part of India after 15th August, 1947; or

(c) being a citizen of India on or after 26th January, 1950.

These are:

(i) Copy of the passport (or)

(ii) Copy of the domicile certificate issued by the Competent authority (or)

(iii) Any other proof acceptable to the Consular Officer

(4) Evidence of relationship as parent/ grandparent, if their Indian origin is claimed as basis for grant of OCI.

(5) Proof of fee payment.

(6) PIO card holders must also submit a copy of their PIO card.

**9. What documents would qualify for "Any other proof for evidence of self or parents or grandparents being eligible for grant of OCI?"**

Any documentary evidence by which the officer equivalent to Under Secretary to the Government of India in the Indian Mission/Post can diligently arrive at the decision.

**10. How many copies of application have to be submitted?**

Applications have to be submitted in duplicate.

**11. Whether applicant/s have to go in person to submit the application/s?**

Yes.

**12. Do the applicant (s) have to take oath before a Consular Officer of the Indian Mission/Post?**

No. The earlier provision in this regard has been done away with.

**13. Where should the application be submitted?**

To the Indian Mission/ Post of the country of citizenship of the applicant. If the applicant is not in the country of citizenship, to the Indian Mission/Post of the country

where he is ordinarily residing. If the applicant is in India, to the FRRO Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata or Amritsar or to CHIO, Chennai or to the Under Secretary, Citizenship section, Foreigners Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Jaisalmer House, 26, Mansingh Road, New Delhi-110011.

**14. Can a person apply in the country where he is not ordinarily residing?**

Yes.

**15. What are the consequences of furnishing wrong information or suppressing material information?**

All the applications will be subject to pre enquiry for any adverse information is available or not. If the Government comes to the knowledge that any false information was furnished or material information was suppressed, the registration as OCI already granted shall be cancelled by an order under section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955. The persons will also be blacklisted banning his/her entry into India.

**16. What is the fee for application for registration as OCI?**

Fee schedule is available on Embassy's website under Consular Head.

**17. Can a person renounce OCI?**

Yes. He/she has to declare intention of renunciation in Form XXII to the Indian Mission/Post where OCI registration was granted. After receipt of the declaration, the Indian Mission/Post shall issue an acknowledgement in Form XXII A.

**18. Can a PIO cardholder apply?**

Yes, provided he/she is otherwise eligible for grant of OCI like any other applicant.

**19. Will the PIO Cardholder be granted OCI registration gratis?**

No. He/she has to make payment of requisite fee.

**20. Will the PIO card be honoured till the time they are valid even after the acquisition of OCI?**

No. The PIO card will have to be surrendered to the Indian Mission/MHA at the time of the grant of the OCI registration certificate.

**21. What will be issued after registration as OCI?**

A Registration Certificate, like the Indian passport in appearance, will be issued.

**22. Will a separate OCI passport be issued?**

No.

**23. Will a duplicate Certificate of Registration as OCI be issued?**

Yes. For this purpose, an application has to be made to the Indian Mission/Post with evidence for loss of certificate. In case of a mutilated/damaged certificate, an application has to be made enclosing the damaged document, along with requisite fee.

The applications in both cases have to be made to the same Indian Mission/ Post which issued the certificate.

**24. Will a new OCI visa sticker be issued on the new foreign passport after the expiry of the old passport?**

No. Government has done away with U-Visa sticker.

**25. Will the applicant lose his citizenship after registering as OCI?**

No. As only citizens of countries which allows dual citizenship under their local laws in some form or the other are eligible for applying for registration as OCIs, the question of their losing their foreign citizenship does not arise.

**26. Can a person holding OCI travel to protected area/restricted area without permission?**

No. He/she will be required to seek Protected Area Permit (PAP)/ Restricted Area Permit (RAP) for such visits.

**27. Would the Indian civil/criminal laws be applicable to persons registered as OCI?**

Yes. For the period the OCI is living in India.

**28. Can a person registered as OCI be granted Indian citizenship?**

Yes. As per the provisions of section 5(1) (g) of the Citizenship Act, 1955, a person who is registered as OCI for 5 years and is residing in India for 1 year out of the above 5 years, is eligible to apply for Indian Citizenship.

**29. Will OCI be granted gratis to certain categories of people?**

No.

**30. Can OCI be granted to foreign nationals who are not eligible for OCI, but married to persons who are eligible for OCI?**

No.

**31. Will foreign-born children of PIOs be eligible to become OCI?**

Yes, provided one of the parents is eligible to become OCI.

**32. What are the benefits of OCI?**

Following benefits will be allowed to OCI:

(a) Multi-purpose, multiple entry, lifelong visa for visiting India.

(b) Exemption from registration with local police authority for any length of stay in India.

(c) Parity with NRIs in respect of economic, financial and education fields, except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural/plantation properties.

**33. Will any other benefit be granted to OCI?**

Any other benefits to OCI will be notified by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) under Section 7B(1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

**34. Whether the OCI is entitled to voting rights?**

No.

**35. Whether the OCI is entitled to hold a constitutional post in India?**

No.

**36. Whether the OCI is entitled to hold Government posts in India?**

No, except for the posts specified by an order by the Central Government.

**37. If a person is already holding more than one nationality, can he / she apply for OCI?**

Yes, as long as the local laws of at least one of the countries allow dual citizenship in some form or other.

**38. What are the advantages of OCI when compared to PIO cardholders?**

An OCI is entitled to life long visa free travel to India whereas for a PIO cardholder, it is only for 15 years.

(ii) a PIO cardholder is required to register with the local Police authority for stays exceeding 180 days in India on any single visit, whereas an OCI is exempted from registration with the Police authority for any length of stay in India.

**39. Will an OCI be entitled to apply for and obtain a normal Indian passport which is given to a citizen of India?**

No. An Indian Passport is given only to an Indian citizen.

**40. Whether nationals of Commonwealth countries are eligible for OCI?**

Yes, if they fulfill the eligibility criteria.

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