



Special Issuance Agency

Federal agencies, summer 2013.

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Secretary of State John F. Kerry presenting his first diplomatic passport to DoS employees, February 2013

SIA Moves Update

SIA is tentatively scheduled to move to a new building in October 2013. We will provide updated information as it becomes available.

Contact SIA

Public Hours:
9:00-4:00 EDT

SIA will be closed Thursday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day.

Address:
1111 19th Street NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

(202) 955-0198
travel.state.gov/passport/

Customer Service:
CA-PPT-SIA-CS@state.gov

Official Travel:
CA-PPT-SIA-Official-Travel@state.gov

Diplomatic Passports:
CA-PPT-SIA-Diplomatic-Passports@state.gov

Visas:
CA-PPT-SIA-Visa-Unit@state.gov

Communications
(General Questions):
CA-PPT-SIA-Communications@state.gov

Traveling Beyond the Rules: Passport Perspectives

On his first day on the job, Secretary of State John Kerry reminisced about his experience living abroad and traveling to East Berlin independently as a child—a time when the future Secretary, with the wisdom of a 12 year old, misused his diplomatic passport. Without his parents' permission, young 4-foot-3-inch John Kerry bicycled beyond the Iron Curtain, using his diplomatic passport to gain access to East Berlin. Upon hearing what his son had done, Secretary Kerry's father told him he could have caused an "international incident." His passport was "promptly yanked," the Secretary mused, and he was "summarily grounded."¹

Maintaining control and accountability of official, diplomatic, and regular no-fee passports is a priority for the Department of State; one that is constantly being addressed through internal review of practices and processes. Unfortunately, there have been many cases of misuse of official or diplomatic passports.

As the future Secretary discovered, there can be real consequences for misuse of U.S. passports, including damaging relations with foreign countries or hindering the ability of the United States

to advance its national security agenda. "Lessons learned," the Secretary concluded.

Federal agencies are required to maintain control and accountability of no-fee passports issued by the Department of State, which in turn helps the department protect the integrity of official, diplomatic, and regular passports.

Agencies should treat no-fee passports as controlled accountable items that are stored in safes when not in use and formally

checked out to bearers for assignments. Agencies should ensure procedures are in place to return no-fee passports for cancellation and/or destruction either upon the completion of each individual's assignment or when eligible family members (EFMs) separate from the sponsoring employee.

"I was told I could've been an international incident."
-Secretary John F. Kerry

¹ The full text of Secretary Kerry's remarks can be found at state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/02/203717.htm.



What passport agents really need to know.

10 helpful reminders for agents that will help us process applications quickly and efficiently.

Please reference the **Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG)** and **Passport Agent's Reference Guide (PARG)** for more detailed guidelines.

1. Photos should be taken within the past **6 months** and portray the applicant's current appearance. Agents should ensure images are **high-quality**, i.e. not pixilated or blurry, and within **standard sizing guidelines**.

2. For lost or stolen passports, fill out Form **DS-64**, in addition to Form **DS-11**.

3. Include the original letter of authorization, LOA, or authorizing form from the employing agency's Washington, D.C. headquarters office or from the agency head overseas, if currently posted abroad. The authorizing documents must be signed in **blue or black ink**, and include 1 photocopy of the LOA.

4. All applicants using Form DS-11 must appear in person.

5. Normally, non-personal services contractors are properly documented with a **regular passport**.

6. Form DS-11s must be delivered to SIA no later than **five business days** after execution.

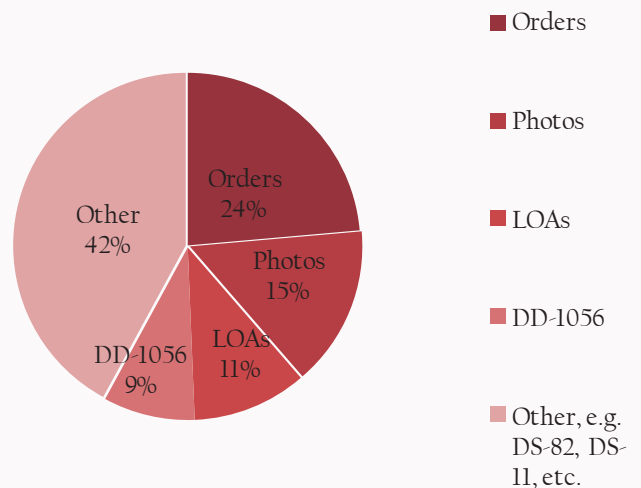
7. All applications for diplomatic passports must include permanent change of station (PCS) Travel Authorizations.

8. Continually update us with the contact information for your passport acceptance agents (and any back-ups).

9. If using Form DS-82 for renewal, any previously issued no-fee passports currently in the applicant's or agency's possession must be submitted to SIA for cancellation.

10. Passport acceptance agents must be retrained every 2 years and be **recertified annually**. Contact CA-PPT-SIA-CS@state.gov for more information.

April 2013 Diplomatic Suspense Report



The **Diplomatic Suspense Report** graph is based on an analysis of application errors found in 233 diplomatic passport applications in April. Problems in an application, e.g. submission of a passport photo that does not meet the sizing guidelines in the PARG, cause applications to be filed in "suspense." These applications await the arrival of corrective action, as requested in a letter to the applicant, from the applicant or the acceptance agent. Review the reminders on this page to learn how to keep your applications out of "suspense."

The New Faces of SIA

- Customer Service Manager (CSM) **Laura Pascarella** joined SIA in December after spending 8 years with DoS in various Consular and Customer Service roles in Miami, DC, and India. Most recently, Laura worked as Program Analyst for the Senior Regional Directorate at Passport Headquarters & as a CSM at the Miami Passport Agency.
- **Danny White** was recently promoted to Entitlement Manager, SIA's resident expert on issues pertaining to entitlement to/eligibility for no-fee passports. Danny previously served as the Diplomatic & Congressional Supervisor, & as a Passport Specialist at SIA. Prior to SIA, Danny managed the procurement of no-fee passports for the Air Force Passport Office & handled passport issues for the DoD Education Activity.
- **Sarah Dirck** was recently promoted to Diplomatic Passport Supervisor & previously served as a Diplomatic Passport Specialist at SIA after spending 3 years at the National Passport Center in New Hampshire. Sarah also has extensive DoD experience, with 9 years in the U.S. Army JAG Corps and 3 in the Criminal Law Division of the Installation Legal Office at Fort Meade.



diplomatic VS. official

Official passports and diplomatic passports carry the same message from the Secretary of State, requesting that the bearer be permitted “to pass without delay or hindrance” and be given “all lawful aid and protection.” All American citizens traveling on official government orders—diplomatic or otherwise—are obligated to respect the laws of the host country in addition to U.S. Federal Government and agency-specific standards of conduct. Neither official passports nor diplomatic passports confer diplomatic immunity. An official or diplomatic passport may subject the bearer to increased scrutiny by foreign governments, non-state actors, and other entities.

The Department of State recently underwent a comprehensive review of regulations, policies, and procedures for issuance of official and diplomatic passports. Department of State regulations provide for the issuance of diplomatic passports to Foreign Service personnel of the foreign affairs agencies, civil service employees of the Department of

State and the Agency for International Development, commissioned members of the Diplomatic Service of the United States, other persons to whom the Department of State has granted a diplomatic or consular title, and persons who have diplomatic or comparable status because of the nature of their foreign mission or the office they hold. Diplomatic passports may be issued to full-time federal government employees who are permanently assigned abroad under the authority of the U.S. Chief of Mission in the country where they serve. Diplomatic passports may be issued to secretaries and deputy secretaries of cabinet departments, the most senior White House personnel and Justices of the Supreme Court. While members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives can request diplomatic passports, many prefer to use an official passport, so as to avoid the perception that they are traveling on behalf of the President or the Secretary of State.

For more information, contact Entitlement Manager [Danny White](#).

From the Desk of Sandra Notice, Passport Specialist

Name and Position?

Sandra Notice, Passport Specialist in the Official Passports section of SIA

Years at SIA?

2 years (6 total in Federal Government)

Other Government Service?

- DoS Passport Services
- North Carolina Department of Corrections
- North Carolina Department of Administration

Hails from?

New York City and Miami

Hobbies?

Involved in community building; previously volunteered with Catholic Social Services in Philadelphia

Professional Motivation?

Learn Constantly—in the government, you always have to keep pace with changing policies and processes

Best workplace practices?

Create a system that works for you. If your work is not organized or systematic, it is going to cause extra stress and confusion that could otherwise be avoided

Federal & Military Passport Agents Reference Guide (FM PARG)

The new FM PARG is set to be released this year.

Ask Your Customer Service Manager (CSM)

Submit your frequently asked questions to

CA-PPT-SIA-CS@state.gov. All questions will receive

responses via email, but one question will be published in an upcoming newsletter and will receive a detailed response from a CSM.



Training Calendar & Waitlist

All passport agent training sessions for 2013 are full, but please feel free to add your name to the waitlist. Email CA-PPT-SIA-Training@state.gov, and include:

- Full Name
- Telephone number
- E-mail address
- Department/Agency/Bureau/Office/Unit symbol(s) (for example, ours is CA/PPT/SIA)
- Date last class attended (if never attended, indicate 'n/a')
- Employment status (direct-hire or contractor)



We will update you when the 2014 training schedule is released. As well, we will notify you if a spot becomes available, or if additional training sessions are added for 2013.

Be Outstanding in
Your Field: #3
Consular Affairs
Leadership Tenet
Develop the
Next Generation

We take seriously our responsibilities as teachers, coaches and mentors and work to develop the skills necessary to play those roles effectively. We make time to get to know our less experienced colleagues and provide them timely praise, honest feedback, and opportunities to cultivate their talents.

Fraud Alerts

Official and diplomatic passports are issued to USG personnel proceeding abroad on official or diplomatic business; as such, these passports must be accounted for at all times. Agents should familiarize themselves with no-fee passport requirements detailed in [22 CFR §51.4 \(c\)](#) and [§51.4 \(d\)](#).

Agencies requesting official and diplomatic passports on behalf of their employees should note that improper care and maintenance, or inadequate methods in accounting for these passports, could lead to violations of [18 USC §1544](#).

- Whoever willfully and knowingly uses, or attempts to use, any passport issued or designed for the use of another; or
- Whoever willfully and knowingly uses or attempts to use any passport in violation of the conditions or restrictions therein contained, or of the rules prescribed pursuant to the laws regulating the issuance of passports; or
- Whoever willfully and knowingly furnishes, disposes of, or delivers a passport to any person, for use by another than the person for whose use it was originally issued and designed should be aware that misuse of a U.S. government passport is a **felony** and can result in fines and imprisonment up to 25 years.



Here is an extreme case of an official passport that was not retrieved upon the bearer's termination from government employment. In July 2012, a man triggered suspicions by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers after he scheduled a same-day, round-trip flight to Japan. He presented airport security with a U.S. official passport upon being asked for identification. Airport officials found 45 bars of chocolate-coated methamphetamines, or approximately 2 kilograms, disguised as Snickers candy bars, in the bearer's carry-on luggage. Be vigilant about retrieving no-fee passports from personnel who are no longer entitled to them. Holding on to your no-fee passport? Misuse of a passport can be a **felony**.