

Internal Administration Circular No 02/2008

My No: MIA/01/07/04/04/18
Ministry of Internal Administration
No: 51, Sir Ernest de Silva Mawatha,
Colombo - 07.

2008.09. 17

All Secretaries of Ministries,
Chief Secretaries of Provincial Councils
Heads of Departments
District Secretaries/Government Agents and
Heads of Institutions of all Government Corporations and
Statutory Boards



Issuance of Official Passports

The Circular No. GJ/1/46 dated 11.07.1996 issued by the Secretary, Ministry of Defence on the issuance of Official Passports is hereby repealed and instead the following provisions will come into force with effect from 01.10.2008.

02. The Officials who are eligible to apply for official passports

- i) All Government officials at executive level who travel abroad often for official purposes are not entitled for diplomatic passports.
- ii) All Government officials of the All Island services recognized by the Public Administration Circular No. 56/89 and subsequent circulars.
- iii) All officials of the executive level in Corporations, Statutory Boards and other state owned agencies.
- iv) All officials categorized as executives in the circulars issued by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs from time to time with regard to the restructuring of salaries in the public service.
- v) The Judges and those who are categorized as Legal Officers, Medical Officers and Assistant Medical Officers in terms of the circulars issued from time to time by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs on the restructuring of the salaries in the public service.
- vi) Those who are categorized as executive officers according to the circulars issued by the Department of Management Services from time to time with regard to restructuring of salaries of Government corporations, Statutory Boards and State Owned Agencies.

- vii) Executive officers of the three Armed services and the police .
 - a) Sri Lanka Army - All officers holding the rank of Major and above.
 - b) Sri Lanka Air force - All officers holding the rank of Squadron Leader and above
 - c) Sri Lanka Navy - All officers holding the rank of Lieutenant Commander and above.
 - d) Sri Lanka Police - All officers holding the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police and above
- viii) Following officers serving a Cabinet Minister or a Chief Minister of a Provincial Council
 - a) Private Secretary
 - b) Media Secretary
 - c) Two Coordinating Secretaries
 - d) Two Advisors
(Total number of officers should not exceed six)
- ix) The following officers serving a Deputy Minister
 - a) Private Secretary
 - b) Coordinating Secretary
(number of officers should not exceed two)
- x) Members of Provincial Councils , Mayors and Deputy Mayors of Municipal Councils and Urban Councils
- xi) Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Pradeshiya Sabhas
- xii) Basnayaka Nilames who are appointed under the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance No. 19 of 1931.
- xiii) All individuals who are nominated for Diplomatic Services and recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- xiv) Officers approved for foreign travel by the Secretary Ministry of Internal Administration in relation to essential services and special duties, who do not fall into the above mentioned categories.
- xv) When need arises to obtain an official passport for any official who does not belong to any of the above categories should make a request to the Controller General of Immigration and Emigration with special recommendation of the Secretary of the relevant Ministry. The Controller – General could issue an official passport, restricting to one or several countries, with restriction of validity for a specified or for a recommended period, if he is satisfied that the contents in the application deem sufficient to issue an Official Passport.

03. Conditions with regard to the issuance of an official Passport.

- i) The application prepared according to the attached specimen at Annexure 01 should be forwarded with the recommendation of the Secretary to the Ministry /Head of the Department / Corporation/ Statuary Board / or State Agency.
- ii) The official who recommends an application for an official passport should hold total responsibility in that regard.
- iii) **Officials who are eligible to make recommendations for official passports.**
 - a) Ministry officials (Including staff of the Ministers / Deputy Ministers) – Secretary to the Ministry/ Additional Secretary
 - b) Personal Staff of the Chief Ministers – The Chief Secretary of provincial Council.
 - c) For Departmental officers – Head of Department
 - d) For Officers of Corporations/ Statutory Boards/ State owned Agencies – Head of the relevant Institution/ Secretary/ Additional Secretary to the relevant Ministry
 - e) Members of Provincial councils – Chief Secretary/Secretary to the Governor
 - f) Mayors and Deputy Mayors of Municipals and Urban Councils – Secretary to Ministry of Local Government of the relevant province
 - g) Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Pradesheeya Sabhas – Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government of the relevant province

04) Documents required when applying for official passports.

- i) Duly filled application number IM 35
- ii) Original and a photocopy of the certificate of Birth of the applicant
- iii) National Identity Card of the applicant issued by the Commissioner General for Registration of Persons with a photocopy
- iv) The original of passport/Emergency Certificate/Identity Certificate with a photocopy of the data page, if the applicant had earlier obtained them
- v) A certified copy of the police entry in case the applicant has misplaced the previously obtained valid travel document

vi) Recommendation of the Secretary to the Ministry/Head of Department (According to Annexure 01)

vii) Applicant's salary particulars in the month closest to the date the application is forwarded.

05. Validity Period of the Official passports

- i) Although the period of validity of an official passport is 10 years, the maximum period of validity for the first issue of an official passport is restricted to three (3) years. However, the validity period of an official Passport can be restricted for a certain period less than 3 years and for a specific country or several countries as requested by the Head of the institution. If an amendment or a removal of such restriction is needed, it can be considered on a request made by the head of the institution to the Controller General of the Department of Immigration and Emigration. The validity period of an official passport should not be extended for more than three (3) years with any amendment.
- ii) When a person becomes eligible for an official passport by virtue of holding position, an official passport is issued only for the period he/she holds the post. Head of the Institution therefore, should be mindful of this fact when making recommendations e.g. Members of Provincial Councils, Non-diplomatic officers appointed for Foreign Service.
- iii) Official passports can be used only for official foreign travel or for studies abroad on official leave. However, it can be used, by eligible officials for private foreign travel also if the leave abroad has been approved by the secretary of the relevant ministry for a period less than 03 months. If private leave abroad exceeds three (3) months the Controller General of Immigration and Emigration should be informed.
- iv) An official passport is not valid for employment in a foreign country. That will be indicated by an endorsement or stamp placed in the passport.
- v) When a person has to travel abroad on no-pay leave, he/she should surrender the official passport to the Controller General of the Department of Immigration and Emigration and should obtain an ordinary passport.
- vi) If a person has already obtained an ordinary passport he/she can either hand it over to the Controller General and obtain an official passport subject to the provisions in Para 2 above or an endorsement can be made on the existing ordinary passport to use it for official foreign travel on a request of the applicant.

- vii) The official passport should be surrendered to the head of the establishment of the Ministry/ Provincial Council/ Department/ Corporation/ Statutory board/ or state owned Agency, when the holder retires/ resigns from the service or is under interdiction. If not, the head of the establishment should take action to take over the official passport from the person concerned. Such official passport should be surrendered to the Department of Immigration and Emigration and get it cancelled and handed over to the person concerned. In the event such person does not hand over the official passport, the head of the establishment should inform the Department of Immigration and Emigration to take necessary action to cancel it.
 - viii) If an official passport is lost, an entry should be made at the nearest police station as in the case of the loss of an ordinary passport and that should be informed to the Controller General of the Department of Immigration and Emigration through the head of the institute for the cancellation of the official passport.
 - ix) Holding of an official passport does not exempt the holder from the requirement to adhere to stipulations laid down in the Establishment code, Public Administration Circulars, Treasury Circulars, Ministry Circulars or Establishment Circulars relating to travel abroad.
06. A register of persons holding the official passports is maintained daily by the Department of Immigration and Emigration and the files of those who have obtained official passports are placed separately in the record room. The Department should obtain confirmation on 1st January each year from the head of each institution, whether the official passport holders are still holding the position and necessary action should be taken if any change of position has occurred.
07. Applying for or misusing of an official passport, in contravention to the above guidelines is an offence liable for punishment under section 45 of the Immigrants and Emigrants Amended Act No. 20 of 1948.
08. Action should be taken by the Controller General of Immigration and Emigration to cancel all official passports issued prior to 01.10.2008, outside the provision of this new circular, which is effective from 01.10.2008.
09. Please bring the contents of this circular to the notice of all heads of institutions and other officials under your Ministry/Provincial Council.

Sgd./Dr. U. Vidanapathirana
Secretary
Ministry of Internal Administration

- Copies :
- 1. Secretary to H.E. the President
 - 2. Secretary to the Hon. Prime Minister
 - 3. Controller General - Department of Immigration and Emigration

ANNEXURE 01

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECRETARY TO THE MINISTRY/ HEAD
OF THE INSTITUTION TO OBTAIN AN OFFICIAL PASSPORT**

- 01.NAME OF APPLICANT :
- 02.DESIGNATION AND THE DATE OF APPOINTMENT :
- 03.THE SERVICE OFFICER BELONGS TO AND THE DATE OF APPOINTMENT IN SUCH SERVICE :
- 04.REASON TO OBTAIN OFFICIAL PASSPORT :
- 05.REQUIRED VALIDITY OF PASSPORT :
- 06.PRIVATE ADDRESS OF APPLICANT :
(Any change should be informed)
07. TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF APPLICANT
OFFICIAL :
RESIDENCE :
MOBILE :

I certify that the above information is correct and recommend / do not recommend the issue of an official passport to the applicant.

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Date

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**Secretary to the Ministry /
Head of Institution.**