

Cancellation of Passports

Introduction

Deceased holders

Information provided to the public

Changes to Death Certificates in Northern Ireland

Passports containing visas

Passport cancelled on system: holder not aware

Lost and Stolen (LS) record in existence

Subsequent issues

No subsequent issues

Passport impounded

Passport not cancelled, but holder experiencing problems travelling on passport

Cancellation of passports for non-payers of passport fees

Introduction

Process

Returned cheque due to insufficient funds

Refused bank mandate

Administration charge

Storage and retention of papers

Implementation

LSR

Applicant pays or wants to pay after 8 weeks

Introduction

Where an application for a replacement passport is submitted, or the accompanying passport is still valid (e.g. because it is full), the document should be cancelled and a note made on the system (see also Passports containing visas, below).

Cancellation should be done when the new issue is authorised and not before.

Passports should be cancelled as follows:

E-passports (version 2) – the bottom right corners of:

- a) the front cover &
- b) the biodata page

must all be cut off, making sure that the right hand side of the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) has been cut through, except in the case of faulty passports. The back cover of the new style passport must be left uncanceled.

E-passports (version 1)) – the top right corners of:

- a) the front cover
- b) the back cover &
- c) the biodata page

must all be cut off, making sure that the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) has been cut through except in the case of faulty passports.

Digitally issued PASS passports – the top right corners of:

- a) the front cover
- b) the back cover &
- c) the biodata page

must all be cut off, making sure that the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) has been cut through.

Old Style Machine Readable PIMIS passports – the top right corners of the front and back covers must be cut off, making sure that the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) is cut through.

“Old Blues” – the top right corner of the front cover must be cut and the first five pages stamped with a cancelled stamp. Care should be taken to not stamp over the personal details.

Examiners should not cut or stamp any pages other than those mentioned above. This should not invalidate any visas contained in the passport but it is the responsibility of the applicant to check whether the visas remain valid for travel.

When exceptionally consigning a passport to confidential waste the passport should be cut into four roughly equal pieces, ensuring that the cut goes through the picture. With ePassports (v.1) the antenna must also be cut through. With the new style e-passport (v.2) the antenna will be automatically cut through when the cover is cut into four.

For information regarding the cancellation of Temporary Passports please see Temporary Passports Issued by FCO

Deceased passport holders policy

Introduction

In the spring of 2005 the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) undertook a comprehensive review of the return of deceased persons' passports. The review covered the current arrangements for dealing with deceased persons' passport, the information available to customers and the handling procedures adopted by regional offices.

The Central Customer Service Team in Newport is also involved in the Tell Us Once (TUU) scheme whereby persons notifying the General Register Officer (GRO) of a death may also provide a passport held by the deceased to be cancelled. GRO will then contact IPS to inform us of the cancellation and status of the holder. Please see Tell Us Once for further information.

Process

Procedure: -

- On receipt, the passport must be cancelled on the system as "Holder deceased".
- A passport note must also be added, stating what was received i.e. passport/death certificate if one has been submitted, along with an indication as to whether the passport has been destroyed or returned to the sender.

It is not mandatory for the death certificate to be submitted unless the passport has been declared lost or unavailable.

If the passport has not been sent in with the notification and has been declared lost, the notification should be sent to the Lost, Stolen and Recovered department (LSR) in order for them to obtain a completed LS01 form.

All the passport holder's information should have been provided within the notification leaflet, and as such it is felt that staff will no longer be required to manually record the details of a deceased person's passport.

Notification leaflets should be retained for 13 months for audit purposes and in case there is a need for future investigation i.e. malicious reporting of a death.

The appropriate acknowledgement letter should still be sent to the sender.

There is no change to local arrangements as to who currently deals with deceased persons' passports.

Counter staff may process deceased passports where the customer attends in person and insists on taking the passport away with them. All other deceased passports should be transferred to the Central Customer Services Team by DX secure bag.

Information Provided to the Public

Our web site, Teleperformance and our Death Notification Leaflet 'What to do with a Passport when the Passport Holder is Deceased' all advise our customer what to do with the passport in these circumstances. The information provided asks customers to return such passports to the nearest IPS office and, for added security, to cut off the top right hand corner of the passport before posting. The Notification leaflet and form is available on line as a download or via Teleperformance by calling the Adviceline.

Changes to Death Certificates in Northern Ireland

In May 2010 IPS received correspondence from the Northern Ireland General Register Office (NI GRO) informing us of planned changes to the format of their certificate. For information on how death certificates from Northern Ireland will be impacted, please see Birth Certificates – Changes to Birth, Death and Stillborn Certificates – Northern Ireland.

Passports containing visas

It is the responsibility of the passport holder to ensure that a valid visa in an expired (or full) passport would be acceptable at the immigration control point of the country concerned. It is not for IPS to comment on the validity of a visa in a passport accompanying an application as the holder might accept this as authentication that the visa will be acceptable at foreign immigration controls.

In many cases a visa is valid for only one visit or for the validity of the passport. If requested, applicants should be advised to check with the appropriate Embassy or Consular office of the country to be visited whether an unexpired visa in a previous cancelled passport remains valid.

All passports must be cancelled, using the methods above only. In doing this any valid visa contained in the passport will not be cut through.

If the applicant has requested the passport back uncanceled they must be informed, using template 005A, that this is not possible and to contact the Embassy of the country which issued the visa.

Passport cancelled on system - holder not aware

In the majority of cases the passport holder will have been stopped on entry to or exit from the UK. The immigration or police officer will have checked the passport database and established the passport as cancelled.

The immigration or police officer will establish whether the person presenting the passport appears to be the rightful holder, and if so will usually return the passport to the holder with a covering letter explaining that the passport is not valid for travel and suggesting that the holder telephones the IPS Adviceline.

The passport Adviceline operator will ascertain whether the passport holder is travelling urgently or not. If the passport holder **is** travelling urgently, the call centre operator will make a premium service appointment for the passport holder and will advise him/her to produce a completed passport application form, two recent photographs, the cancelled passport and the relevant fee.

Upon receipt of the application/complaint, the examiner will:

- Check the cancelled passport for signs of manipulation.
- Check PASS to confirm the passport status and passport history. In particular the examiner must identify subsequent issues and Lost and Stolen (LS) records.

Lost and Stolen (LS) record in existence

Where an LS record is in existence the scanned record of the LS01 should be retrieved to establish whether it was the passport holder who reported the loss, and whether the record was correctly associated.

Where the holder has reported the passport as lost or stolen since 8/12/2003 the holder will have received a letter explaining that the passport had been cancelled and if subsequently recovered would not be valid for travel.

Where the LS Record has been incorrectly associated and everything else is otherwise in order the passport should be reissued gratis to the expiry date of the original. Out of pocket expenses should be reimbursed at the request of the holder. As IPS have made the error any requests for compensation should be considered.

Subsequent issues

Where there have been subsequent issues requisitions all files or check the system to see why additional passports have been issued. Ascertain from the customer the whereabouts of these passports and have LS01s completed where necessary.

If a passport has been issued with a restricted validity because a passport, although despatched, would not reach the customer in time for travel, and the customer discards the restricted validity passport after use in favour of the fully valid passport the replacement passport should be issued gratis. Any out of pocket expenses should be reimbursed because at the time of issue it is unlikely that IPS will have advised the customer that the passport had been cancelled on the system.

No subsequent issues

Requisition original issue file or retrieve the image from the system.

If ID confirmed and application otherwise in order, there is no obvious reason for the cancellation, proceed with gratis issue.

Consider any claims for compensation.

Passport impounded

Where the passport has been impounded by the Immigration service it will be cancelled by having the corners cut and returned to the LSR Central team in Peterborough. This will take a few days to achieve but a service level agreement is in place.

Once the passport has been received by the LSR team an R record will be created and the passport cancelled on the system. The passport will be destroyed.

Passport not cancelled, but holder experiencing problems travelling on passport

There have been a number of queries about British passports showing as cancelled on the US Department of Homeland Security Customs & Border Protection database. This has resulted in the passport holders experiencing difficulties when entering the US.

A similar problem is currently being experienced with travellers entering a number of other foreign countries.

In the majority of cases these passports have never been cancelled against our LSR database or the system, and they have not been reported as lost or stolen. Nor are they showing on the UK Immigration records.

At present we are not sharing our database with the authorities of other countries.

Where a call is received via the Telephone Enquiries Bureau (TEB) about this matter, the caller must be advised to send in the passport to the Customer Services Department, together with a covering letter confirming the circumstances. The details of the individual should be taken and the matter referred to Customer Service Teams with a note that the caller has been told to return the passport for investigation.

Where the passport has been cancelled against our database please follow the information found.

On receipt of the passport, it should be visually checked to ensure that there have been no unauthorised entries or amendments. Once it has been established that the returned passport has never been cancelled either through the IPS or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), there is no evidence of tampering and it is not on the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) records, the passport holder must be advised that we have checked our records and there is no trace of the passport being reported lost or stolen, nor has the passport been cancelled against our database.

In order to check that the United Kingdom Immigration Service UKBA has not noted the passport cancelled on their record, the Customer Service officer will need to refer the details to FIU who will contact our liaison officer in UKBA to check their records for any possible matches, and where there is an entry, the reason for it.

Before the introduction of our LSR database, many FCO posts contacted UKBA direct with information on lost, stolen or mislaid passports and the passport may be on the UK Immigration Service records as a result of this information. If the passport has been cancelled on the UKBA records as a result of them being notified by the FCO, the applicant will need to pay for a replacement passport. Once it has been established that the passport has been reported lost or stolen via the FCO, but the IPS has not updated our database, full details of the passport number, the holder's name and the entry on the records must be sent to the LSR Manager via the regional LSR teams.

When there is no evidence that the passport has ever been cancelled either by the IPS or the UKBA, if the passport holder wishes, they may contact the Embassy of the country involved to ask for a written explanation as to why the passport was unacceptable by their Immigration officials. On production of a letter from the Embassy, corroborating the error, we will make representations to the appropriate Department via the FCO to investigate how such a thing could have occurred. Such requests will need to be sent in the first instance to the Customer Service teams who will liaise with Policy.

The passport holder may wish to consider applying for a new passport if they anticipate returning to the country concerned. As the passport appears to have been correctly issued and has not been cancelled, we cannot be held

responsible for an error made by another country, and the full fee will need to be paid.

If an examiner is advised that an applicant is applying for a replacement passport because their passport has been registered as cancelled, and checks against our system show the passport is still valid, the examiner must obtain the full facts and refer the case to FIU via their line manager, to establish whether or not the passport has been cancelled against IPS records, and if so why. If the passport was reported lost or stolen via the FCO, full details of the passport number, the holder's name and the entry on the records must be sent to the LSR Manager, who will arrange to update our records.

HQ Policy should be informed of any further incidences where a passport is returned following detention at an overseas entry port and the passport has not been tampered with nor registered lost or stolen (either against our data base or the Immigration Service records). A record of the passport number, date of issue, the date the IPS were advised and the country involved should be sent to Policy Section at the end of each month.

Please also see Lost and Stolen Passports.

Cancellation of passports for non-payers of passport fees

Introduction

This policy instruction applies mainly to **Finance** and therefore examiners do not have to do anything different from what they are currently doing. However, it is important for examiners and other stakeholders to be aware of the policy.

Current policy and procedure allow for instances where some passports have been issued for which no payments have been received. This can happen where a passport has been issued and delivered to the applicant but either the cheque or the bank mandate for a credit/debit card payment has been refused or there are insufficient funds.

This policy introduces a mechanism whereby the passport holder will be informed that the passport will be cancelled if they fail to respond within eight weeks after the first reminder for payment has been sent out to them. It is important to note that the purpose of this policy is to encourage the payment of unpaid fees.

Process

This policy change is to cancel the passport on the system if there is no reply to the final letter.

Returned cheque due to insufficient funds

Finance will write out to the applicant giving them three weeks to make payment and advising them that failure to respond within the three-week period may lead to their passport being cancelled.

If there is no response after this initial three-week period, Finance will send out a final letter to the applicant requesting payment. The final letter should be sent out by **Secure Delivery by DX Secure to act as proof of delivery**. The applicant should be advised in this letter that failure to respond after the next three weeks will result in the cancellation of the passport and once the passport is cancelled, the holder will not be able to use it for travel or any other purpose.

Refer the required documents and spreadsheet to your finance HEO to authorise inclusion on the database.

The required documents will include the returned cheque and a collated spreadsheet which details names, bar code and action taken on each case.

The HEO will check the documentation and sign a hard copy of the spreadsheet for storage with paper work on cases to be included on the database.

Refused bank mandate

On receipt of the bank mandate, Finance will try to contact the applicant first by phone (if a telephone number is available) to request payment. If contact is made, process the payment on the PDQ machine and confirm with the applicant that payment has been received.

If a telephone number is not available or there is no answer to the telephone call, send out a reminder to the applicant giving them a week to make payment. Note that there is no need to mention the cancellation of the passport at this stage as this letter is just a reminder that the bank mandate for their credit/debit has been refused. Many cases of refused mandates can be cleared as incorrect card details are often the problem.

If there is no payment after this initial contact, issue a second class letter to the applicant advising that failure to respond after the next two weeks will lead to the cancellation of the passport and that once the passport is cancelled, the holder will not be able to use it for travel or any other purpose.

If there is no payment at the end of this two-week period, send a final letter, using **Secure Delivery by DX Secure to act as a proof of delivery**. This letter should also advise the applicant that failure to respond at the end of the three-week period will lead to the cancellation of their passport.

Refer the required documents and spreadsheet to your finance HEO to authorise inclusion on the database.

Administration charge

The present process of charging the administration fee will be withdrawn with immediate effect. This will be re-introduced after we have authority as part of the Consular Fees Order to make a £5 charge. Further communication on this will be supplied to Finance teams at a later date.

Storage and retention of papers

There is no change to the current process of storage and retention of documents at present. The difference will be the signing off for the spreadsheet and the collation/retention of the spreadsheets at the Glasgow office.

Implementation

This policy was implemented on **1st June 2008** and from this date the web site, application packs, customer advice booklet and finance debtor letters all contained wording stating that we will cancel a passport where payment is not received.

The Regional Finance Teams maintain and forward spreadsheets to Glasgow Finance Team. Glasgow will enter passport notes onto the system when spreadsheets are received and will update the database.

Charging the Administration fee of £5 – this will be introduced as soon as we get clearance as part of the Consular Fees Order and relevant communication will be sent to Finance and letters updated.

LSR

Where one of these passports for which no payment was received is reported lost, stolen or is submitted for renewal or replacement, then the new passport issued should not be released to the customer until both payments have cleared. It is important to work closely with the Glasgow Finance to ensure that the database of cancelled passports and the passport notes on the system are kept updated.

Applicant pays or wants to pay after 8 weeks

Where the applicant pays, Finance should account for the money as per current procedures. Once the funds are cleared finance should advise the applicant that the passport has been reinstated and can now be used; contact the Glasgow Finance team to update their database and insert the appropriate passport note the system.