



For Immediate Release

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CHANGES TO PASSPORT SERVICES FOR BRITISH NATIONALS

The British Government is making important changes to the passport service for British nationals living overseas.

Previously, during the hurricane season, applicants were able to send a copy of their passport with their renewal application rather than the original. The UK Passport Office is stopping this practice because of the risk of fraud. Original passports will need to be submitted with the passport applications all year round.

Also, from 12 August 2013, the application process will be centralised and British Citizens in the Cayman Islands will need to submit their passport application to Her Majesty's Passport Office in the UK. British Overseas Territory Citizen (BOTC) passport holders should continue to submit their passport applications through the Cayman Islands Passport Office.

These important changes follow a review by the National Audit Office. They are designed to achieve economies of scale, greater security and consistency in decision making. All British passports have enhanced sophisticated security features designed to reduce the likelihood of identity theft and passport fraud.

Passports can be renewed up to 9 months ahead of the expiry date with no loss of validity. Applicants are encouraged to plan ahead and submit their applications in good time.

Gary Benham
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Notes for Editors

Before 12 August, British Citizens living in the Cayman Islands submitted passport applications to a regional processing hub in Washington, United States.

Information on the UK Government website will be amended shortly before 12 August to advise British nationals on the new passport application process. All the information required to make an application will be found at <https://www.gov.uk/overseas-passports>.

Applicants will be required to send their applications to the Passport Customer Service Centre in Durham. But there will be no change to processing times.

Fees charged to British nationals applying overseas are based on the current costs of providing the service. As overseas volumes are much less than those in the UK it is harder to gain efficiencies overseas. That is why we have taken the decision to repatriate the issuing of passports to British nationals overseas to the UK. Once this has been completed Her Majesty's Passport Office will be seeking to create closer alignment between the two sets of fees.