

FAQ's on OCI Related matters

Q. I have recently acquired a new passport; do I need to re-issue my OCI card?

A: OCI Card renewal is only required once **after acquiring a new passport after turning 20 years of age or if there has been any change in his personal particulars viz. Name, father's name, nationality etc.**

Q: I am a person of Indian origin as my parents were born in undivided India before partition. After partition, they briefly held Pakistani citizenship before moving to the United States. Am I eligible for an OCI card?

A: No. If the applicant, or his/her parents or grand-parents had ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, he/she will not be eligible for an OCI card.

Q: I hold a valid PIO Card. Am I required to convert this to an OCI Card? Will my PIO Card be valid beyond the conversion deadline?

A. The Government of India has decided to discontinue the conversion of Person of Indian Origin (PIO) cards to Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards after December 31, 2025. Consequently, the PIO to OCI conversion facility is no longer available. PIO cardholders who wish to obtain OCI registration are advised to apply afresh for OCI registration in accordance with the extant guidelines.

Q: Is a Renunciation/Surrender Certificate compulsory before I apply for an OCI Card? What is the procedure to apply for a Renunciation/Surrender Certificate? How long does it take to issue it?

A: Yes, a Renunciation/Surrender Certificate is compulsory before applying for an OCI card if the person ever held an Indian citizenship. One can apply for it through VFS website. It normally takes 4-5 working days to issue Renunciation Certificate (excluding VFS mailing time).

Q: Can I travel to India with just my OCI Card, or should I also carry the passport which contains the 'U' Visa (OCI Visa)?

A: No need to carry the passport which contains the **U visa**, Vide circular No. 26011/06/2015-OCI dated 29th January, 2015 of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India has decided that, all immigration authorities in India will not insist on production of the foreign passport containing the 'U' Visa Sticker in the case of OCI Cardholders while they enter/exit India and the immigration clearance will be granted based on production of just the valid **OCI card**, accompanied by a valid passport (which may not have the U visa sticker).

Q: My spouse is a foreign national of non-Indian origin. I hold an OCI Card. Is my spouse entitled to an OCI Card? What about my children?

A: Yes, the spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or spouse of foreign origin of an Overseas Citizen of India cardholder registered under section 7A and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application, can apply for an OCI card. Minor children whose both parents are/were citizens of India or one of whose parents is/was a citizen of India are eligible to apply for an OCI Card.

Q: I want to add my spouse's name on my OCI Card. How can I do so?

A: One can do so by applying for re-issuance of OCI Card.

Q: Are foreign military personnel of Indian origin eligible for OCI cards?

A: No, foreign military personnel either in service or retired are not entitled for grant of OCI. No person who has earlier served in a foreign military organization is eligible for an OCI card.

Q: What are the benefits available to an OCI Card holder?

A: An OCI card holder gets the following benefits:

- A multiple entry, multi-purpose life-long visa for visiting India.
- Exemption from registration with local police authority for any length of stay in India.
- Parity with Non-resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of economic, financial and educational fields as per the relevant Acts, except in relation to acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties.
- OCI can be used as identity proof for application of PAN Card and driving license as well as for opening a bank account if the OCI card holder is residing in India.

Q: What are the benefits to which an OCI card holder is NOT entitled to?

A: The OCI Card holder is not entitled:

- to vote;
- to be a member of a Legislative Assembly or of a Legislative Council or of the Parliament 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
- to undertake any Missionary work, Mountaineering and Journalism without prior permission of the Govt. of India;

- OCI cardholder shall also require Protected Area Permit (PAP)/Restricted Area Permit (RAP) to visit any place which falls within the Protected/Restricted Area notified by the Government as in the case of any other foreigner.

Q. Can foreign nationals, who are not otherwise eligible for OCI, get OCI if they are married to persons who are OCI cardholders?

A. Yes, the spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or spouse of foreign origin of an Overseas Citizen of India cardholder registered under section 7A and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application.

Q. Are Minor children eligible for OCI Card?

A. Yes, minor children whose both parents are/were citizens of India or one of the parents is/was a citizen of India are eligible for OCI Card.

Q. Whether civil Govt. servant working in Ministry of Defence as IT engineers/civil contractors entitled for OCI?

A. No

Q. Who can avail the OCI Miscellaneous services?

A. Only an existing Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card holder can avail the OCI Miscellaneous Services.

Q. Under what circumstances can the OCI Miscellaneous services be availed?

A. OCI Miscellaneous services can be availed for updation/re-issuance of OCI Card in the following category of cases:

(i) In case of issuance of new passport (refer to the condition according to one's age)

(ii) In case of change of personal particulars viz. name, nationality etc.

(iii) In case of loss/damage of OCI registration certificate/visa.

(iv) If wrong personal particular is filled in the online application viz. name, father's name, date of birth etc.

(v) In case of change of address/occupation

Q. What should be done for issuance of re-issuance of OCI Card in case of loss of OCI Card?

A. In case of loss of OCI documents, file a complaint with the Police authorities. Apply online for reissue of OCI under lost category through VFS Global. Please submit

physical copy of application along with required documents (including Police Report) to VFS center.

Q. Will I receive a new OCI Card after my application for updation is approved?

A. No, the applicant does not get a new OCI Card after his/her application for updation is approved. The particulars of his/her passports gets updated with his/her existing OCI Card.

Q. Where should I contact if information relevant to my are is not available on the website.

A. If the desired information is not available here, the applicant can ask his/her query on the chatbot (**SAHAYAK**) available on this website. They can also send emails to **oci[dot]chicago[at]mea[dot]gov[dot]in** as well. While enquiring, kindly keep your passport number and file number with you.