

## Department of State

### § 51.3 Types of passports.

(a) *Regular passport.* A regular passport is issued to a national of the United States.

(b) *Service passport.* When authorized by the Department, a service passport may be issued to a non-personal services contractor traveling abroad to carry out duties in support of and pursuant to a contract with the U.S. government, when exceptional circumstances make a service passport necessary to enable the individual to carry out his or her contractual duties.

(c) *Official passport.* When authorized by the Department, an official passport may be issued to:

(1) An officer or employee of the U.S. government traveling abroad to carry out official duties, and family members of such persons;

(2) A U.S. government personal services contractor traveling abroad to carry out official duties on behalf of the U.S. government;

(3) A non-personal services contractor traveling abroad to carry out duties in support of and pursuant to a contract with the U.S. government when the contractor is unable to carry out such duties using a regular or service passport; or

(4) An official or employee of a state, local, tribal, or territorial government traveling abroad to carry out official duties in support of the U.S. government.

(d) *Diplomatic passport.* A diplomatic passport is issued to a Foreign Service Officer or to a person having diplomatic status or comparable status because he or she is traveling abroad to carry out diplomatic duties on behalf of the U.S. government. When authorized by the Department, spouses and family members of such persons may be issued diplomatic passports. When authorized by the Department, a diplomatic passport may be issued to a U.S. government contractor if the contractor meets the eligibility requirements for a diplomatic passport and the diplomatic passport is necessary to complete his or her contractual duties in support of the U.S. government.

(e) *Passport card.* A passport card is issued to a national of the United States on the same basis as a regular passport. It is valid only for departure

from and entry to the United States through land and sea ports of entry between the United States and Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean and Bermuda. It is not a globally interoperable international travel document.

[81 FR 67157, Sept. 30, 2016]

### § 51.4 Validity of passports.

(a) *Signature of bearer.* A passport book is valid only when signed by the bearer in the space designated for signature, or, if the bearer is unable to sign, signed by a person with legal authority to sign on his or her behalf. A passport card is valid without the signature of the bearer.

(b) *Period of validity of a regular passport and a passport card.* (1) A regular passport or passport card issued to an applicant 16 years of age or older is valid for ten years from date of issue unless the Department limits the validity period to a shorter period.

(2) A regular passport or passport card issued to an applicant under 16 years of age is valid for five years from date of issue unless the Department limits the validity period to a shorter period.

(3) A regular passport for which payment of the fee has been excused is valid for a period of five years from the date issued unless limited by the Department to a shorter period.

(c) *Period of validity of a service passport.* The period of validity of a service passport, unless limited by the Department to a shorter period, is five years from the date of issue, or so long as the bearer maintains the status pursuant to which the service passport is issued, whichever is shorter. A service passport which has not expired must be returned to the Department upon the termination of the bearer's status or at such other time as the Department may determine.

(d) *Period of validity of an official passport.* The period of validity of an official passport, unless limited by the Department to a shorter period, is five years from the date of issue, or so long as the bearer maintains his or her official status, whichever is shorter. An official passport which has not expired must be returned to the Department upon the termination of the bearer's

## §51.5

## 22 CFR Ch. I (4–1–23 Edition)

official status or at such other time as the Department may determine.

(e) *Period of validity of a diplomatic passport.* The period of validity of a diplomatic passport, unless limited by the Department to a shorter period, is five years from the date of issue, or so long as the bearer maintains his or her diplomatic status, whichever is shorter. A diplomatic passport which has not expired must be returned to the Department upon the termination of the bearer's diplomatic status or at such other time as the Department may determine.

(f) *Limitation of validity.* The validity period of any passport may be limited by the Department to less than the normal validity period. The bearer of a limited passport may apply for a new passport, using the proper application and submitting the limited passport, applicable fees, photographs, and additional documentation, if required, to support the issuance of a new passport.

(g) *Invalidity.* A United States passport is invalid as soon as:

(1) The Department approves the revocation notification pursuant to §51.65(a); or

(2) The passport has been reported as lost or stolen to the Department, a U.S. passport agency or a diplomatic or consular post abroad and the Department has recorded the reported loss or theft; or

(3) The passport is cancelled by the Department (physically, electronically, or otherwise) upon issuance of a new passport of the same type to the bearer; or

(4) The Department has sent a written notice to the bearer that the passport has been invalidated because the Department has not received the applicable fees; or

(5) The passport has been materially changed in physical appearance or composition, or contains a damaged, defective or otherwise nonfunctioning chip, or includes unauthorized changes, obliterations, entries or photographs, or has observable wear or tear that renders it unfit for use as a travel document, and the Department either takes possession of the passport or sends a written notice to the bearer); or

(6) The bearer of a special issuance passport no longer maintains the status pursuant to which the passport was issued; or

(7) The Department has sent a written notice to the bearer, directly or through the bearer's employing agency, stating that a special issuance passport has been cancelled by the Department.

(8) The Department approves a Certificate of Loss of Nationality for the passport holder pursuant to §50.40 of this chapter and 8 U.S.C. 1481.

[81 FR 67158, Sept. 30, 2016, as amended at 83 FR 21874, May 11, 2018]

### §51.5 Adjudication and issuance of passports.

(a) A passport authorizing officer may adjudicate applications and authorize the issuance of passports.

(b) A passport authorizing officer will examine the passport application and all documents, photographs and statements submitted in support of the application in accordance with guidance issued by the Department.

### §51.6 Verification of passports and release of information from passport records.

(a) *Verification.* When required by a foreign government, a consular officer abroad may verify a U.S. passport.

(b) *Release of information.* Information in passport records is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act. Release of this information may be requested in accordance with part 171 or part 172 of this title.

### §51.7 Passport property of the U.S. Government.

(a) A passport at all times remains the property of the United States and must be returned to the U.S. Government upon demand.

(b) Law enforcement authorities who take possession of a passport for use in an investigation or prosecution must return the passport to the Department on completion of the investigation and/or prosecution.