

Modi Government Simplifies process for re-issue of OCI Cards

Decision Expected to Facilitate OCI Card Holders

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In a decision which is expected to significantly ease the process for re-issue of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards, the Modi Government has decided to simplify the process. This decision has been taken on the directions of the Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah.

The OCI Card has proved to be very popular amongst foreigners of Indian Origin and spouses of foreign origin of Indian citizens or OCI cardholders, as it helps them in hassle free entry and unlimited stay in India. So far about 37.72 lakh OCI Cards have been issued by the Government of India.

As per the extant law, a foreigner of Indian origin or a foreign spouse of an Indian citizen or foreign spouse of an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder, can be registered as an OCI cardholder. OCI card is a life-long visa for entry into and stay in India with a number of other major benefits attached to it which are not available to other foreigners.

Presently, the OCI card is required to be re-issued each time a new passport is issued up to 20 years of age and once after completing 50 years of age, in view of biological changes in the face of the applicant. With a view to facilitate the OCI cardholders, it has now been decided by the Government of India to dispense with this requirement. A person who has got registration as OCI cardholder prior to attaining the age of 20 years will have to get the OCI card re-issued only once when a new passport is issued after his/her completing 20 years of age, so as to capture his/ her facial features on attaining adulthood. If a person has obtained registration as OCI cardholder after attaining the age of 20 years, there will be no requirement of re-issue of OCI card.

With a view to update the data regarding new passports obtained by the OCI cardholder, it has been decided that he/she shall upload a copy of the new passport containing his/her photo and also a latest photo on the online OCI portal, each time a new passport is issued up to 20 years of age and once after completing 50 years of age. These documents may be uploaded by the OCI cardholder within 3 months of receipt of the new passport.

However, in the case of those who have been registered as OCI cardholder as spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or an OCI cardholder, the person concerned will be required to upload on the system, a copy of the new passport containing the photo of the passport holder and also a latest photo along with a declaration that their marriage is still subsisting each time a new passport is issued. These documents may be uploaded by the OCI cardholder spouse within three months of receipt of his/ her new passport.

The details will be updated on the system and an auto acknowledgement through e-mail will be sent to the OCI cardholder informing that the updated details have been taken on record. There will be no restriction on the OCI cardholder to travel to/ from India during the period from the date of issue of new passport till the date of final acknowledgement of his/ her documents in the web-based system.

All the above services of uploading documents will be provided on gratis basis to the OCI cardholders.

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