



To enhance mission performance, TSA is committed to promoting a culture founded on its values of Integrity, Innovation and Team Spirit.

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides TSA policy and procedures for requesting and providing official passport services for TSA officials. This directive includes procedures for visa processing, official and diplomatic passport processing, and passport and visa processing for dependents of TSA officials who receive a diplomatic passport.
2. **SCOPE:** This directive applies to all TSA employees.
3. **AUTHORITIES:**
 - A. Title 22 USC § 211
 - B. Title 22 USC § 213
 - C. Title 22 CFR 51.21
 - D. Title 22 CFR 51.3(b)
 - E. Department of State (DOS) Memorandum, “Implementation of No-Amendment Policy”
4. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. Automated Passport System: The Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service (OLE/FAMS) automated passport system provides for comprehensive tracking of all passport and visa documents connected to a TSA employee, provides notification to employees when expiration dates are nearing and renewal is necessary, and serves as the communication vehicle between the Passport Section and all Visa and Passport Points of Contact (POCs).
 - B. Country Clearance Cable: A country clearance cable is a telegram which is a means of communication within the foreign diplomatic network. Country clearance cables notify DOS officials in Washington, DC, and embassy and post officers abroad, of a traveler’s presence in a foreign country. Country clearance cables are DOS policy which requires embassy clearance for official travel to a foreign country.
 - C. Local Execution Office: A local execution office is a local post office or municipal court with a passport agent authorized to sign and execute a passport application.
 - D. Request for Official Passport Action: A cover memorandum to DOS, completed by the TSA/OLE/FAMS Passport Section, which requests a passport action to facilitate official travel. This memorandum is also used to request the release of the completed official passport to the Passport Section for transmittal to the applicant.

- E. TSA/OLE/FAMS Passport Section: The entity within TSA that provides official passport processing services for TSA employees. This entity, which will be referred to throughout this document as the “Passport Section” is a component within OLE/FAMS.
- F. Passport: An internationally recognized travel document that verifies the identity and nationality of the bearer. A valid United States (U.S.) passport is required to enter and leave foreign countries. Only DOS has the authority to grant, issue, or verify U.S. official or diplomatic passports.
- G. Visa and Passport Point of Contact (POC): A Visa and Passport POC is designated to assist with the processing of official passports and/or visas and to serve as a liaison with the Passport Section.
- H. Visa: An official authorization appended to a passport, allowing entry into and travel within a specific country or region. In general, citizens of the U.S. do not need a visa to re-enter the U.S.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. TSA Assistant Administrators (AAs) or equivalent are responsible for designating, in writing, both a primary and back-up Visa and Passport POC, for visa and passport issues. A primary and back-up Visa and Passport POC must be selected from headquarters staff, and must be made 30 days from the effective date of this policy. This does not preclude an AA or equivalent from designating additional Visa and Passport POCs in the field, but there is no requirement to do so.
- B. Passport Section Supervisor is responsible for:
 - (1) Serving as the primary liaison with all Visa and Passport POCs.
 - (2) Providing requested forms to staff and Visa and Passport POCs.
 - (3) Sending notification to official passport holders when necessary.
 - (4) Providing technical assistance with the automated passport tracking system.
 - (5) Ensuring efficient communication with DOS.
 - (6) Mitigating any problems while passport and visa applications for TSA employees are processed.

NOTE: The OLE/FAMS Functional Areas Page contains [contact information for the OLE/FAMS Passport Section](#).

C. Visa and Passport POCs are responsible for:

- (1) Serving as the primary liaison with the Passport Section.
- (2) Providing assistance regarding official passport information for personnel in their organizational element.
- (3) Preparing country clearance cables.
- (4) Completing DOS and Passport Section training provided by OLE/FAMS.
- (5) Administering oaths to execute passports.
- (6) When required, maintaining custody of official passports that are not needed for official travel purposes (see section 6.E. below for additional details on custody requirements).

NOTE: The OLE/FAMS Functional Areas Page contains [contact information for Visa and Passport POCs](#). Please also see [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) for Visa and Passport POCs](#).

- D. The Transportation Sector Network Management (TSNM) is responsible for approving additional foreign travel requirements that must be adhered to when traveling outside of the U.S.
- E. The supervisor for the official passport applicant/holder is responsible for generating correspondence on behalf of the applicant/holder, and must maintain contact and coordination with the Visa and Passport POC to ensure prompt coordination of passport and visa documents.
- F. The passport applicant/holder is responsible for correctly completing all forms as required by DOS and TSA, and protecting the passport and/or visa before, during, and after official travel.

6. POLICY:

- A. Official Passports and Diplomatic Passports: DOS policy prevents physical possession by the same individual of both a diplomatic and official passport. When DOS issues diplomatic passports, they typically do so on a limited basis. Diplomatic passports will be issued on a case-by-case basis, only with the approval of the respective TSA AA and DOS.
- B. All passport requests must be made at least 60 calendar days prior to the expected travel date while all visa requests must be made at least seven business days prior to the travel date (see section 7. I. for exceptions).
- C. Prompt notification and timely submission of all DOS passport and visa documents is critical for an effective TSA passport and visa process. Therefore, it is TSA policy to require all applicants and holders of passports/visas, along with their supervisors, to ensure that documentation to the Visa and Passport POC is submitted promptly when travel is anticipated, but no later than when it is officially scheduled. The Visa and Passport POC will submit all

required documents to the Passport Section (see Procedures section and associated hyperlinks), who will coordinate with DOS to receive and communicate visa and passport outcomes to the Visa and Passport POC.

- D. DOS and many embassies will not routinely expedite passports, renewals or visa applications. Accordingly, the Passport Section will only expedite requests of official passports or visas under exceptional circumstances (see section 7. I. for details on expedited processing.)
- E. TSA employees may maintain custody of their official passport when it is no longer needed for official travel, unless their AA has a specific requirement to maintain control of them when not in use. Official passports shall be maintained in a secure storage compartment.
- F. Dependents of TSA Employees: The policy and procedures herein must be followed for all dependents of TSA employees who require a passport or visa for official travel.

7. PROCEDURES: The OLE/FAMS Functional Areas Page contains directions relevant to the functions identified in this directive.

- A. New Passport Issuance for TSA Staff Accessible to a Visa and Passport POC: When an employee's duty station is accessible to a Visa and Passport POC (within Washington DC commuting area), see [New Passport Issuance for TSA Staff Accessible to a Visa and Passport POC](#).
- B. New Passport Issuance for TSA Staff Not Accessible to a Visa and Passport POC: When an employee's duty station is not accessible to his or her Visa and Passport POC (e.g., duty location outside of Washington DC commuting area), or the TSA local office does not have a Visa and Passport POC trained by DOS, see [New Passport Issuance for TSA Staff not Accessible to a Visa and Passport POC](#).
- C. Official Passport Renewal: When an employee requires renewal of an official passport, see [Official Passport Renewal Procedures](#).
- D. Passport Amendments: When an employee requires an amendment to an official passport, see [Passport Amendment Procedures](#).
- E. Lost or Stolen Official Passports: All passport holders must protect their passports and must immediately report lost, stolen, or found passports to their supervisor, who must inform the Visa and Passport POC. The Visa and Passport POC will, in turn, inform the Supervisor of the Passport Section. Please also see [Lost, Stolen or Destroyed Passports](#).
- F. Cessation of Employment with TSA:
 - (1) Before an official passport holder ceases employment with TSA, the passport holder must immediately return the official passport to his or her supervisor, who will then return it to the Visa and Passport POC.
 - (2) The Visa and Passport POC will promptly send the official passport to the Passport Section with official correspondence indicating the nature of the cessation (such as

employee no longer employed by TSA or employee transferred to another agency) and include the official passport holder's name, date of birth, and official passport number (to confirm that the enclosed passport is the correct one).

G. Visa Issuance:

- (1) The Functional Areas Page contains a DOS link for guidance on specific visa requirements, [Visa Requirements-Department of State Link](#). This link is general guidance for both personal and official travel.
- (2) Immediately upon the issuance of the employee's travel order (but within the timeframe of section 6. B. above), the supervisor must submit a Visa application to the Visa and Passport POC, who will review it for accuracy, and then forward it to the Passport Section for further processing. This request should include the official or diplomatic passport, two passport-size (2"X 2") photographs, and the required visa application(s). The visa application(s) must be fully completed per each country's requirement. The Passport Section will return visa applications that are incomplete to the Visa and Passport POC.

H. Country Clearance Cables: Once a TSA employee receives travel orders, his or her supervisor will notify the Visa and Passport POC and send a copy of the employee's travel orders. The Visa and Passport POC will then complete a draft cable, using the attached template (see [Country Clearance Cable Request Information](#)), and send it to the Passport Section via their designated secure e-mail account. The draft cable should include:

- (1) The traveler's name and title;
- (2) Affiliation;
- (3) Purpose of travel (including the names of workshops/meetings);
- (4) Travel destination and general schedule (specify dates in each city within each country);
- (5) Contact name in the foreign country; and,
- (6) Name of the inviting office and telephone numbers.

I. Expedited Passport/Visa Processing: Only under extreme circumstances will expedited requests of official passports or visas be accepted by the Passport Section. An example of an extreme circumstance is a real world mission involving rapid deployment where advance notice is not possible. Upon approval from a senior official (authority not more than one level below the AA), the Visa and Passport POC will contact the Passport Section telephonically and provide the Passport section with a written reason for the expedited request. Once it is determined that there is a need for an expedited passport/visa, the Passport Section will make arrangements to pick up the passport or visa, along with any required correspondence.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION: This directive is effective immediately upon signature.

APPROVAL



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Date

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