

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Oversea Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme

Who is eligible to apply?

A foreign national, who was eligible to become citizen of India on 26.01.1950 or was a citizen of India on or at anytime after 26.01.1950 or belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947 and his/her children and grand children, provided his/her country of citizenship allows dual citizenship in some form or other under the local laws, is eligible for registration as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI). Minor children of such person are also eligible for OCI. However, if the applicant had ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, he/she will not be eligible for OCI.

Who was eligible to become Citizen of India on 26.01.1950?

Any person who or either of whose parents or any of whose grand-parents was born in India as defined in the Government of India Act, 1935 (as originally enacted), and who was ordinarily residing in any country outside India was eligible to become citizen of India on 26.01.1950.

Which territories became part of India after 15.08.1947 and from what date?

The territories, which became part of India after 15.08.1947 are:

- (i) Sikkim from 26.04.1975
- (ii) Pondicherry from 16.08.1962
- (iii) Dadra & Nagar Haveli from 11.08.1961
- (iv) Goa, Daman and Diu from 20.12.1961

Can the spouse of the eligible person apply for OCI?

Yes, if he/she is eligible in his/her own capacity.

Can the children of parents, one of whom is eligible for OCI, apply for OCI?

Yes.

In what form should a person apply for OCI and where are they available?

A family of two spouses and up to 2 minor children can apply in the same form i.e. Form [XIX](#), which can be downloaded from the website www.mha.nic.in.

Can the application form be filled and submitted on line?

Only Part A of the application form can be filled in online. Thereafter, the printout of Part A, and the duly filled in Part B, have to be submitted by hand/mail to the Indian Mission/Post.

What documents have to be attached with the application?

The details of documents are mentioned in the '**Checklist for OCI Registration**' [for new applications] and '**Checklist for OCI Miscellaneous services**' [for Miscellaneous services for Registered OCIs]. All original documents mentioned there along with two complete photocopies of all documents should be sent with the application.

What documents would qualify for 'Any other proof' for evidence of self or parents or grand parents being eligible for grant of OCI?

Any documentary evidence by which the officer equivalent to Under Secretary to the Government of India in the Indian Mission/Post can diligently arrive at the decision.

How many copies of application have to be submitted?

Applications have to be submitted in duplicate.

Whether applicant/s have to go in person to submit the application/s?

It is not mandatory; the applications can also be sent by post [with clearly marked OCI WING], along with a prepaid, self-addressed courier envelope.

Do the applicant (s) have to take oath before a Consular Officer of the Indian Mission/Post?

No. The earlier provision in this regard has been done away with.

Where should the application be submitted?

To the Indian Mission/ Post of the country of citizenship of the applicant. If the applicant is not in the country of citizenship, to the Indian Mission/Post of the country where he is ordinarily residing. If the applicant is in India, to the FRRO Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata or Amritsar or to CHIO, Chennai or to the Under Secretary, Citizenship section, Foreigners Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Jaisalmer House, 26, Mansingh Road, New Delhi-110011.

Can a person apply in the country where he is ordinarily residing?

Yes.

What are the consequences of furnishing wrong information or suppressing material information?

All the applications will be subject to pre or post enquiry depending on whether any adverse information is available or not. If the Government comes to the knowledge that any false information was furnished or material information was suppressed, the registration as OCI already granted shall be cancelled by an order under section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955. The persons will also be blacklisted banning his/her entry into India.

What is the fee for application for registration as OCI?

US \$ 275/- for each applicant. In case of PIO card holder, US\$ 25/- for each applicant. With effect from 4th February, 2008, fee should be paid in US Dollars through bank draft/money order payable to 'Consulate General of India, Toronto'.

What is the time taken for registration as OCI?

Within 15 days of the application, if there is no adverse information available against the applicant. If any adverse information is available against the applicant, the decision to grant or otherwise is taken within 4 months.

If the registration as OCI is not granted, what amount will be refunded?

An amount of US\$ 250/- shall be refunded, if registration is refused.
US\$ 25/- is the processing fees, which is non-refundable.

Can a PIO cardholder apply?

Yes, provided he/she is otherwise eligible for grant of OCI like any other applicant.

Will the PIO Cardholder be granted OCI registration gratis?

No. He/she has to make a payment of US\$ 25/- along with the application through Bank Draft/Money Order.

Will the PIO card be honoured till the time they are valid even after the acquisition of OCI?

No. The PIO card will have to be surrendered to the Indian Mission/MHA at the time of the grant of the OCI registration certificate and the OCI -U visa sticker.

What will be issued after registration as OCI?

A Registration Certificate, like the Indian passport in appearance, will be issued, and a multiple entry, multi-purpose OCI 'U' visa sticker will be pasted on the foreign passport of the applicant. For this purpose, the applicant has to send the original foreign passport to the Indian Mission/Post after receipt of the acceptance letter/OCI Registration Certificate.

Will a separate OCI passport be issued?

No.

Will a duplicate Certificate of Registration as OCI be issued?

Yes. For this purpose, an application has to be made Online and submit it to the Indian Mission/Post with evidence for loss of certificate and Police Report. In case of a mutilated/damaged certificate, an application has to be made enclosing the damaged document, along with payment of a fee of US\$ 100/-.

The applications in both cases have to be made to the same Indian Mission/ Post which issued the certificate.

Will a new OCI visa sticker be issued on the new foreign passport after the expiry of the old passport?

Yes. The applicant should follow instructions mentioned under 'Miscellaneous Services' above. The fee is US\$ 25.

Will the applicant lose his citizenship after registering as OCI?

No. As only citizens of countries which allows dual citizenship under their local laws in some form or the other are eligible for applying for registration as OCIs, the question of their losing their foreign citizenship does not arise.

Can a person holding OCI travel to protected area/restricted area without permission?

No. He/she will be required to seek Protected Area Permit (PAP)/ Restricted Area Permit (RAP) for such visits.

Would the Indian civil/criminal laws be applicable to persons registered as OCI?

Yes. For the period the OCI is living in India.

Can a person registered as OCI be granted Indian citizenship?

Yes. As per the provisions of section 5(1) (g) of the Citizenship Act, 1955, a person who is registered as OCI for 5 years and is residing in India for 1 year out of the above 5 years, is eligible to apply for Indian Citizenship.

Will OCI be granted gratis to certain categories of people?

No.

Can OCI be granted to foreign nationals who are not eligible for OCI, but married to persons who are eligible for OCI?

No.

Will foreign-born children of PIOs be eligible to become OCI?

Yes, provided one of the parents is eligible to become OCI.

What are the benefits of OCI?

Following benefits will be allowed to OCI:

- (a) Multi-purpose, multiple entry, lifelong visa for visiting India.
- (b) Exemption from registration with local police authority for any length of stay in India.

(c) Parity with NRIs in respect of economic, financial and education fields, except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural/plantation properties.

Will any other benefit be granted to OCI?

Any other benefits to OCI will be notified by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) under Section 7B(1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Whether the OCI is entitled to voting rights?

No.

Whether the OCI is entitled to hold a constitutional post in India?

No.

Whether the OCI is entitled to hold Government posts in India?

No, except for the posts specified by an order by the Central Government.

If a person is already holding more than one nationality, can he / she apply for OCI?

Yes, as long as the local laws of at least one of the countries allow dual citizenship in some form or other.

What are the advantages of OCI when compared to PIO cardholders?

Apart from the fact that OCI confers on the recipient the status of an Indian overseas citizen, (i) an OCI is entitled to life long visa free travel to India whereas for a PIO cardholder, it is only for 15 years.

(ii) a PIO cardholder is required to register with the local Police authority for stays exceeding 180 days in India on any single visit, whereas an OCI is exempted from registration with the Police authority for any length of stay in India.

Will an OCI be entitled to apply for and obtain a normal Indian passport which is given to a citizen of India?

No. An Indian Passport is given only to an Indian citizen.

Whether nationals of Commonwealth countries are eligible for OCI?

Yes, if they fulfill the eligibility criteria.

Can a person renounce OCI?

Yes. He/she has to declare intention of renunciation in Form XXII to the Indian Mission/Post where OCI registration was granted. After receipt of the declaration, the Indian Mission/Post shall issue an acknowledgement in Form XXII A.

Do the applicants who have applied on the earlier prescribed application form have to apply again in the new form?

No. All such applications will be considered for registration as OCI without seeking fresh application and fee.