

# Passport applications for children under the age of 16



## One person, one passport...

Planning a trip outside of Canada with your child is an exciting time.

Children under the age of 16 are required to have a valid passport to travel to most countries.

This policy is in place to combat crimes against children, including abduction, prostitution, and illegal migration.

Whether the child travels alone or with an adult, a passport is the most recognized form of identification worldwide.

## Applying for a child's passport

You can apply for a passport on behalf of a child, if you are:

- one of the parents;
- the custodial parent in the case of separation or divorce; or
- the legal guardian.

The applicant is the parent or legal guardian, so the child is not required to be present when submitting the application. Generally, both parents should participate in obtaining passport services for their child and sign the application form.

## Proof of Canadian citizenship

As proof of your child's Canadian citizenship, you must provide a birth certificate or certificate of Canadian citizenship.

A long form birth certificate is recommended to confirm the identity of both parents.

## Passport photos

Submit two identical passport photos, taken within the last twelve months, with the application. Photos must show the child's head and shoulders only (e.g., no hands holding the child). Passport Canada recognizes the difficulty in obtaining a neutral expression of a newborn and will be tolerant in this regard.

## Guarantor

The guarantor must have known the applicant personally for at least two years and have knowledge of the child.

## Signature

The signature block for children under the age of 11 must be left blank. Children aged 11 years and over must sign the form.

## Fees

All passport service fees must be paid upon application.

## Validity

A passport issued to a child:

- under the age of 3 is valid for 3 years.\*
- aged 3 to 15 is valid for 5 years.\*\*

\*To update the photo, children who have been issued a passport in their first year of life (between birth and 364 days of age) are entitled to a one-time, replacement passport at no cost. The replacement passport will be valid for the balance of the three-year validity period of the original passport.

\*\*The passport of a child who turns 16 years of age continues to be valid until the expiry date.

## Travelling alone, with one parent, or a relative

For children travelling outside Canada — either alone or with a parent or relative — a consent letter is strongly recommended. For more details, visit Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada's Web site: [www.voyage.gc.ca](http://www.voyage.gc.ca).

**Travel and children**  
Be on the safe side.  
Get your child a passport.

## Custody, separation and divorce

All documents that refer to custody, mobility, or access to the child must be provided. If a divorce has been granted, a copy of the divorce judgment or order must also be provided. Only the parent with custodial rights may apply on behalf of the child. Where joint custody provisions exist, either parent may apply, but **both** parents must provide their consent by signing the application.

Generally, both parents should participate in obtaining passport services for their child and sign the application form.

## Checklist

When applying for your child's passport, please submit a completed application form, including:

- two identical passport photos, one signed by a guarantor;
- original proof of Canadian citizenship;
- the fee; and, if applicable,
- all documents that refer to custody, mobility, or access to the child.

Depending on the circumstances, additional documents may be required.

For more information, visit [www.passportcanada.gc.ca](http://www.passportcanada.gc.ca) or call 1-800-567-6868 or 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232).