

## **INFORMATION SHEET:**

### **4.02G-Eng-Passport Information**



#### **What is a passport?**

A passport is an official document issued by the government of a country that identifies someone as a citizen of that country. It is usually needed for travel, when entering or leaving a country.

#### **How do I get a passport?**

If you are a U.S. citizen, you can apply for a passport at one of the passport acceptance facilities. Passport acceptance facilities include your local government center and U.S. post offices. Some locations are listed on this handout and others can be found on the internet at <https://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

You will need:

- To fill out a passport application form (DS-11)
- To have proof of your U.S. citizenship (your U.S. birth certificate or Certificate of Citizenship or Naturalization)
- An ID
- A passport photo
- The fee to pay for it.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you need to contact the embassy or consulate of your home country to find out how to get a passport. Contact information for various consulates appears at the end of this handout.

#### **What information do I generally need to fill out a passport application form?**

Generally, to fill out a passport application form the applicant will need information such as: Legal name and other names used, date of birth, sex, place of birth, social security number (if for a USA passport), contact information, mailing address, parental information such as dates and places of birth, marital information, physical information, travel information, emergency contact, former passport numbers and dates, etc.

#### **How do I get a passport for my minor child?**

If your child was born in your home country, you need to contact the embassy or consulate of your home country to find out how to get a passport. Contact information for various consulates appears at the end/other handout.

If your child was born in the United States, then a parent can apply for a U.S. passport for the child. Usually both parents must appear in person at a passport acceptance facility (U.S. Passport Office, U.S. Post Office, or certain other government centers), but there are exceptions. If only one parent is named on the birth certificate, then that parent can apply by herself for the minor child's passport.

#### **What documents do I need to apply for my child's passport?**

To apply for your child's passport, you will need:

- The passport application form (DS-11)
- An original or certified copy of the child's U.S. birth certificate (you can request a certified copy of your child's birth certificate from the Vital Records office of the county that is closest to you; a hospital birth record will not be sufficient) or adoption decree showing you are the legal parent (plus another copy of either of those documents)



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- Your government-issued ID such as your own valid, unexpired passport or consulate ID (“matricula”) (plus another copy)
- A passport photo of the child (many passport acceptance facilities provide photo services for an additional fee)

### **What if only one parent can apply in person but both parents are named on the birth certificate?**

If the other parent has died or if you have a court order that grants you sole legal and physical custody of the child with no travel restrictions, then you can apply by yourself for the passport. You will need a copy of the death certificate or the court order granting sole legal and physical custody.

If you do not have such a court order and only one parent can appear in person to apply for a passport, you need to bring a special notarized letter called a “Statement of Consent” (DS-3053) that is signed by the other parent and gives permission for you to apply alone for the child’s passport.

### **What if I cannot find the other parent or get them to sign the Statement of Consent?**

If both parent’s names appear on the child’s birth certificate but it is not possible to get a Statement of Consent from the other parent, you can fill out a Form DS-5525 “Statement Of Exigent/Special Family Circumstances For Issuance Of A U.S. Passport To A Minor Under Age 16” to explain why you cannot get the other parent’s statement of consent. Filling out this form does not guarantee that the passport will be issued. If the other parent has been deported and you have a copy of the deportation order, then you should include a copy when you file the form.

### **What if they do not give me a passport after filling out the Statement of Exigent/Special Family Circumstances?**

Then you may need to consult a family law attorney for help in getting a court order. Examples of court orders include an order that terminates the parental rights of the other parent, an order that grants you sole legal and physical custody with no travel restrictions, a court order authorizing you to get a passport for the child regardless of the custodial arrangement or that specifically authorizes travel with you; or a “Declaratory Judgement” allowing you to get a passport for the child.

If you already have a custody or parenting time order, you can ask the court to change (“modify”) the order.

#### **Important Information for Hennepin County residents:**

The court’s self-help service center will help single mothers apply for a court order allowing you to apply for a passport for your minor child. To get help to do this visit the:

Family Justice Center

110 South 4th Street, 1st Floor

Minneapolis, MN 55401

(612) 596-8519 (recording); (612) 596-1067 to schedule an appointment

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (closed holidays)

#### **Where may I get the official passport forms for free?**

You may access the official U.S. Department of State free passport-related forms for free at

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/forms.html>

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VLN thanks Sheila Stuhlman for compiling this information, which derives, in part, from a webinar by MN Legal Service State Support. Visit <https://www.vlnmn.org/la-planeacion-de-emergencia-familiar-un-kit-de-herramientas-importantes> for more Family Emergency Preparedness materials in English and Spanish.

The information in this toolkit is adapted from a variety of local and national resources. This information is not legal advice. For answers to individual legal questions, you may want to consult with a lawyer. For a complete list of sources please contact VLN at (612) 752-6677.

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