

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ON THE MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT

What is a Machine Readable Passport (MRP)?

The Machine Readable Passport (MRP) is a passport where the personal details of the applicant are printed in such a way that the passport can be read by the naked eye and has a “machine readable zone” containing the personal data of the passport holder that can be read by a machine or computer.

What are the other features of the Machine Readable Passport?

The new Machine Readable Passport (MRP) is colored maroon and consists of 44 pages. The data page of the MRP is now fully printed.

The MRP also has the following security features: watermarked paper, colored UV fibers, UV reactive inks, special designs, microtexts, laser perforated numbers, ultrathin laminates resistant to forgery and chemical, thermal and mechanical attacks, letter screen, invisible personal information and holograms, among others.

Is there a new photo requirement for the issuance of a Machine Readable Passport?

Yes, the passport photo should be taken against a royal blue color background instead of a white background. This new requirement is necessary because the security feature encoded in the printed photograph of the holder is more pronounced against a royal blue background.

NEW PASSPORT PHOTO REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT

1. **RECENT PHOTO:** Photograph should have been taken from a photo studio within the last six (6) months. Photos taken from **Photo-Me machines shall not be accepted.**
2. **SIZE:** Photograph size is 4.5 x 3.5 cms:
3. **BACKGROUND COLOR:** Royal Blue
4. **POSE:** Full frontal
5. **IMAGE SIZE:** Image of the applicant should occupy approximately 70 – 80% of the photograph.

6. **CROPPING:** There should be at least 8 mm – 10 mm space at the top of the photo between the edge of the photo and the crown/head of the person to allow for “cropping” of the photo.
7. **MATTE PAPER PREFERRED:** Photograph should be printed on good quality photo paper, preferably matte.
8. **CLEAN AND CLEAR PHOTOGRAPH:** Photograph should be free from ink marks, dirt, grease, finger prints and paste stains.
9. **USE OF COLLARED SHIRT:** Applicant’s photograph should show him/her wearing decent attire with collar (no short sleeves/sleeveless/plunging necklines for women).
10. **EYEGLASSES:** Use of eyeglasses is acceptable provided there is no glare from the glasses and the eyes are distinctly shown.
11. **EARS SHOULD BE VISIBLE:** As much as possible, both ears of the applicant should be visible.
12. **HEAD SCARF/ VEIL:** Use of head scarf for religious or medical reasons is allowed (i.e., Muslim women/nuns/cancer patients with hair loss/Alopecia). However, the scarf should not cover the eyebrows/eyes.
13. **CAPS/ HEADGEARS:** Use of caps or head gear is not allowed.
14. **USE OF CONTACT LENSES:** Use of contact lenses for medical reasons is all right PROVIDED the contact lenses do not change the applicant’s true eye color.
15. **USE OF EARRINGS:** Use of earrings is acceptable for women ONLY provided the earrings are small.

The following photos are automatically rejected:

1. Photo with red eye effect
2. Dirty photos
3. Image of the face is either too big or too small
4. Wrong background color
5. Poor quality photo (washed out image/ unnatural skin tone)
6. Photo does not resemble applicant

Is personal appearance a requirement for the issuance of the new Machine Readable Passport?

Yes, all applicants, whether for the renewal of an old regular passport or those applying for the first time, **MUST** appear personally before a Consular Officer at the **Philippine Embassy in Berlin** or the **Philippine Consulate General in Frankfurt am Main** to affix her/his thumbmark and sign his/her application form. The applicant’s personal appearance is not required when the applicant is below 8 years of age, over 65 years or age, or when the applicant is mentally or physically incapacitated.

Can I apply for a passport in the Honorary Consulates in Munich, Stuttgart, Mainz, Essen, or Gotha?

No, passport applications can be filed only in Berlin and Frankfurt.

What are the benefits of a Machine Readable Passport?

Since a Machine Readable Passport has a zone that can be read by a machine or computer, the processing of travelers at ports of entry and exit is faster because the data in the passport can be read by the machine and stored automatically in the database of immigration offices. In the past, the information was manually encoded in the database. This means greater convenience and security for the traveler.

What will happen to the old green passport if it has not yet expired?

The old green passports will still be honored until the date of expiration.

How can one get a Machine Readable Passport?

Filipinos abroad may file their application for the MRP at the Philippine Embassy or Consulate nearest their residence.

For countries in the European zone which includes Germany, processing of MRP applications takes a minimum of 30 working days. Applicants are therefore advised to have their Philippine passport renewed at least six (6) months before expiry date or before the expiration of their German residence or work visas, or before their projected travel, to avoid any inconvenience

In view of the proximity of the implementation in Germany of this new program of the Philippine government, all Filipino community organizations are requested to give this information the widest possible dissemination for the benefit of all Filipino citizens in Germany.

For further inquiries about the new MRP application procedure, please contact during office hours at 0900H-1800H, Monday to Friday except holidays, the Consular Section of the Philippine Embassy in Berlin at telephone number **(030) 864 95023 or 864 95026** or the Philippine Consulate General in Frankfurt am Main at **(069) 2470 6764**. Pertinent information could also be downloaded from the Embassy's website at www.philippine-embassy.de

NEW PROCEDURES IN APPLYING FOR A MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT

Starting 1 July 2008, the following procedures when applying for a Machine Readable Passport (MRP) shall be observed:

FOR RENEWAL OF PASSPORT

1. PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF APPLICANT IS REQUIRED except when an applicant is

- 8 years old and younger
- 65 years old and older
- mentally or physically incapacitated

2. Submit in person a duly accomplished Passport Application Form which is available at the Consular Section of the Embassy . The form must be filled in LEGIBLY and COMPLETELY.

3. Submit photocopies of pages containing the personal data of applicant (page 1), amendment page (page 2), and the signature of passport signing officer of the current passport.

4. Submit three (3) passport size photos (4.5 x 3.5 cms. and image of the applicant should occupy approximately 70 – 80% of the photograph)

5. Present to the Consular Officer the original current passport for verification of data.

6. Upon verification of data in the machine generated application form, applicants to affix signature and thumbprints.

7. Pay the passport fee of Euro 50.00.

8. In claiming the new machine readable passport;

- a. applicants may pick up their new MRP passport in person at the appointed date (after minimum period of 30 working days) and surrender current passport for cancellation, or
- b. After a minimum period of 30 working days, applicants may send their current original passport, for cancellation, by mail and enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope for postal delivery of new and cancelled passports.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

For First Time Passport Applicant:

1. Report of Birth
2. International Birth Certificate
3. Philippine Passport of Parent/s
4. Affidavit for Delayed Registration (if birth is registered thirty 30 days after birth)
5. Fee: Euro 25.00 for the Report of Birth
Euro 25.00 for Affidavit for Delayed Registration of Birth

For Married women who want to use surname of spouse:

1. Report of Marriage
2. International Marriage Contract from Standesamt.
3. One (1) photocopy of passport of ID of spouse
4. Affidavit for Delayed Registration (If marriage is registered thirty (30) days after the event).
5. Fee : Euro 25.00 for the Report of Marriage
Euro 25.00 for the Affidavit for Delayed Registration

For married women who would like to revert back to their maiden name:

1. If already widowed, submit death certificate of husband
2. If marriage is annulled: NSO issued Marriage Certificate with the annotation on the annulment decree and certified true copy of the first page and the dispositive portion of the judgment on annulment.
3. If divorced: original copy of the judgment on divorce initiated by foreign spouse.