

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS  
FOREIGNERS DIVISION  
F. No. – 26011/Misc./47/2019 – OCI

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## OVERSEAS CITIZENSHIP OF INDIA (OCI) CARDHOLDER

### INTRODUCTION

**OCI Scheme is operational from 02.12.2005**

The Constitution of India does not allow holding Indian citizenship and citizenship of a foreign country simultaneously. Based on the recommendation of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, the Government of India decided to register Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) of certain category as has been specified in section 7A of The Citizenship Act, 1955 as **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholders**.

2. Application for registration as OCI Cardholder can be made **Online**. For this purpose, please visit <https://ociservices.gov.in>. Before filling the application, **Instructions** may be perused so that there is no mistake in submission of application. Further, the details regarding **Fee** and **Offices where original supporting documents have to be submitted for prior verification** may also be perused.

3. Registered OCI Cardholders shall be entitled to the following benefits:

(1) multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India for any purpose:

Provided that for undertaking the following activities, the OCI Cardholder shall be required to obtain a special permission or a Special Permit, as the case may be, from the competent authority or the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer or the Indian Mission concerned, namely:-

- (i) to undertake research;
- (ii) to undertake any Missionary or Tabligh or Mountaineering or Journalistic activities;
- (iii) to undertake internship in any foreign Diplomatic Missions or foreign Government organisations in India or to take up employment in any foreign Diplomatic Missions in India;
- (iv) to visit any place which falls within the Protected or Restricted or prohibited areas as notified by the Central Government or competent authority;

**Note:** For requisite special permission, OCI Cardholder may visit <https://ociservices.gov.in> .

(2) exemption from registration with the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer or Foreigners Registration Officer for any length of stay in India:

Provided that the OCI Cardholders who are normally resident in India shall intimate the jurisdictional Foreigners Regional Registration Officer or the Foreigners Registration Officer by email whenever there is a change in permanent residential address and in their occupation;

(3) parity with Indian nationals in the matter of,-

- (i) tariffs in air fares in domestic sectors in India; and
- (ii) entry fees to be charged for visiting national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, the national monuments, historical sites and museums in India;

(4) parity with Non-Resident Indians in the matter of,-

- (i) inter-country adoption of Indian children subject to the compliance of the procedure as laid down by the competent authority for such adoption;
- (ii) appearing for the all India entrance tests such as National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, Joint Entrance Examination (Mains), Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced) or such other tests to make them eligible for admission only against any Non-Resident Indian seat or any supernumerary seat:

Provided that the OCI Cardholder shall not be eligible for admission against any seat reserved exclusively for Indian citizens;

- (iii) purchase or sale of immovable properties other than agricultural land or farm house or plantation property; and



(iv) pursuing the following professions in India as per the provisions contained in the applicable relevant statutes or Acts as the case may be, namely:-

- (a) doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists;
- (b) advocates;
- (c) architects;
- (d) chartered accountants;

(5) in respect of all other economic, financial and educational fields not specified in this notification or the rights and privileges not covered by the notifications made by the Reserve Bank of India under The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (42 of 1999), the OCI Cardholder shall have the same rights and privileges as a foreigner.

(6) Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholders are eligible for appointment as teaching faculty in IITs, NITs, IIMs, IISERs, IISc, Central Universities and in the new AIIMS set up under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

***Explanation –***

- (1) The OCI Cardholder (including a PIO cardholder) is a foreign national holding passport of a foreign country and is not a citizen of India.
- (2) “Non-Resident Indian” shall have the same meaning as assigned to it in The Foreign Exchange Management (Acquisition and Transfer of Immovable Property in India) Regulations, 2018 made by the Reserve Bank of India under The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (42 of 1999) and who fulfils the “Non-Resident Indian” status as per The Income Tax Act, 1961 (43 of 1961).

Any other benefits to an OCI Cardholder may be notified by the Central Government under section 7B(1) of The Citizenship Act, 1955.

4. **Benefits to which OCI Cardholder is not entitled to**

The OCI Cardholder is not entitled to vote, be a member of Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council or Parliament, cannot hold Constitutional posts



such as President, Vice President, Judge of Supreme Court or High Court etc. as specified in section 7B(2) of the Citizenship Act, 1955. The OCI Cardholder shall not be entitled for appointment to public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of any State except for appointment in such services and posts as the Central Government may, by special order, in that behalf, specify. Further, the OCI Cardholder cannot acquire agricultural land or farmhouse or plantation properties in India.

5. State Governments should ensure that the OCI Cardholder registration booklets of OCI Cardholders are treated as their identification for any services rendered to them.

6. A person registered as an OCI Cardholder is eligible to apply for grant of Indian citizenship under section 5(1) (g) of The Citizenship Act, 1955 if he/she has attained full age (18 year) and if he/she is registered as OCI Cardholder for five years and is ordinarily resident in India for twelve months before making an application for registration. Central Government, if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist, may after recording the circumstances in writing, relax the period of twelve months, up to a maximum of thirty days which may be in different breaks.

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