

REGISTRATION AS OCI CARDHOLDER IN LIEU OF PIO CARD

1. The issues relating to submission of applications by erstwhile PIO Cardholders with valid PIO cards as on 9.1.2015 for registration as OCI Cardholders have been re-examined by the Central Government and revised instructions have been issued to all concerned on 16.7.2015. Copy of the instructions issued on 16.7.2015 is annexed.

2. As on date, all Person of Indian Origin (PIO) cardholders are deemed to be Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders in terms of the notification issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on 9.1.2015.

3. However, all persons having valid PIO cards as on 9th January, 2015 are advised to apply for registration as OCI cardholder in view of the following advantages in possessing an OCI card:-
 - (a) OCI card is a smart card
 - (b) Possession of an OCI card will facilitate quicker immigration clearance at the Immigration Check Posts
 - (c) It will help in obtaining various Consular Services from the Indian Missions
 - (d) For those who are resident in India, it will facilitate in availing various services in India.

3. The date for submission of applications for registration as OCI cardholder in lieu of the PIO card online has been extended till **31st December, 2016**. This cutoff date will be only for submission of the applications online by the applicants. A separate online application form for submission of application for registration as OCI cardholder in lieu of PIO card is available in the website <https://passport.gov.in/oci/>

4. The erstwhile PIO cardholder with a valid PIO card as on 9.1.2015 will have to upload only the following documents with his/ her application:-
 - (a) Copy of the valid Passport
 - (b) Copy of the PIO card
5. The applicants can submit the applications online from anywhere. The grant of OCI card in lieu of the PIO card will be on a gratis basis.
6. The OCI card shall be issued by the Indian Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned within the jurisdiction of the applicant's place of residence. The applicant will have to approach the Indian Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned only for collecting the OCI Card by surrendering the PIO card.
7. In the meantime, all the Immigration Check Posts and the Airlines (through the Civil Aviation/ DGCA) have been informed that the erstwhile PIO cardholders are allowed to travel either on the PIO card or on the OCI card and that they should honor both.

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 26011/06/2015-OCI
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs
(Foreigners Division)

NDCC-II Building, Jai Singh Road
New Delhi, the 16th July, 2015

To

- (1) All Indian Missions/ Posts
- (2) FRROs – Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Amritsar, Bangalore Hyderabad, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Calicut, Goa, Lucknow and Ahmedabad.

Subject : Submission of applications by erstwhile PIO Cardholders for registration as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholder

Sir,

I am directed to refer to this Ministry's letters of even number dated 26th February, 2015 and 8th June, 2015 on the above mentioned subject and to say that the issues relating to submission of applications by erstwhile PIO Cardholders with valid PIO cards as on 9.1.2015 for registration as OCI Cardholders have been re-examined by the Central Government. Accordingly, the following course of action has been decided, with the approval of the competent authority:-


- (1) The entire OCI application and processing system, including the submission of the application, uploading the requisite documents and payment of fee will be brought online by 31.7.2015.
- (2) The date for submission of the application for registration as OCI cardholder by the erstwhile PIO cardholders is extended **till 31.3.2016**. This cutoff date will be only for submission of the applications online by the applicants.
- (3) As on date, all PIO cardholders are deemed to be OCI cardholders in terms of the notification issued by this Ministry on 9th January, 2015. Therefore, the erstwhile PIO cardholder with a valid PIO card as on 9.1.2015 will have to upload only the following documents with his/her application:-
 - (a) Copy of the valid Passport
 - (b) Copy of the PIO card

- (4) The applicants can submit the applications online from anywhere. The grant of OCI card in lieu of the PIO card will be on a gratis basis and no fee shall be payable by the applicant.
- (5) The Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned will verify only the genuineness of the PIO card issued and clear the application for registration as OCI cardholder. In case the PIO Card was issued from the Mission/ Post/ FRRO other than where the application for registration as OCI cardholder has been made, the issuing authority shall get confirmation regarding the genuineness of the PIO Card issued from the authority who issued the PIO Card initially, at the earliest through electronic means. The whole exercise shall be completed preferably within a fortnight of submission of the application online.
- (6) The OCI Card shall be issued by the Indian Mission/ Post / FRRO concerned within the jurisdiction of the applicant's place of residence. The applicant will have to approach the Indian Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned only for collecting the OCI Card by surrendering the PIO card.
- (7) After an OCI Card has been issued to a PIO cardholder, security agencies may conduct the detailed verification of the applicant at any time and if any irregularity or anything adverse is found against the applicant, the same shall be uploaded by them on the online system and necessary action will be taken by the Indian Mission/Post/ FRRO concerned for cancellation of the registration as OCI cardholder in terms of the provisions of section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

2. All authorities concerned are requested to strictly comply with the above mentioned instructions.

3. These instructions shall come into force with immediate effect.

Yours faithfully


(B.V.R. Murthy)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India