



Protecting your privacy

Key points

- **The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade handles and protects your personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*, the *Australian Passports Act 2005* and the Department's Privacy Policy (www.dfat.gov.au)**
- **We protect your personal information from misuse, interference and loss; and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure**

What kinds of personal information do we collect?

We collect the personal information you provide with the travel document application. It includes the answers to the questions on the application form and the accompanying documents and photographs.

In accordance with the Australian Passports Act, we may also collect personal information from other agencies where those agencies believe there are reasons related to law enforcement or security for refusing or cancelling a travel document.

Keeping your personal information safe

We store the personal information you provide in secure Departmental computer systems and storage cabinets which can only be accessed by authorised officers. We take all reasonable steps to protect your information from misuse, interference and loss; and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

The Privacy Act and the Australian Passports Act regulate how we use and disclose your personal information. An officer of the Department who breaches provisions in these Acts may face a criminal or civil penalty, or both.

Applications

The information you provide when applying for a travel document may only be used or disclosed in accordance with the law. Purposes for which your personal information is used or disclosed include, but are not limited to, establishing your eligibility for a travel document by confirming your identity and citizenship details.

Your information may be disclosed to other entities or individuals only as allowed under the Australian Passports Act and the Privacy Act.

Disclosure to assess eligibility

Authorised officers may disclose your information to entities or individuals able to assist us with verification of the information you provide in your application. These include:

- the Australian Electoral Commission
- the Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages

- state and territory road traffic authorities
- any other entities or individuals who issued or signed a document that was presented with a travel document application or who is mentioned in that application.

Disclosure for purposes set out in the Australian Passports Act

The Australian Passports Act permits us to disclose your personal information to other agencies for the following purposes:

- to advise about the status of a passport
- law enforcement
- to facilitate or otherwise assist with international travel by Australian passport holders
- to confirm or verify information about Australian passport holders and applicants
- the operation of family law and related matters.

Agencies to which we may disclose your personal information for these purposes include, but are not limited to:

- the Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- the Attorney-General's Department
- state and territory police
- Australian Federal Police
- Interpol and its member countries
- courts of the Commonwealth of Australia and of each state and territory
- specified member countries of the APEC Regional Movement Alert System.

Disclosure to foreign border authorities

In accordance with the Privacy Act we may also disclose personal information to foreign border authorities in the following circumstances:

- If we have reason to suspect that unlawful activity, or misconduct of a serious nature, that relates to passport issuing functions or activities has been, is being or may be engaged in; and we reasonably believe that the collection, use or disclosure is necessary in order for the Department to take appropriate action in relation to the matter;

- If we believe that the disclosure of the information is reasonably necessary for one or more enforcement related activities conducted by, or on behalf of, an enforcement body; and the recipient is a body that performs functions, or exercises powers, that are similar to those performed or exercised by an enforcement body.

Disclosure authorised by legislation administered by another agency

We may disclose your personal information when requested by another agency and where the disclosure is authorised by legislation administered by that agency. The Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Electoral Commission are agencies which have the power to request the disclosure of passport information.

Data verification

Australian travel document holders who provide their documents to public or private sector organisations as proof of identity may be asked to consent to have the data verified by the Department via the Document Verification Service (DVS), which is managed by the Attorney General's Department. Provided the organisation is an approved DVS user, the Department will verify the data and confirm the validity of the document.

Consequences if your personal information is not collected

Verification of your identity and citizenship details is necessary for a travel document to be issued. If we cannot confirm these details we will be unable to issue you with a travel document.

Privacy on the internet

We do not collect personal information about you when you visit websites on the Department's servers, unless you choose to provide that information. However, our websites contain links to other sites. The Department is not responsible for the content and privacy practices of other sites, and we encourage you to read the privacy policy of each site. The Department's website www.dfat.gov.au provides more information.

Viewing or amending your personal information

At any time you can view your travel document details via a link on the Australian Passport Office website (www.passports.gov.au). Should you wish to amend the details contained in your travel document, you will need to apply for a new travel document.

Further information is available at www.passports.gov.au

Who to contact

If at any time you believe we have not adhered to our privacy obligations or if you have any other questions on the material set out in this brochure, contact:

Communications Unit
Australian Passport Office
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
John McEwen Crescent
BARTON ACT 0221

Email: passports.australia@dfat.gov.au

You can obtain further information about your rights under the Privacy Act from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's website, www.oaic.gov.au


Please safeguard your passport

Remember to safeguard your passport at all times. Please store it in the wallet provided to prevent damage. Additional fees apply to replace lost or stolen passports.

We value your comments

We work hard to improve our service to you and we welcome your input about how our staff can make it even better. Please submit any compliments, complaints or comments to us in any of the following ways:

 www.passports.gov.au
passports.australia@dfat.gov.au

 APIS 131 232

 **Communications Unit**
Australian Passport Office
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
R G Casey Building, John McEwen Crescent
Barton ACT 0221

Further information

To see a copy of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Privacy Policy visit the DFAT website at www.dfat.gov.au

For the latest information about passports and copies of our other publications, visit our website, www.passports.gov.au or call the Australian Passport Information Service (APIS) **131 232** in Australia. If you are overseas, contact an Australian diplomatic mission or consulate.

For travel advice and practical information to help you prepare for safe overseas travel, go to www.smartraveller.gov.au.

Accessibility

If you are not fluent in English, you can use the Australian Government's Translating and Interpreting Service at your passport interview at no cost. If you need an interpreter or are visually impaired and need general passport information, please call APIS on **131 232**.

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service: TTY users telephone **133 677** and Speak and Listen users telephone **1300 555 727**. Ask for APIS on **131 232**.

