

Person of Indian Origin card (PIO Card Scheme 2002)

Who is a PIO?

- A person who was an Indian national or any of whose ancestors was an Indian national and who is presently holding another country's citizenship/nationality i.e. he/she is holding a foreign passport; or
- Any person who at any time held an Indian Passport; or
- Any person who was born in or was permanently resident in India as defined in the Government of India Act, 1935 and other territories that became part of India thereafter, or whose parents or grandparents were so born/were so resident provided neither was at any time a citizen of Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The scheme covers upto four generations; or
- Any person who is a spouse of an Indian citizen or of a person of Indian origin as mentioned above and has been for more than one year. (Please note that if marriage is later declared invalid, the PIO card will not longer be valid).

Who is eligible to apply for a PIO card?

Any person meeting any of the above definitions of a PIO, except nationals of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and stateless persons, is eligible to apply for a PIO card.

Who is ineligible to apply for a PIO card?

Nationals of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka or any stateless person, or any person who had been a national of any of these countries or either of whose parents, grandparents or great grandparents had been nationals of these countries at any time. Please read "Cancellation of PIO Card" also.

What benefits accrue to a PIO card holder?

- No visa required for visiting India.
- No separate "Student Visa" required for admissions to educational institutions in India
- No separate "Employment Visa" required for taking up employment in India.
- Special counters at immigration check posts for speedy clearance.

- Exemption from the requirement of registration if stay on any single visit in India does not exceed 180 days.

(NOTE: In the event of continuous stay in India exceeding 180 days, the PIO Card holder shall have to register at least a month before the expiry of the 180 day period with the concerned Foreigners Regional Registration Officer/Foreigners Registration Officer)

- Parity with non-resident Indians in respect of facilities available to the latter in economic, financial and educational field, specifically in the following areas:-
 - in respect of all facilities in the matter of acquisition, holding, transfer and disposal of immovable properties in India except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural/plantation properties;
 - in respect of facilities available to children of NRIs for getting admission to educational institutions in India including medical colleges, engineering colleges, Institute of Technology, Institute of Management, etc. under the general categories;
 - in respect of facilities available under the various housing scheme of LIC, State Government and other Government Agencies

(Note: No parity with NRIs is allowed in the sphere of political rights)

Processing Time

Minimum six weeks; may take more time.

What is the Validity of the PIO Card?

A PIO Card shall be valid for a period of fifteen years from the date of issue subject to the validity of the passport of the applicant. In other words, the PIO card shall be valid only if the passport held by the individual is valid on a particular date. After issuance of the PIO card, if the holder is issued a new passport, he should get the details of the new passport endorsed on the PIO card.

What will be the status of PIO Cards issued earlier as per PIO Card Scheme (1999)?

PIO Cards issued earlier for US \$1000 will continue to remain valid and no refund shall be admissible. However, the validity of such cards shall be extendable by 10 more years without charging any fee.

Acquisition of duplicate PIO Card in case of loss etc.

Application in the prescribed format with supporting documents (see How to Apply above) PLUS an FIR or document giving the details of how the PIO card was lost/damaged, should be submitted to the same office that issued the original PIO card

Cancellation of PIO Card

The Central Government may, by order, cancel a PIO Card, if it is satisfied that:

1. the PIO Card was obtained by means of fraud, false representation or the concealment of any material fact ;or
2. the PIO Card holder has shown himself by act or speech to be disaffected towards the Constitution of India and other laws of India; or
3. the PIO Card holder is a citizen or, subject of any country at war with, or committing external aggression against India; or of any other country assisting the country at war with, or committing such aggression against India; or
4. the PIO Card holder has been sentenced in India for indulging in acts of terrorism, smuggling of narcotics, arms, ammunition etc. or has been sentenced for committing an offence punishable with imprisonment up to one year or fine up to rupees ten thousand; or
5. it is not conducive to the public interest that the person should continue to hold a PIO Card.
6. No reasons shall be assigned for cancellation of the Card.