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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 13173]

RIN: 1400-ZA28

Pilot for Online Version of Application for a U.S. Passport (Form DS-11)

ACTION: Notice of pilot program; comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of State is announcing a pilot program to accept certain renewal and first-time passport applications online. Interested applicants will be able to visit America.gov to check their eligibility to submit a passport application through this pilot. It is anticipated that the pool of eligible applicants will be expanded as testing progresses.

DATES: This pilot will be effective November 16, 2026, until November 20, 2027, unless further extended.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Tinianow, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Services, Office of Adjudication, 202-765-6517.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Currently, only applicants who are eligible for a passport renewal using form DS-82: U.S. Passport Renewal Application for Eligible Individuals[1] can submit a U.S. passport application online. The Department is seeking to expand the availability of online passport applications to first-time applicants and other applicants previously issued U.S. passports who are not eligible to apply using form DS-82. As part of this effort, Passport Services will run a pilot for the online use of form DS-11: Application for a U.S. Passport[2].

The pilot will be deployed in phases starting on November 16, 2026, and will be limited to individuals age 18 and over, who have an identification document accepted by

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[1] OMB Control No. 1405-0020
[2] OMB Control No. 1405-0004

Login.gov, excluding mobile driver's licenses. Accepted ID types include valid U.S. passport books and cards, and valid driver's licenses or non-driver's license state-issued ID cards issued by a U.S. State, District of Columbia, or U.S. territory.

The pilot will begin with adult applicants located in the United States who have been previously issued a fully valid U.S. passport who are not eligible for a DS-82 renewal application, and first-time adult applicants located in the United States using a Certificate of Naturalization issued by USCIS as evidence of U.S. citizenship. As the Department makes progress on testing and technological capability, it anticipates later expanding the pilot to adult applicants with no previous U.S. passport who are using a valid certified U.S. birth certificate that meets all requirements listed in 22 CFR 51.42 issued by vital records authorities in a state that elects to participate when the capability becomes available, a Certificate of Citizenship issued by USCIS, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) as evidence of U.S. citizenship, and to eligible applicants who are located overseas. Further expansions may be considered during the course of the pilot.

The pilot application will be accessible via America.gov. Interested applicants will answer a series of questions on that website to determine if they are eligible to use this pilot application. Eligible applicants will be directed to Login.gov for identification verification and then returned to America.gov to complete and submit their application online. Applicants who do not meet the criteria for this pilot will be redirected to the appropriate application process, detailed below.

Process

Applicants who indicate on America.gov that they are seeking passport services will be first asked a series of eligibility-related questions such as whether they are applying for their own passport, whether they are U.S. citizens, and whether they have urgent travel plans. Technical limitations may prevent otherwise eligible applicants from using the pilot application. Those who are not eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will be

provided with information about the passport application process that is appropriate for them based on their answers. For instance, individuals who wish to submit an affidavit or court order, or whose applications require one, will be directed to the paper application process.

Once eligibility for the online DS-11 is confirmed, applicants will be prompted to sign in to or create an account for Login.gov. Login.gov will prompt them to provide an ID for verification, pass a liveness detection check[3], enter their Social Security Number, put in their address, and verify the information provided.

After signing in to Login.gov, the applicant's information will be provided to the Department of State. Applicants will be returned to America.gov and asked to review and confirm the basic biographical information that their Login.gov account provided to the Department of State such as name, sex, and date of birth. They will have an opportunity to correct any imported information before they confirm. America.gov will then ask applicants to accept terms and conditions for Form DS-11 before asking applicants to provide information specific to the form that is not collected by Login.gov, including their USCIS or alien registration number (if applicable), emergency contact, and occupation. Finally, applicants will be asked to submit an eligible passport photo, choose their desired product and delivery type, review their applications, and take the oath declaring under penalty of perjury that all of the information in the form is true and correct. Since the pilot uses an online process for the DS-11, applicants will fulfill the oath requirement by recording themselves stating the oath. That recording will then be

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[3] Liveness detection is the process which determines that the application is being completed by a live human (not a bot or SI) and that the identity of that human matches the biometric information of the applicant. This process is completed by capturing a live photo of the applicant using Login.gov's technology that confirms the applicant's live presence in front of the camera. Login.gov then compares the identity to the application's information using a variety of tools, including facial recognition to the identification documents provided.

reviewed alongside the rest of the application by a passport agent for confirmation and acceptance.

Once accepted by the passport agent, the application will be adjudicated and processed by a passport authorizing officer following the same procedures as the paper DS-11 applications. This adjudication process will involve verifying the applicant's citizenship records using system checks, including those from USCIS. When an application is approved, the passport will be issued and mailed to the address provided by the applicant through their online application submission.

Authorities

The pilot program is being launched pursuant to 22 U.S.C. § 211a - Authority to grant, issue, and verify passports, which authorizes the Department to "grant and issue passports, and cause passports to be granted, issued, and verified in foreign countries . . . ." 22 U.S.C. § 213 - Application for Passport; Verification by Oath requires that certain passport applications "be duly verified by his oath before a person authorized and empowered by the Secretary of State to administer oaths." For purposes of this temporary pilot program, eligible applicants who are required to take an oath will record themselves reciting it, the recording will be uploaded, and a passport agent will review and confirm the recorded oath before the application is adjudicated.

The pilot program will also temporarily alter the application of the following regulations in Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations:

- 51.8(b) – Submission of currently valid passport, which provides that "[w]hen applying for a new passport on-line, an applicant must have the currently valid passport of the same type available for cancellation via the on-line process." A first-time applicant eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will not have a currently valid passport available for cancellation.

- 51.21 – Execution of Passport Application, which provides that specific populations "must apply for a passport by appearing in person before a passport agent or passport acceptance agent" and "must verify the application by oath or affirmation before the passport agent or passport acceptance agent" as well as spelling out processes for passport renewal by mail or online. Persons belonging to those populations who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot, including such persons overseas, will not appear in person for the oath to be administered.
- 51.22(e) – Responsibilities, which includes those of persons acting as passport acceptance agents' "certify[ing] that they have personally witnessed the applicant signing his or her application" and others as part of their responsibilities. Persons who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will not be personally witnessed.
- 51.29 – Attorney or other third-party assistance, which permits persons seeking passport services to be physically accompanied by third parties of their choice when seeking passport services. Persons who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will not need to be physically accompanied by those third parties.
- 51.42 – Persons born in the United States applying for a passport for the first time, which specifies certain evidence persons born in the U.S. must submit in original copies when applying for a passport for the first time. Some persons who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will be first-time applicants, and they may only be required to submit evidence electronically.
- 51.43 – Persons born outside the United States applying for a passport for the first time, which specifies evidence persons born outside the U.S. may be required to submit by paper when applying for a passport for the first time. Some persons who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot will be first-time applicants, and they may only be required to submit evidence electronically.

- 51.51 – Passport fees, which includes an execution fee "when the applicant is required to execute the application in person." The Department expects the execution of online DS-11 applications during the pilot to cost the same as execution of in-person DS-11 applications because the Department must still review the entire application, including the recorded oath and evidence of identity, for execution and acceptance. Therefore, even though applications submitted by persons who are eligible for the pilot will not be executed in person, the $35 execution fee will still apply. However, the Department will also use the pilot to study and verify associated costs and will update its fee schedule as necessary.
- 51.52(b) – Exemption from payment of passport fees, which specifies that persons exempt from passport fees are also exempt from passport execution fees if their applications are executed before a federal official. Persons who are eligible for the online DS-11 pilot who fall into the categories under this section will be exempt from passport fees and passport execution fees.

Paperwork Reduction Act

The application for a passport, form DS-11, is approved under OMB Control Number 1405-0004. The latest approval was on June 25, 2025, for three years. The following information applies to the existing DS-11 procedures. The Department processed 13,913,231 DS-11 applications in FY 2025. The average time for an applicant to complete a DS-11 (which includes the time required to search existing data sources, gather the necessary information, provide the information required, review the final collection, and submit the collection to Passport Services for processing) is 85 minutes per response. The Department anticipates that accepting a percentage of these applications online will decrease the time burden for the applicants, although the amount of time saved will be one of the data points to be learned in the pilot. Eligibility criteria

for a U.S. passport and the applicability of relevant passport statutes and regulations, including 18 U.S.C. 1541 *et seq.*, will not change during or as a result of this pilot. Applicants will still be required to establish their U.S. citizenship and their identity and follow all relevant Department instructions. By running this pilot, the Department hopes to gain insights to inform an eventual transition to allow an option to submit DS-11 applications online on a permanent basis.

Request for Comments

The Department welcomes comments on this initiative. Comments relating to the time and money saved (keeping in mind that submitting a paper application takes an average of 85 minutes) will be particularly helpful. Navigate to Regulations.gov, search for Docket No. DOS-2026-1222, and submit a comment. Please note that comments will assist Department personnel in evaluating the pilot and deciding on future actions, including possible rulemaking. The comments will not receive a response.

Matthew D. Pierce,

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Passport Services,

U.S. Department of State.

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