



BIOMETRIC RESIDENCE PERMITS

This leaflet explains the UK Border Agency process for giving your biometric information and applying for a biometric residence permit (BRP).

What is a biometric residence permit?

The biometric residence permit is a residence permit which holds a migrant's biographic details (name, date and place of birth) and biometric information (facial image and fingerprints), and shows their immigration status and entitlements while they remain in the UK.

Who has to apply for a biometric residence permit?

Foreign nationals from outside the European Economic Area making certain applications to the UK Border Agency have to apply for a biometric residence permit. This applies to both postal applications and applications made in person (known as 'premium applications').

If a migrant has to apply for a biometric residence permit it will be stated on the application form. For up-to-date information on which types of applications are affected please log on to the UK Border Agency website at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Successful applicants receive a biometric residence permit as evidence of their right to be here. Migrants applying successfully in categories which do not have to enrol biometrics will continue to receive a sticker (vignette) in their passport.

Why do applicants over 6 years old have to give their fingerprints?

The law states that everyone over 6 years old must provide their fingerprints when applying for a biometric residence permit.

Why do children under the age of 16 need a 'responsible adult' to accompany them?

It is a legal requirement to ensure the child understands the process and is reassured.

Who is a responsible adult?

This is a parent or guardian, or another person aged 18 years or over who takes responsibility for the child.

How do I enrol my biometric information and apply for a biometric residence permit from inside the UK?

If you make your application to extend your stay in the UK **by post or online**, we will send you a letter asking you to enrol your biometrics after we have received your application. You will be able to enrol your biometric information one of the Post Offices offering this service across the UK using their walk-in service. Please visit the Post Office website at www.postoffice.co.uk or call their helpline on 08457 22 33 44 for the location of your nearest branch. If you want to make your application **in person** you can do this at one of our public enquiry offices by using the premium or super premium service. You will enrol your biometric information at the same time as making your application.

If you want to apply at one of our public enquiry offices you must book an appointment online by visiting our website:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/book-appointment

If you want to use the super premium service you should phone 020 8196 3893 or 020 8196 3892.

What happens when I enrol my biometric information?

Enrolling your biometric information is a quick and clean process. We take a digital photograph of your face, then you put your fingers on a glass screen to be scanned - there is no ink or mess.

We are aware of the need to protect the dignity, privacy and modesty of applicants, and there will be special arrangements for applicants where needed.

How long does it take to enrol biometrics?

The UK Border Agency biometric enrolment process takes 5-10 minutes. There may then be a short wait while we check your data.

SECURING OUR BORDER CONTROLLING MIGRATION

What about any medical or physical conditions that may require the UK Border Agency to provide the applicant with special arrangements?

If you or any dependants who are applying with you have a medical or physical condition which may require special arrangements to be made in order for your biometric features to be recorded, you must obtain a letter or other document giving the details of any such condition and enclose it with your application.

Appropriate documentary evidence would be a letter from a treating clinician, such as a practising doctor registered with the General Medical Council, giving details of the condition and/or special needs and explaining any arrangements that may be necessary.

What if I have no fingers or hands?

If you are physically unable to provide fingerprints we will take a photograph of the facial image and record on the database the fact that you are physically unable to provide fingerprints.

Why must I give my biometrics as part of my application?

Providing biometrics helps to protect the identities of genuine applicants. Biometric residence permits make it easier for individuals to prove their identity, immigration status and entitlements in the UK. Individuals are locked into a single identity which helps the UK Border Agency tackle immigration abuse, child trafficking, illegal working and identity fraud.

What happens if I refuse to give my biometrics?

If a postal applicant fails to make arrangements to provide their biometrics their application will be rejected. If they fail to enrol their biometrics or refuse to provide their biometrics then their application to the UK Border Agency may be rejected.

If a premium applicant refuses to provide their biometrics then their application to the UK Border Agency may be rejected.

Why do I have to be fingerprinted again when I gave my biometrics overseas as part of my visa/entry clearance application?

This is to verify that an individual making an application in the UK is the same person who applied for the visa overseas and who came through the UK border.

What will happen to my biometrics after they have been taken?

Your biometric information will be stored on a central government database in the UK, and will be checked against UK government records. It will be handled in line with the UK's strict data protection laws.

Will I be interviewed?

If the fingerprint check reveals any queries around your identity, these matters may be resolved through an interview. However, this will not routinely be required.

Will I be issued with a biometric residence permit?

If you are successful in your application you will receive a biometric residence permit. However, the card is not issued on the day you give your biometrics. It will be sent to you in the post via secure delivery. If you have not received your permit within 10 working days of the date of your decision letter you must email BRPdelivery@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk and provide the following details:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- nationality;
- passport number;
- delivery address;
- a contact telephone number; and
- case reference number

You cannot enquire about undelivered permits in person at our offices or biometric enrolment centres. This applies to both premium and postal services.

When will I get my biometric residence permit?

If you apply by post, we will post your permit to you by secure delivery, separately from the decision about your application and the return of your documents.

If you apply at a public enquiry office, we will post your permit to you by secure delivery after your appointment. Permits cannot be issued on the same day as your appointment.

We advise you not to book any non-urgent travel before you have received your permit.

What must I do when I receive my biometric residence permit?

You must check your permit carefully when you receive it, to ensure that all the details on it are correct. If you find a mistake, you must email BRPerror@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk within 10 working days of receiving the permit - otherwise you may be charged for a replacement and will have to apply again. You must provide us with the following details:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- nationality;
- passport number;
- contact telephone number;

- BRP reference number
- case reference number; and
- exactly what is wrong with the BRP.

We advise you to make a photocopy of the front and back of your permit, in case it is lost or stolen. If you want to make another application in the future, you will have to send your permit to the UK Border Agency, so you may want to retain a copy for your records.

What must I do if my biometric residence permit is not delivered?

If you have not received your permit within 10 working days after the date on your letter from us extending your permission to stay in the UK, you must email BRPdelivery@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk and provide the following details:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- nationality;
- passport number;
- delivery address;
- a contact telephone number; and
- case reference number

You cannot ask about undelivered permits in person at our public enquiry offices or biometric enrolment centres.

How do I use my biometric residence permit?

Your biometric residence permit is evidence of your permission to stay in the UK, and shows the conditions of your stay. It enables you to confirm your identity and your rights to study and/or work here, and to access public services.

You must show the permit to your employer or approved education provider before you start to work or study.

You must take your permit with you if you go abroad while you have permission to stay in the UK. You may have to show the permit to an immigration officer at the border when you leave the UK. You will also have to show it as well as your valid national passport or travel document before you begin your return journey, and again when you re-enter the UK. The permit proves that you are allowed to return to the UK, but it cannot be used instead of a passport or travel document.

What must I do if my biometric residence permit is lost or stolen?

If your biometric residence permit is lost or stolen, you must report the loss or theft to us as soon as possible by e-mailing BRPlost@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. You must provide the following details:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- nationality;
- passport number;
- contact details;
- BRP reference number;
- case reference number; and
- when, where and how the loss or theft occurred.

You must also report the loss or theft to the police and obtain a police report and a crime reference number, as soon as possible.

If your biometric residence permit is lost or stolen while you are in the UK, you must apply for another permit within 3 months of reporting the loss or theft of your original permit, using form BRP (RC). You can download the BRP (RC) application form and guidance from our website at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

If your permit is lost or stolen while you are outside the UK, you must apply for a Replacement BRP visa in order to re-enter the UK. [The Replacement BRP visa page](#) explains what you have to do. You must then apply for a new biometric residence permit within 1 month of re-entering the UK, using form BRP (RC). You can download the BRP (RC) application form and guidance from our website at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/.

If you do not apply for a replacement permit, you may have to pay a financial penalty of up to £1,000, or we may shorten your permission to stay.

How do I change my personal details on my biometric residence permit?

You must tell us as soon as you can if:

- you change your name (for example, because of marriage or by deed poll);
- you change your gender, legally or permanently;
- you change your nationality; or
- your facial appearance changes significantly.

If you change any personal details listed above or any details shown on your biometric residence permit, you must apply for a new permit within three months using application form BRP (RC). If you do not do this, you may have to pay a financial penalty of up to £1,000 or we may shorten your permission to stay. You can download the application form and guidance by using the link below.

[BRP \(RC\) application form and guidance](#)

What must I do if I change my address?

If you have received a letter telling you a biometric residence permit will be sent to you but have changed, or will be changing, your address before

you have received your biometric residence permit, you must tell us immediately by emailing BRPdelivery@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

or;

If you are unable to email, please write, free of charge to:

Freepost RRYX-GLYU-GXHZ
Returns Unit
PO Box 163
Bristol
BS20 1AB

If you have made an immigration application that also required you to apply for a biometric residence permit and you have not yet received a letter telling you a biometric residence permit will be sent to you, but have changed, or will be changing, your address before you receive your biometric residence permit, you must tell us immediately by completing a Change Of Address (COA) form.

This can be found online at: [COA form](#)

If you have made an immigration application that also required you to apply for a biometric residence permit, and change your address at any time after you have received your biometric residence permit, and you think you are likely to be at the new address for at least 6 months, you must tell us, by completing a Migrant Change of Circumstances (MCC) form, This can be found online at: [MCC form](#)

Print and complete the form, and post it to the address shown on its front cover.

If you have made an immigration application that did not require you to apply for a biometric residence permit, and change your address at any time; you must tell us immediately, by completing a Change Of Address (COA) form.

This can be found online at: [COA form](#)

or;

If you are unable to email, please write to:

Change of Address Team
UK Border Agency
11th Floor, Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
CR9 2BY

What must I do if I change my circumstances?

You must tell us immediately if:

- you change your circumstances so you no longer qualify to stay under the Immigration Rules that were in place when we gave you permission to stay in the UK; or
- you are a student and you change your course and/or education provider (sponsor).

It does not matter whether we are currently deciding or have already decided your application - you must tell us of any changes, by completing a Migrant Change of Circumstances (MCC) form, This can be found online at: [MCC form](#)

Print and complete the form, and post it to the address shown on its front cover.

What must I do if the information on my biometric residence permit is incorrect, someone has been using my permit, or my permit is damaged?

You must tell us immediately by emailing BRPerror@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk if you know or suspect that

- the information held on your permit is untrue, misleading or incomplete;
- someone has used your permit with or without your permission; or
- your permit has been damaged or tampered with.

You must provide the following details:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- nationality;
- passport number;
- a contact telephone number;
- BRP reference number
- case reference number; and
- exactly what has happened to the BRP.

Where can I access more information?

For further information please log on to: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Or call the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766.

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