



**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
**To**  
**PASSPORT APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE AGENTS**  
**January 3, 2017**

**Photocopies of Primary U.S. Citizenship Evidence**

**Effective January 9, 2017**, all customers applying for a passport using form DS-11 must submit a clear copy of their citizenship evidence in addition to their original or certified copy of U.S. citizenship. If there is writing on both sides of the citizenship evidence, then copies must be made of the front and back of the document.

The photocopy is required of primary U.S. citizenship evidence such as a certified birth certificate, naturalization certificate, consular report of birth abroad, and certificate of citizenship. Customers who submit an expired U.S. passport book or passport card as citizenship evidence do not need to submit a photocopy.

**Photocopies:**

- Must be legible
- Must be on white 8.5"x11" standard paper
- Must be copied using black ink
- Cannot be double-sided

Customers can also submit a second certified copy of their citizenship evidence in place of a photocopy. The second certified copy or photocopy will be retained by the Department of State.

Customers who do not submit a photocopy or second certified copy of their citizenship evidence may experience a delay in the processing of their passport application.

It is the customer's responsibility to provide a photocopy of the citizenship evidence at the time of application acceptance. However, an acceptance facility can charge customers for making photocopies on their behalf.

We have enclosed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to assist you in answering questions from customers.

Please contact your regional Customer Service Manager with any questions on this policy.

## **FAQs on the Submission of Photocopies of Citizenship Evidence**

**Q.** Why is the Department of State requiring a photocopy of my citizenship evidence and the original/certified copy?

**A.** While we return the original to you, we retain the additional copy with your passport record. This assists the Department's effort to preserve the integrity of the passport issuance process, and reduces the risk of another person attempting to use evidence in your name to get a passport.

**Q.** It states on my U.S. birth certificate that it is illegal to make a copy. What should I do?

**A.** If you elect not to submit a photocopy, you can submit a second certified copy of your birth certificate.

**Q.** It states on my naturalization certificate or citizenship certificate "do not copy". What should I do?

**A.** USCIS does not prohibit photocopies of these certificates for passport purposes.

**Q.** The photocopy of my citizenship evidence is not clear. It has lines and watermarks that make it difficult to read. What should I do?

**A.** The lines and watermarks may be a feature of the safety paper your evidence is printed on. Please submit the clearest copy possible.

**Q.** Do I need to submit a photocopy of my passport book or card?

**A.** No, you do not need to submit a photocopy of the passport book or card that you are using as primary evidence of citizenship evidence.