

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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## Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email [Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca](mailto:Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca).

3 January 2014

**GHA104709.E**

Ghana: Requirements and procedures for obtaining a passport, both within and outside the country; types of documents accepted as proof of identity and citizenship (2008-2013)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

### 1. Obtaining a Passport from Within Ghana

The websites of the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) and the Services Portal of the Government of Ghana both indicate that, in order to acquire a Ghanaian passport, an individual must submit the following:

- passport application form;
- any of the following as a proof of citizenship:
  - birth certificate (original and a photocopy);
  - old passport (if any);
  - certificate of naturalization;
  - baptismal certificate;
  - statutory declaration made in a high court by one of applicant's parents; or
  - affidavit by "Head of Family in respect of applicant regarding citizenship;"
- four recent passport-sized photographs on plain background (one to be endorsed by witness or guarantor); and
- processing fee (Ghana n.d.c; *ibid.* n.d.g).

The GIS and the Services Portal of the Government of Ghana state that an applicant requires two "guarantors," who must be relatives living in Ghana and a "witness," who can be one of the following:

- A Clergyman;
- A Commissioned officer of the Armed Forces (captain and above); Prison Service or the Ghana Police (superintendent and above);
- A senior Civil or Public Servant (Principal Executive Officer and above);
- Head of a recognised Educational Institution/ Corporate organization;
- Recognised professionals registered with their respective regulating bodies (e.g. Surveyors, Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers etc). (*ibid.*; *ibid.* n.d.c)

Both websites note that, in addition to the above listed documents, an individual who is traveling abroad for medical treatment must submit a medical report (*ibid.*; *ibid.* n.d.g). Applications must be submitted in person to the nearest Immigration office (*ibid.*; *ibid.* n.d.c). Processing can take up to 30 days from receipt of the completed application (*ibid.*; *ibid.* n.d.g).

#### 1.1 Biometric Passports

Sources indicate that Ghana started issuing biometric passports in April 2010 (*ibid.* n.d.f; *Daily Graphic* 30 June 2011). The Ghana High Commission in Ottawa and the Embassy of Ghana in the Netherlands both state that non-biometric passports can be used until November 2015 (Ghana 13 Apr. 2010; *ibid.* n.d.e). Information on whether Ghana still issues non-biometric passports could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an individual applying for a biometric passport must submit the following:

- an application form;
- birth certificate;
- old passport (if available); and
- bank receipt for the processing fee (*ibid.* n.d.f).

In a 30 June 2011 article, *Daily Graphic*, an Accra-based newspaper, stated that biometric passport application centers [PACs] were operating in Accra, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and in western and northern regions of the country. The website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says similarly that there are PACs in Accra, Kumasi, Sunyani, Sekondi-Takoradi, Tamale and Ho (Ghana n.d.f).

The GIS website states that, in order to acquire a biometric passport, an applicant must complete the following steps:

- applicant purchases passport application form from approved point of sale, [such as] Ecobank Gh Ltd., Ghana Commercial Bank Ltd. or National Investment Bank Ltd.;
- applicant fills passport application form correctly and submits it and relevant documents to a PAC;
- applicant is invited to take digital photograph and biometric data-finger-prints;
- applicant receives a submission receipt, with passport collection date (*ibid.* n.d.a).

The government charges the following fees for passports:

1. Express service, three working days: 100 Ghanaian Cedi (GHS) [about C\$46 (XE 2 Jan. 2014)];
2. Regular service, 15 working days: 50 GHS (Ghana n.d.a).

The website of the GIS notes that applicants can collect their passports at a PAC by presenting a submission receipt and undergoing a final biometric check (*ibid.*).

## 2. Obtaining a Passport from Abroad

According to the website of the Ghana High Commission in Ottawa, an individual applying for a Ghanaian passport in Canada must submit to the Ghana High Commission the following:

- an application form (C\$28.00 each);
- four passport-sized photographs;
- old passport (ibid. n.d.b).

The processing fee is C\$200.00, or C\$300.00 for express delivery (ibid. [2013]).

The application form states that applicants must also submit proof of citizenship and identity, such as a school certificate, driver's licence, employment, student or "other" ID card (ibid. n.d.d). A copy of the application form is available on the website of the Ghana High Commission and it is attached to this Response. Processing time is between two and four weeks (ibid. n.d.b).

In order to replace a lost or damaged Ghanaian passport in Canada, a person must submit to the Ghana High Commission the following:

- an application form;
- four passport-sized photographs;
- applicant's birth certificate;
- police report;
- medical card;
- landed immigrant document; and
- driver's licence (if available) (ibid.).

The processing fee is C\$400.00 (ibid. [2013])

The Ghana High Commission further notes that applicants requesting to replace lost or damaged passports, "will be invited for an interview in order for the Mission to satisfy itself that they are bona fide Ghanaian nationals" (ibid. n.d.b).

Information on whether Ghanaian missions abroad issue biometric passports could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

- Daily Graphic* [Accra]. 30 June 2011. Emmanuel Adu-Gyamerah. "138,067 Biometric Passports Issued Nationwide - Kpodo." <<http://www.modernghana.com/news/337443/1/138067-biometric-passports-issued-nationwide-kpodo.html>> [Accessed 18 Dec. 2013]
- Ghana. [2013]. Ghana High Commission, Ottawa. "Important Announcement! New Consular Fees for Applicants in Canada, Effective May 1 2013." <[http://www.ghc-ca.com/consularmatters/NEW%20CONSULAR%20FEES%20FOR%20APPLICANTS%20IN%20CANADA%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ghc-ca.com/consularmatters/NEW%20CONSULAR%20FEES%20FOR%20APPLICANTS%20IN%20CANADA%20(2).pdf)> [Accessed 16 Dec. 2013]
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- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.c. Ghana Immigration Service (GIS). "Eligibility for a Passport/Procedure." <[http://www.ghanaimmigration.org/Eligibility\\_info.htm](http://www.ghanaimmigration.org/Eligibility_info.htm)> [Accessed 16 Dec. 2013]
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- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.f. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. "Passports." <<http://www.mfa.gov.gh/index.php?id=76>> [Accessed 18 Dec. 2013]
- \_\_\_\_\_. N.d.g. Services Portal of the Government of Ghana. "Eligibility for a Passport/Procedure." <<http://www.eservices.gov.gh/PO/SitePages/PO-Guidelines.aspx>> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2013]
- XE. 2 January 2014. "XE Currency Converter." <<http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/convert/?Amount=100&From=GHS&To=CAD>> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2014]

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to contact the following organizations were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response: Ghana – consulates general in New York and Vancouver, Ghana Immigration Service.

A representative of the Ghana High Commission in Ottawa was unable to provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

**Internet sites, including:** AllAfrica; Amnesty International; Factiva; Ghana – Consulate General in New York, Embassy of Ghana in The Hague, Ghana High Commission in London, UK, Government of Ghana Official Portal, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ministry of Interior, National Communications Authority; Ghana Reporters; Keesing Reference Systems; Modern Ghana; United Nations – Refworld; United States – Department of State.

## Attachment

Ghana. N.d. Ghana High Commission, Ottawa. "Application for a Republic of Ghana Passport." <<http://www.ghc-ca.com/frm-e-consular-matters.html>> [Accessed 16 Dec. 2013]

[Tips on how to use this search engine.](#)

