

## Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Cardholder

### OCI Scheme is operational from 02.12.2005

The Constitution of India does not allow holding Indian citizenship and Citizenship of a foreign country simultaneously. Based on the recommendation of the High Level committee on Indian Diaspora, the Government of India decided to register Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) of certain category as has been specified in the Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 as **Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Cardholder**.

2. Application for registration as OCI Cardholder can be made **Online**. For this purpose, please visit <https://passport.gov.in/oci> . Before filling the application, **Instructions** may be perused so that there is no mistake in submission of application. Further, the details regarding **Fee** and **Offices where original supporting documents have to be submitted for prior verification** may also be perused.

3. Persons registered as OCI Cardholder have not been given any voting rights, election to Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha/Legislative Assembly/Council, holding Constitutional posts such as President, Vice President, Judge of Supreme Court/High Court etc. Registered OCI Cardholders shall be entitled to the following benefits:

- (i) Multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India for any purpose (However OCI Cardholders will require a special permission to undertake research work in India for which they may submit the application to the Indian Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned).
- (ii) Exemption from registration with Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) or Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) for any length of stay in India.
- (iii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial, and educational fields except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties.
- (iv) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be treated at par with Non-Resident-Indians in the matter of inter-country adoption of Indian children.
- (v) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be treated at par with resident Indian nationals in the matter of tariffs in air fares in domestic sectors in India.
- (vi) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be charged the same entry fee as domestic Indian visitors to visit national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in India.

- (vii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians(NRI) in respect of:-
  - (A) entry fees to be charged for visiting the national monuments, historical sites and museums in India;
  - (B) pursuing the following professions in India, in pursuance of the provisions contained in the relevant Acts, namely:-
    - (a) doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists;
    - (b) advocates;
    - (c) architects;
    - (d) chartered accountants;
  - (C) to appear for the All India Pre-Medical Test or such other tests to make them eligible for admission in pursuance of the provisions contained in the relevant Acts.
- (viii) State Governments should ensure that the OCI Cardholder registration booklets of OCI Cardholders are treated as their identification for any services rendered to them. In case proof of residence is required, Overseas Citizens of India Cardholder may give an affidavit attested by a notary public stating that a particular/specific address may be treated as their place of residence in India and may also in their affidavit give their overseas residential address as well as e-mail address, if any.

Any other benefits to an OCI Cardholder will be notified by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) under section 7B(1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

4. A person registered as an OCI Cardholder is eligible to apply for grant of Indian citizenship under section 5(1) (g) of the Citizenship Act, 1955 if he/she is registered as OCI Cardholder for five years and is ordinarily resident in India for twelve months before making an application for registration. Central Government, if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist, may after recording the circumstances in writing, relax the period of twelve months, up to a maximum of thirty days which may be in different breaks.

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