

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

- 1. Are passports issued to persons from an early age in Bahrain?**
- 2. Are new passports issued at specific intervals in Bahrain?**
- 3. When are passports renewed in Bahrain?**

RESPONSE

1. Are passports issued to persons from an early age in Bahrain?

A search of the sources consulted found information that indicates that children are issued with passports in Bahrain.

The website of the Bahrain embassy in Washington DC indicates that “Each child must have his/her own passport.” It is stated on the website that “Under the new law, children will no longer be added to a parent’s passport” (‘Passport Renewal’ (Undated), Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/renew.html> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 1).

However, the website also carries a notice to Bahraini citizens travelling abroad from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain that appears to indicate that the name of a dependant child can be included on a parent’s passport if the child does not have his or her own passport. It is stated on the notice by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that “If a family member does not have his or her own passport (for example, a dependant child), make sure that his or her name is included in your passport” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain (Undated), ‘Notice to all Bahraini citizens traveling abroad’, Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website [http://www.bahrainembassy.org/Travellers%20notice%20\(eng\).pdf](http://www.bahrainembassy.org/Travellers%20notice%20(eng).pdf) – Accessed 6 December 2006 – Attachment 2).

The website provides the following information regarding the issuing of a new Bahraini passport for a child:

Issuance of a new Bahraini passport for a child requires:

- A letter from both parents of the child addressed to the Ambassador requesting issuance of a new passport.
- A completed application form (pdf).
- Three (3) passport size photos (*white background, 1.5” x 2.5”*) attached to the signed application form.
- US\$27 cash fee
- A copy of *both* parent’s passports.
- An authenticated copy of the parents’ marriage certificate.
- The original or authenticated birth certificate.
- Send all documents and a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Embassy through the US Postal Service (Express or Priority Mail). If you choose to use another service for the return of your documents, such as FedEx or DHL, please make sure that your name and address appears in BOTH the Sender and Recipient fields of the prepaid airwaybill (‘New Passport’ (Undated), Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/newpass.html> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 3).

The website of the General Directorate of Immigration and Passports in Bahrain indicates that a parent “can acquire separate passports for your children from the Bahraini Passports Section at the General Directorate of Immigration & Passports”. The website provides the following information regarding the procedures “for issuing a separate passport for children who are currently endorsed in either parent’s passport:”

- Fill in the application form, which must be signed by the child’s parent or guardian.
- Parent or guardian must come personally to confirm his wish for a separate passport for his child.

The following documents are required:

- Original birth certificate of the child, with copy
- Original marriage certificate of the parents, with copy.
- Original passports of both parents, with copies.
- Original CPR of child, with copy (both sides) (‘Services – Bahraini Passports – Procedure for issuing a separate passport for children who are currently endorsed in either parent’s passport’ (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website <http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport1.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 4).

A report dated 23 July 2001 submitted by Bahrain to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child indicates that “minor children and unmarried daughters” had “the right to be issued with passports” under the provisions of the Passports Act No. 11 of 1975, as amended, and its implementing regulations. It is stated in the report that:

Under the Passports Act No. 11 of 1975, minor children and unmarried daughters have the right to be issued with passports in the manner detailed in the provisions of the said Act, as amended, and in its implementing regulations promulgated by the Minister of the Interior in Ordinance No. 15 of 1976.

The report also includes the following information:

131. The Passports Act of 1975 stipulates that passports issued to Bahraini citizens must include the names of their wives and minor children accompanying them on their journey, as well as their dates of birth and gender, their photographs being affixed to the passport and stamped by the passport issuing authority.

132. The said Act permits the issue of separate passports to persons lacking legal capacity only with the consent of their legal representatives.

133. The Act therefore ensures that children do not travel without the consent of their parents or the persons acting on the latter's behalf. Moreover, in order to protect their children, parents have the right to petition the courts to prohibit their children holding separate passports from travelling alone without their consent (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child 2001, 'Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under Article 44 of the Convention – Initial reports of States parties due in 1994 – Bahrain', UNHCR REFworld website, CRC/C/11/Add.24, 23 July, pp. 20 & 26 <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDCOI&id=3df5a4bc4> – Accessed 15 November 2006 – Attachment 5).

2. Are new passports issued at specific intervals in Bahrain?

3. When are passports renewed in Bahrain?

An article in the *Bahrain Tribune* dated 12 July 2006 indicates that pursuant to a law issued in July 2006, Bahraini passports for adult citizens “are valid for 10 years”. Passports for those aged less than 21 years “are valid for five years.” The article refers to “His Majesty the King, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa” issuing “five laws for 2006” including “Law No. 25 on amending some articles of Law No. 11 for 2005 concerning passports. This law states that passports for citizens aged 21 and above are valid for 10 years, while the passports for citizens under 21 are valid for five years” (‘King issues five laws’ 2006, *Bahrain Tribune*, 12 July <http://www.bahraintribune.com/ArticleDetail.asp> – Accessed 6 December 2006 – Attachment 6).

An earlier article in the *Bahrain Tribune* dated 11 April 2006 notes that Bahrain's Chamber of the Deputies was to discuss a bill for amendments to the passport law that included changing the time for renewing Bahraini passports to ten years for adults. It is stated in the article that:

Bahraini passports would be renewed every ten years for adults instead of five years according to a bill for the amendment of certain provisions of the passport law that will be discussed today by the Chamber of the Deputies.

According to the bill, citizens below 21 would continue to renew their passport every five years, because at such age they have a lot of changes in their personal information, such as the educational level.

... The bill excludes those having diplomatic passports as these documents don't have expiry dates. They expire when diplomats' missions conclude (‘Adults' passports to be renewed every 10 years' 2006, *Bahrain Tribune*, 11 April <http://www.bahraintribune.com/ArticleDetail.asp> – Accessed 6 December 2006 – Attachment 7).

However, the website of the General Directorate of Immigration and Passports in Bahrain indicates that “The Bahraini Passport is valid for five years.” The website provides the following information regarding the procedures for renewing a Bahraini passport:

To renew the passport the applicant should fill in and sign the Passport Renewal Card and attach the following:

- 1 recent colour photograph, front view with white background.
- The expired passport ('Services – Bahraini Passports – Passport Renewal Procedures' (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website <http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport3.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 8).

The website of the Bahrain embassy in London indicates that if a "Passport has been renewed for 10 years, you must apply for a new passport which must be done in Bahrain." The website also sets out the requirements to renew a Bahraini passport. The documentation required by the embassy for passport renewal differs slightly from that required by the General Directorate of Immigration and Passports in Bahrain ('Passports – Passport Renewal' (Undated), Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, London website http://www.bahrainembassy.co.uk/consular_services.htm – Accessed 15 November 2006 – Attachment 9). The website of the Bahrain embassy in Washington DC also provides information regarding the renewal of a Bahraini passport ('Passport Renewal' (Undated), Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/renew.html> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 1).

The website of the General Directorate of Immigration and Passports in Bahrain also includes information on the circumstances in which a passport will be replaced. According to the website:

A Passport will be replaced in the following cases:

- If the passport is damaged.
- If the passport pages have been completely used.
- If modifications are needed in passport details ('Services – Passport Replacement Procedures' (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website <http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport4.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006 – Attachment 10).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Government Information & Reports

Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada <http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/>

US Department of State <http://www.state.gov/>

United Nations (UN)

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd>

Non-Government Organisations

International News & Politics

BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

Region Specific Links

The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain

<http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/index-1.htm>

Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/>

Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, London website <http://www.bahrainembassy.co.uk/>

Bahrain Tribune website <http://www.bahraintribune.com>

Search Engines

Copernic <http://www.copernic.com/>

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

1. 'Passport Renewal' (Undated), Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/renew.html> – Accessed 16 November 2006.
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain (Undated), 'Notice to all Bahraini citizens traveling abroad', Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website [http://www.bahrainembassy.org/Travellers%20notice%20\(eng\).pdf](http://www.bahrainembassy.org/Travellers%20notice%20(eng).pdf) – Accessed 6 December 2006.
3. 'New Passport' (Undated), Embassy of The Kingdom of Bahrain, Washington DC website <http://www.bahrainembassy.org/newpass.html> – Accessed 16 November 2006.
4. 'Services – Bahraini Passports – Procedure for issuing a separate passport for children who are currently endorsed in either parent's passport' (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website <http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport1.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006.
5. United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child 2001, 'Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under Article 44 of the Convention – Initial reports of States parties due in 1994 – Bahrain', UNHCR REF WORLD website, CRC/C/11/Add.24, 23 July <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDCOI&id=3df5a4bc4> – Accessed 15 November 2006.
6. 'King issues five laws' 2006, *Bahrain Tribune*, 12 July <http://www.bahraintribune.com/ArticleDetail.asp> – Accessed 6 December 2006.
7. 'Adults' passports to be renewed every 10 years' 2006, *Bahrain Tribune*, 11 April <http://www.bahraintribune.com/ArticleDetail.asp> – Accessed 6 December 2006.
8. 'Services – Bahraini Passports – Passport Renewal Procedures' (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website <http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport3.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006.
9. 'Passports – Passport Renewal' (Undated), Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, London website http://www.bahrainembassy.co.uk/consular_services.htm – Accessed 15 November 2006.

10. 'Services – Passport Replacement Procedures' (Undated), The General Directorate of Immigration and Passports, Bahrain website
<http://www.immigration.gov.bh/english/services-passport4.htm> – Accessed 16 November 2006.