

How to get an emergency travel document

Before you can fly home, you will need to get your baby an emergency travel document (ETD), which is similar to a temporary passport. The process for getting an ETD includes:

- An online application form
- An online interview
- Collection of the passport from the local British Embassy.

It can be a lengthy process and delay your return home, so **please submit the application as soon as possible.**

We're very practised at navigating this system that sadly isn't set up for our families. If you have any questions about applying for an emergency travel document or face any barriers, please get in touch with our team, and we will do all we can to help. You don't have to deal with this by yourself.

Get in touch

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Step 1 - Starting the ETD process

Get in touch with the local British Embassy, British Consulate or the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). You can find a list of their details here. These departments usually issue emergency travel documents to people who have lost their passports, and it's unusual that the authorities need to issue one for a baby, so you will need to clearly explain your situation. You will need to explain:

- This is a newborn baby who has never had a passport
- They are having medical treatment that makes taking photographs difficult, and there may be medical devices on the face to support the baby's breathing that cannot be removed.
- You will need documents that will allow travel within a period of time, such as two weeks, not just for a single day, because your baby's condition could change, and aeromedical transfers are complicated to organise.



Step 2 - Collecting information

Once you have spoken to an Embassy, Consulate, High Commission or the FCDO, they should send you a link to an online form to complete. [You can also access this yourself here.](#)

You will be asked to provide documents for your baby, including evidence of nationality. This is likely to include:

- A passport-style photograph of the baby
- A passport and birth certificate of the mother, and also the father if present
- Marriage certificates of parents if married
- Birth certificate and marriage certificate of the maternal grandparents (that means mum's mum and dad)
- Evidence you were pregnant before going away, such as hospital or GP letters
- Foreign birth certificate for the baby
- Proof of travel plan (we can provide this)

Scans and clear photos of documents will be accepted. These do not need to be original copies.

Step 3 - Photographs

You will need to provide photos of your baby for the emergency travel document. You should take the best photograph of your baby's face that you can, trying to follow the UK government guidelines. If your baby is having help with breathing, their face might be partially covered. We can provide a doctor's letter to explain why this cannot be removed.

Step 4 - Birth certificates

You will need to get help from the hospital to register the birth with the foreign government and get a birth certificate. In most countries, this means going to the hospital of birth or a government registry office and may mean paying a fee. You may need to take a translator as they may not speak English. Most birth certificates are multilingual, but if it is not clear what it says, it may need to be translated.



Step 5 - Proof of travel plans

During the application, you will be asked about your travel plans. We would advise putting in a date that is about a month in advance of when you submit the form. This does not mean you have to travel on this date (you may travel home before or after); it is just a guideline that you will not be held to.

If your baby is being flown by medical escort, we can provide you with a copy of the airline ticket. If you are being flown by air ambulance, there won't be a ticket, but we can provide an invoice with a flight plan as proof of your travel plans.

Step 6 - Submission

Submit all your information to the Embassy, Consulate, High Commission or the FCDO. You will then be invited to an online interview to confirm details. This is largely a formality, and then you will be able to collect the emergency travel document from the British Embassy.

