



Police Certificate Application Guidance Notes

These notes apply to those applicants wishing to obtain an immigration visa for Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa or the United States of America

Note: Our application forms change periodically. If you obtain this form some time before applying please check that it is still the version which must be used when you are ready to apply.

The Association of Chief Police Officers Criminal Records Office (ACRO) provide:

Standard Service:

Produces a Police Certificate in 10 working days (excludes days of receipt and dispatch).

Premium Service:

If you require your Police Certificate urgently with the Premium Service we will produce your Police Certificate in 2 working days (excludes days of receipt and dispatch).

If you are the subject of impending/outstanding criminal proceedings, you will not be eligible for the Premium Service.

Additional Copies:

If you require more than one copy of the Police Certificate, please submit £5 (Pounds Sterling) for each additional copy at the time of the original application. Subsequent requests for extra copies may require a new application form and fee.

Fees (in Pounds Sterling):

Standard Service - £35.00 (10 working days)
Premium Service - £70.00 (2 working days)
Additional Copies - £5.00 each

Payments must be by UK Bank Cheque, UK Postal Order, or Bankers Draft (see FAQ's).

Payments should be made payable to HPA (this stands for 'Hampshire Police Authority').

If your payment is not cleared, your Police Certificate will be deemed invalid and the appropriate Embassy/High Commission will be notified.

ACRO will carry out extensive authentication exercises including searching various databases.

How long does my Police Certificate take to come back to me?

This can vary, and there are a number of factors you may wish to take into account in your planning. Although we offer a 2 day and a 10 day service, at different costs to help with your requirements, **please note that these are the operational working days that we need to process your application on our systems and they do not include weekends or bank holidays or postal time each way.**

Please allow several more days to be added for your planning. Allow plenty time for posting from you to us and back again, or perhaps select a courier or faster/safer postal service each way. For more information on delivery services please see FAQ's.

Example times: For an application posted 1st Class to us in the UK on the **Premium Service**, please allow 3 working days from you to us and 3 working days for the return i.e. a total of 8 working days until you get your Police Certificate back. This is if everything goes smoothly and to plan, the postal service is good; there are no errors on your application, no Bank Holidays etc.

For **Standard Service** posted to us 1st Class in the UK it is important to realise that including the weekends and any non-working days, it could take up to 20 days before you receive your Police Certificate.

Please note –

- These are guideline times and can not be guaranteed;
- We do not guarantee postal service times;
- For overseas postal times please allow substantially longer for us to receive your application and the time it takes for its return; and
- If you have any urgent requests please call us first so that we can advise you on further possible options to assist you with your planning.

Applicants who are serving, ex-serving, dependants of serving or ex-serving UK Armed Services personnel or a civilian who has been subject to military discipline will receive their Police Certificates together with disclosure information provided by the Service Police Crime Bureau.



A POLICE CERTIFICATE IS PROVIDED FOR THE AGREED SPECIFIED PURPOSE OF OBTAINING A CONSULAR CERTIFICATE FOR IMMIGRATION PURPOSES. KEEP THE DATA SECURE AND PROTECT THEM AGAINST LOSS OR UNAUTHORISED ACCESS.

The following factors are likely to delay the processing of a Police Certificate Application:

- Incomplete information provided (you must complete all sections of the application form as required and provide all specified documents);
- Inability to authenticate your current address;
- Failure to enclose correct payment (in UK Pounds Sterling) or rejection of the payment by our bank;
- You are the subject of impending/outstanding criminal proceedings at the time of applying for a Police Certificate;
- An event or occurrence outside of ACRO's control, for example a postal strike or computer systems failure; and
- Searches on historical Police databases are required

To minimise the risk of errors ACRO have developed administrative procedures and safeguards including the right of appeal and a Formal Dispute Procedure. You should contact ACRO if you dispute the content of your Police Certificate (see contact details below right).

ACRO will initiate the Formal Dispute Procedure if there is an alleged error on your Police Certificate criminal history information including:

- Disputed Identity (The whole record is incorrect);
- Accuracy (Yes that's me, but some of the details are wrong); and
- Relevance (Why is that on the Certificate?).

If an error occurs due to illegible handwriting, a new Police Certificate will be issued at a cost of £10 (Pounds Sterling).

Proof of Identity:

ACRO require a copy of your passport description, photograph and expiry date pages.

Note - The name displayed on the Police Certificate will be as displayed on your passport.

Please supply two items of correspondence, no more than 6 months old, that confirm your current address, e.g. utility bills, such as a phone bill, gas bill, electricity bill or bank statement.

DO NOT send originals, they will not be returned.

You need to provide confirmation of your current residential address, together with a list of previous addresses within the last 5 years.

Postal Address:

The completed application form will be processed and the results sent directly to you at your current address as quoted on the application form or to another address (postal address) as requested by you. For postal methods please refer to FAQ's.

Photographs:

Please enclose a recent passport size colour photograph (45mm x 35mm). This will be scanned onto your Police Certificate.

(For guidance, please refer to the Home Office Identity and Passport Service's guide to passport photographs, or [click here](#)).

The back of your photograph must be signed by a person listed on the photograph endorsement page of this application form.

This person is someone other than yourself, your partner or a family member who can confirm your identity and has **known you for a minimum of 2 years**. Your chosen individual must:

- Complete and sign the declaration on the application form.
- Write "I certify this to be a true likeness of (your full name)" on the back of your photograph, which should be signed and dated by them.

Declaration:

Before signing the declaration, you must ensure that all the information provided on your application form is correct and accurate.

Please note that signing the declaration allows ACRO to share any information to enable a decision on your Immigration Application to be made, and to update police systems where appropriate.

Your completed application form, proof of identity, photograph and payment must be sent to:

ACRO, PO Box 481, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 9FS (UK)

For enquiries concerning the completion of this form, please contact ACRO on **0845 60 13 999** during our office opening hours (8:30-16:30) Monday to Friday or via email to:

customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk

International callers from outside of the UK should call **00 (44) 1962 871111** during the above UK times

**For further information please read Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).
All documents referring to your Police Certificate, including your application form and identity documents will be destroyed after 3 months.**



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Police Certificate Application Form

This Application Form must be completed in English using BLOCK CAPITALS

| | |
|---|---|
| Title: | Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other (please specify) |
| Surname: | |
| Forename(s): | |
| Sex: | Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other names by which you have been known (including maiden name, all married names, names prior to or after change by Deed Poll) <u>Please tick if not applicable</u> <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Surname | Forename(s) |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy): | | |
| Place of Birth: | Town: | Country: |
| Nationality (include all): <i>If you have more than one Nationality and you require details of all Nationalities included on your Police Certificate, you must include details from the relevant passports to support your claims.</i> | | |
| Passport Number: | Issuing Country: | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Country for which you require the Police Certificate: | |
| Australia <input type="checkbox"/> | South Africa <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Canada <input type="checkbox"/> | United States of America <input type="checkbox"/> |
| New Zealand <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Date of travel if known: | |



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| | |
|--|--|
| Current Address: | |
| <i>Please ensure that your address is written accurately.</i> | |
| Postcode: | |
| Have you lived at this address for 5 years or more? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>If No, please provide details of your previous address(es) for the last 5 years (including dates) on the continuation sheet provided.</i> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Postal Address for the return of your Police Certificate: <i>(If different from current)</i> <i>(Please ensure you include c/o, Department or Case Reference Numbers when using this facility)</i> | |
| Postcode: | |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Contact Details <i>(please include international dialling codes where appropriate):</i> | |
| Home: | Work: |
| Mobile: | |
| Email Address: | |

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Have you ever been arrested or dealt with by way of Caution/Warning/Reprimand, or been convicted of a criminal offence in the United Kingdom? <i>If YES, please provide details on the continuation sheet.</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are you the subject of outstanding criminal proceedings? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are you a serving, ex-serving or a dependant of a serving or ex-serving member of the United Kingdom Armed Services (or a civilian that has been subject to United Kingdom Armed Services law)? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence in Northern Ireland? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you ever lived in Northern Ireland? <i>If YES, please provide details on the continuation sheet.</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence in Scotland? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you ever lived in Scotland? <i>If YES, please provide details on the continuation sheet.</i> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |



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| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Service Required: | | Standard (£35) <input type="checkbox"/> | Premium (£70) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Number of additional copies of the Police Certificate required (requested at the time the application is made) £5 each | No. | £ | |
| | Additional Postage Details (Please Specify) | | Cost : £ |
| Total Payment Enclosed (Pounds Sterling) | | £ | |
| Payment Method: | | | |
| UK Cheque <input type="checkbox"/> | UK Postal Order <input type="checkbox"/> | Bankers Draft <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Applicant Declaration

The Applicant must agree to the following conditions:

1. I understand the questions asked in this application form and I declare that the information I have supplied is accurate and I am the person to whom it relates.
2. I declare I have listed all the names by which I have ever been known.
3. I authorise ACRO to make any enquiries it deems necessary in relation to the information given on this form and to share this information to any extent necessary to enable a decision to be made on my Immigration Application.
4. I understand that ACRO will check the details I provide against the Police National Computer and Police Service of Northern Ireland Records (where applicable) to obtain details of criminal convictions where they exist.
5. I understand that ACRO will update the aforementioned police systems (if appropriate), with the information provided.
6. I am aware that it is an offence to make a statement or representation which I know to be false or do not believe to be true, or to seek to obtain a Police Certificate by any means which include deception.

Signature (Applicant) **Date** dd / mm / yyyy



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Photograph Endorsement

In order to satisfy ACRO requirements, the back of your photograph needs to be signed by a person included in one of the groups listed to the right.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive, but you must ensure that the endorsing individual is a Professional.

This person is someone other than yourself, your partner or a family member who can confirm your identity and has **known you for a minimum of 2 years**.

Your chosen individual must:

- Complete and sign the declaration on the application form; and
- Write "I certify this to be a true likeness of (your full name)", on the back of your photograph, which should be signed and dated by them.

If you are currently residing outside of the UK and are having problems identifying anyone from the above list, please contact ACRO at:

customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk

- Accountant
- Bank/building society official
- Barrister
- Broker
- Chairman/Director/Manager/Personnel Officer (limited company)
- Chiropodist
- Commissioner of Oaths
- Councillor: local or county
- Civil Servant (permanent)
- Engineer (Qualified)
- Fire Service Official
- General Practitioner
- Minister of a recognised religion
- Nurse (SRN and SEN)
- Member of Parliament
- Merchant Navy Officer
- Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers of the Armed Services (active or retired)
- Optician/Chemist/Dentist
- Police Officer/Police Staff
- Post Office Official
- Solicitor
- Teacher or Lecturer

NOTE : Endorsers may be contacted to verify their details

To be completed by the Endorser of the photograph

I am not a relative or partner of the Applicant. I have endorsed and signed on the back of the photograph confirming that the image is a true likeness of the Applicant.

Signature..... Date dd / mm / yyyy

Print name

Occupation.....

Contact Telephone Number.....



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Your Check List – please tick when you are satisfied the item is included

What your envelope should contain

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Application Form (fully completed and signed) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Two proofs of current address (copies will not be returned) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Passport size photograph (signed and endorsed on reverse by endorser) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Copy of Passport photo page (if UK Passport), or the page containing identification detail if other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Your payment (cheque dated, signed & payable to HPA) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PLEASE DO NOT RETURN GUIDANCE NOTES AND FAQ'S WITH YOUR APPLICATION FORM | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please do not staple or pin documents together | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ensure the correct postage is paid | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Applications to be sent to: ACRO PO Box 481 Fareham Hampshire PO14 9FS (UK) | <input type="checkbox"/> |



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Continuation Sheet

If you have not lived at your current address for longer than five years, please list any address(es) you have lived at over the past five years below:

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Former Address 1: | Date from: | To: |
| | | |
| Postcode: | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Former Address 2: | Date from: | To: |
| | | |
| Postcode: | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Former Address 3: | Date from: | To: |
| | | |
| Postcode: | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Former Address 4: | Date from: | To: |
| | | |
| Postcode: | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Former Address 5: | Date from: | To: |
| | | |
| Postcode: | | |



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If you have further information you would like to provide, please comment below:



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Frequently Asked Questions

- **How long does it take to get my Police Certificate?**

*The Certificate will be prepared and dispatched in 10 working days of receipt for a Standard Service and in 2 working days for a Premium Service. **In each case this excludes days of receipt and dispatch.** Postage times are not guaranteed. The Police Certificates are sent 1st class through Royal Mail wherever you are in the world. You are advised to allow extra time if your application is made close to a UK Bank Holiday.*

- **By what postal methods may I have my Police Certificate returned to me?**

Your application fee includes:

To UK addresses – Standard 1st Class Return

To International addresses – Royal Mail Airmail return.

You can request and pay an extra fee for the following (this fee must be sent with your application):

UK – Registered Mail, Recorded Mail, Special Delivery Next Day

International – International Signed For, AIRSURE

(For prices please contact ACRO on 0845 60 13 999 or

customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk) Prices are subject to Royal Mail's annual price increases and restrictions on size and weight.

If you intend to use a Courier you will need to send in with your request the following:

1. *An A4 size return Courier Envelope*
2. *A completed Airways bill (which must be signed and be account paid)*
3. *A UK contact telephone number for your Courier so that we can arrange the pick up of your Police Certificate once ready for dispatch.*

Failure to send in any of the above will mean that your Police Certificate will be returned to you by 1st Class Royal Mail.

- **How much does a Police Certificate cost?**

The Standard Service costs £35 and the Premium Service costs £70.

*Extra copies of Police Certificates can be purchased at a cost of £5 each **at the time the application is made**, for either service. (Subsequent requests will require an administration fee of £5 and a cost of £5 per Certificate)*

- **Can I pay online?**

No, you can pay by Cheque, Bankers Draft or Postal Order. Your payment must be in Pounds Sterling. You can arrange for someone else to pay the fee for you if necessary (made payable to HPA).

- **Will I get a receipt for my Police Certificate?**

No, unless you specifically request a receipt you will not receive a receipt for the fee paid.



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- **What is a Banker's Draft?**

This may also be known as a Treasurer's Cheque or a Cashier's Cheque.

Bankers Draft in UK Pounds Sterling – This can be done by Banks overseas

It is similar to a cheque except the money has already been debited from your account by your bank

You must give notice to the bank that you require a Banker's Draft (usually 24 hours) so that they can prepare the draft and check that you have enough money in your account. There may also be an additional fee to pay for issuing a Banker's Draft.

You must send this Bankers Draft to us. (It will look like a cheque. Do not send the receipt, we require the original cheque).

- **Can I use a Courier for my Application and Police Certificate?**

Yes, you can use a courier but you must contact ACRO Customer Services for the details as courier companies are unable to deliver or collect to/from a PO Box address.

- **Can I email or fax my application to you?**

No, you must post your application to us as we require an original signature and a Passport photograph.

- **Who can apply for a Police Certificate?**

Anyone who has lived in the UK for any length of time, regardless of Nationality.

- **Can I apply for a Police Certificate for any Country other than Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa or U.S.A.?**

No, we only have an agreement with the above 5 countries and can only provide Police Certificates to be submitted to these 5 countries' Embassies/High Commissions.

- **Can I use the ACRO Police Certificate for employment purposes or for security checks?**

No, the ACRO Police Certificate can only be used for submission to the following 5 Countries' Embassies/High Commissions: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and U.S.A.

- **Will you inform me as to whether you have received my application?**

We are unable to contact you when we receive your application as we have too many applications arriving each day to look out for specific forms. You can call us on our International telephone number 0044 1962 871111 or from the UK 0845 60 13 999 to enquire as to whether we have received it. Alternatively you can send an email stating your name and the country you are applying for and we shall check our system to see if it has been received.

- **If I contact ACRO by telephone or email can you tell me what is on the Police National Computer before I send my application or I receive my Police Certificate?**

We are unable to check the Police National Computer in advance of an application being made, as we have to ensure that the Data Protection Act is complied with. We cannot advise on specific cases without the application being lodged with us.

We are unable to pass information over a telephone or by email in reference to your Police Certificate and the information that may be placed on it.



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- **How long is my Police Certificate valid for?**

There is no set period of time for which the Police Certificate is considered to be valid. The Police Certificate is only truly accurate on the date of issue. Embassies or High Commissions will usually require you to produce a Police Certificate, which has been issued less than six (6) months before your visa interview.

- **I don't know anyone who can sign the back of my photograph in the country I'm in, what do I do?**

You will need to post your photograph to someone who can sign it for you. If you are not in the UK, we suggest you post the entire application form to someone who can sign your photograph and then forward it on to us.

- **Does the person signing my photograph have to reside in the UK?**

No, this can be any person who is in one of the professions we have listed and who has known you for two years or more

- **I don't know anyone from the list of endorsers. Who can sign my photograph?**

The list is not exhaustive, but you must ensure that the certifying individual is a Professional. A Professional who could sign your photograph for a Passport Application would be acceptable.

- **Can more than one application be sent in the same envelope with one form of payment for the total amount?**

*Yes, providing all the documents are complete and the total payment covers each application made. Any missing items may delay the processing for **all** the applications.*

- **What is the difference between a Police Certificate and a Subject Access request?**

A Police Certificate is issued solely for Immigration purposes. The Subject Access request is used to provide an applicant with details of any information held about them on police computers. Both check the Police National Computer to see if you have a criminal record. A Police Certificate is needed if you require a work or residency visa for Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada or the USA only. In the case of the USA you will also need a Police Certificate for holiday purposes if you have ever been arrested or convicted of any offence, no matter how long ago it was.

- **I have a CRB Certificate, can I use that instead of the Police Certificate?**

No, the Embassies and High Commissions will only accept the ACRO Police Certificate.

- **When will the Embassies or High Commissions cease accepting the Subject Access Certificate?**

Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA will no longer accept Subject Access for visa interviews.

- **What will show up on my Police Certificate?**

All Convictions, Warnings, Reprimands and Cautions that are recorded on the Police National Computer. We apply the principles of the 'Retention Guidelines for Nominal Records on the Police National Computer', which incorporates the Step Down Model, when preparing the Police Certificate. Details of the Step Down Model can be found at :-

<http://www.acpo.police.uk/asp/policies/Data/Retention%20of%20Records06.pdf>

Please note: Military Convictions are NOT subject to the Step Down Model.



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- **I do not have any proofs of address in my name at the address I currently live at.**

This could cover any of the following situations:

- A person living in accommodation provided by their employer
- A person living in army accommodation
- People in countries whereby it is uncommon for a female to have any bills or correspondence in their name.
- University students living away from home in halls or shared housing.
- People living with their partner/friend/parents/relatives.
- People living in accommodation whereby they don't own the property, such as rented accommodation/hotel/hostel.

As requested by the Embassy we require two proofs of address, to show you live at the address you state. This does NOT HAVE to be utility bills. This CAN be any form of official correspondence as long as it includes your name and address and is dated within the last six month period.

If you cannot provide any correspondence with your name and address on then the home owner or property owner can provide you with two items of correspondence with their name and address on. They will also need to send a letter with those proofs, which states that you are currently living at that address, and they will need to sign the bottom of the letter. This documentation can be provided by a landlord or hotel manager by way of a letter or proof of payment for rental.

In the case of university students, you may want to use your home address outside of term time; however you can also follow the above procedure.

- **All my post goes through a PO Box, how can I prove my physical address?**

If your post goes through a PO Box then you can provide two proofs of address with your PO Box address on.

You will then need a letter from either your bank/employer stating both your PO Box address and your physical address. Or you can provide a tenancy agreement to accompany the two PO Box proofs of address.

Further Guidelines:

Below is a list of correspondence we can accept as proofs of address:

- Bank statements
- Utility bills
- Phone bills
- Letter from any official body
(employer/police/bank/optician/dentist/doctors/embassy/courts etc.)

Please note that proofs MUST be recent (within the last 6 months), they must also state your name AND address, and any proofs in foreign languages should be translated (although not necessarily officially). Your proofs of address should have been received by you through the postal service and so we would not be able to accept online bank statements.

If you cannot find the answer to your question in this section please do not hesitate to contact ACRO on 0845 60 13 999 or email to customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk



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