

DENMARK INTRODUCES NEW BIOMETRIC PASSPORTS 1 JANUARY 2012

From 1 January 2012 the number of Danish missions abroad where you can apply for a new passport will be reduced.

From 1 October 2011 new Danish passports must contain digital photos, fingerprints and signatures. In this way the security against forgery and misuse of passports is strengthened considerably. Passports issued until 1 October already hold a digital photo of the holder. **Your present passport is still valid until the date of expiry.**

The decision to introduce fingerprints in passports has been made at central level in the EU as part of the combat against terrorism, human trade, human trafficking, illegal immigration and other transnational crime. With the new biometric passport Danish citizens are secured the possibility to travel to countries which in the future will demand this type of passport for entry.

With the new passport you are in a better way protected against someone stealing your identity and pretending to be you and against forgery of your passport.

In order to issue the new passport installation of special equipment for taking photos and recording fingerprints and signature is necessary. The applications must be handed to and handled by specially authorized staff, who will have access to certain data in the central citizens registry, the CPR.

As a consequence, from 1 January 2012 the number of passport issuing Danish missions abroad will be reduced. The Danish honorary consulates will from 1 January 2012 no longer receive applications for biometric passports.

To ensure a satisfactory level of service for the many Danish citizens who have previously relied on the consulates in San Francisco and Los Angeles for passport services, we are opening a passport office at the Innovation Center Denmark in Silicon Valley on March 2012.

From January 1 2012 you must appear in person at either the Consulate General in New York or the Consulate General in Chicago to apply for a new passport. Starting on March 26, 2012, passport services will also be available at the Innovation Center Denmark in Silicon Valley, CA:

The Danish Consulate General in New York: <http://www.gknewyork.um.dk/en>

The Danish Consulate General in Chicago: <http://www.gkchicago.um.dk/en>

Innovation Center Denmark, Silicon Valley, CA: <http://www.siliconvalley.um.dk/en>

From January 1 until March 25, 2012, passport services are not offered on the west coast of the United States, however the Honorary Consulates will still be able to extend passports, issue emergency passports and assist in other consular matters.

What are my options up until 31 December 2011?

Until 31 December 2011 incl., you have the options described on the embassy's website www.ambwashington.um.dk. The new passports will be valid for 2, 5 or 10 years – just as they are now. As mentioned above the new biometric passports live up to the expected new requirements from border controls. With passports without fingerprints there is not the same certainty.

What can be handled by the consulates from 1 January 2012?

After 1 January 2012 the honorary consulates can still extend the validity of passports and issue emergency passports.

A condition for extension of an expired passport is that it expired no longer than three months ago. (Until 1 January 2012 a passport may be extended, if not expired more than two years ago). A passport can only be extended once and for a maximum of 12 months. We recommend that you make sure that the authorities of the country or countries you plan to travel to recognize extended passports. For instance it is not possible to travel without a visa to the USA on an extended passport.

An emergency passport is issued with validity limited to the period required for the duration of the journey and rules of the countries to be travelled through, and for a maximum of 12 months. An emergency passport must

be rendered to the Police or to a Danish mission abroad after use. Travelling with an emergency passport may cause problems with other countries' border controls. Therefore we recommend that you make sure that the authorities of the country or countries you plan to travel to recognize emergency passports.

Can I get a new passport during my holiday in Denmark?

Yes. Already today it is possible – and cheaper – to get a passport with a municipality (kommune) in Denmark. All Danish citizens can apply for a passport at the Civil Service Centre (Borgerservicecenter) in any municipality. It is not necessary for you to reside in or in other way be attached to the municipality. You can find addresses of Civil Service Centres at www.kommune.dk. You may wish to call beforehand for information on opening hours, booking of appointment etc. and inform them that you reside abroad. Processing time for an ordinary passport is approximately 10-14 days. The Civil Service Centre can issue an express passport faster than 10-14 days and an extra fee will be charged.

We recommend that you apply for a passport during your stay in Denmark well ahead of your departure, in order to receive the new passport before you leave Denmark. Another option would be to try and make an agreement with the Civil Service Centre so that they will send your new passport via courier service to your address abroad.

Must I present myself at the Danish Mission which issued my passport to have it handed over to me?

You may inquire at the mission that issued your passport whether it is possible to have the passport sent to you, but you must be aware that the old passport must be handed in for cancellation, before the new passport can be delivered to you.

Must I bring photos for the passport?

No. With the new biometrics equipment the mission can take photos for the passport. So if you apply for an ordinary passport you no longer need to bring photos after 1 January 2012. If you apply for an emergency passport you must bring 2 photos.

Children: We recommend bringing a new photo of the child which meets the requirements for passport photos (see [Passport photo](#)) That photo can then be scanned by the mission if it is not possible for us to take a photo of the child that meets the requirements.

Can I apply for a biometric passport if my finger is injured?

That depends on the extent of the injury. According to the law biometric data must always be contained in a biometric passport. This means that if for example your whole hand is covered by plaster or bandages, only an emergency passport can be issued to you. However, if only the index finger is injured a biometric passport can be issued. In that case fingerprint will be taken of an alternative finger.

Must children also give their fingerprints?

No. Fingerprints are not collected from children below 12 years of age, but they still have to appear in person in order to apply for a passport. From 1 January 2012 applications for passports for children can only be handed in at the missions that issue biometric passports.

Can my child be included in my passport?

No. Since 1 October 2004 children, also newborn children and children without names, must have their own passport. A mission may issue a temporary (emergency) passport if you are in urgent need of a passport. See above on emergency passports.