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Damaged United States Passports: Your One Way Ticket To Nowhere

When a passport becomes damaged, it should be replaced with a new one. In most cases, even if the passbook only has slight water damage, airline personnel or security staff will refuse it. This can put quite a damper on the travel plans, so take steps to replace the [damaged passport](#) in advance of traveling.

Individuals who have damaged passbooks are not eligible to get these renewed using the mail-in service. They are also not eligible for the government process of same day passbook renewal for emergency purposes. Therefore, they must re-apply for a passbook and follow the steps that an initial applicant does. Though this may seem like a hassle, it is designed for the safety and protection of everyone.

The person with a damaged passport will need to obtain the DS-11 application document through the State Department Web site, Passport Acceptance Facility, or Passport Agency. The online version of the form may be completed either electronically or by hand, but it must then be printed. It cannot be submitted online, due to current government policy. If the form is completed by hand, the applicant should print legibly, because anything that cannot be read by the government agents will delay processing.

Applicants must take this application and other required documentation to a Passport Agency or Acceptance Facility. They should not sign or date the DS-11 application until they are instructed to do so by the government agent. The agent will require that applicants provide their Social Security number and this information will be verified.

The documents required in addition to the passbook application prove the individuals citizenship and identity. A certified birth certificate or previously issued undamaged U.S. Passport may be supplied. The birth certificate must have a registrar seal, signature, and filing date. Those who were born in another country may provide a naturalization or citizenship certificate or a certification or report of birth abroad issued by a consulate. Those who do not have any of these may submit certain forms of secondary documentation for the [passports](#) as listed by the State Department on its website.

Not only must the original document be provided, a photocopy of it must be submitted to the agent. The government has certain specifications for the photocopy and these guidelines are listed on the Department of State Web site. If the applicant supplies a witness as a form of secondary identification, that person also must turn in a copy of his or her identification. The government needs to verify the identity of the witness as well as the applicant.

In addition to this documentation and the application, two identical color passport photos must be supplied. These are also subject to specific government guidelines, so refer to the Department of State Web site for more details. The applicant will also need to submit the current passbook application fee of \$75 plus a \$25 execution fee. Those who wish to obtain a passport card in addition to the passbook must pay a \$95 application fee in addition to the \$25 execution fee. The information will be processed by the government within four to six weeks.

Getting a US passport is not the end of the world, but it does require action on the part of the passbook holder. A completed DS-11 application form, proof of identity, citizenship documentation, and two identical two by two color photographs must be supplied with the passport fee. The [replacement US passport](#) should arrive within four to six weeks, allowing the individual to resume international travel.

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