



Syrian Arab Republic
Ministry of Interior
Civil Affairs Directorate



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency
مفوضية الأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين

بطاقات أسرة سورية

الجمهورية العربية السورية
وزارة الداخلية - الشؤون المدنية

بيان ولادة

اسم الأب	اسم الأم	اسم الولادة	تاريخ الولادة	الجنس	الأبنة	محل الفقه	محل الفقه من السجل المدني	مستطاب الاسم

الجمهورية العربية السورية
وزارة الداخلية - الشؤون المدنية

بيان زواج

اسم الزوج	اسم الزوجة	اسم الأب	اسم الأم	اسم الولادة	تاريخ الولادة	تاريخ الزيادة	الدين	محل الفقه	محل الفقه من السجل المدني	مستطاب الاسم

الجمهورية العربية السورية
وزارة الداخلية - الشؤون المدنية

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المعمربة العامة للأحوال المدنية
الشعبة المركزية
الاسم والتوقيع

Civil Documentation and Registration in the Syrian Arab Republic

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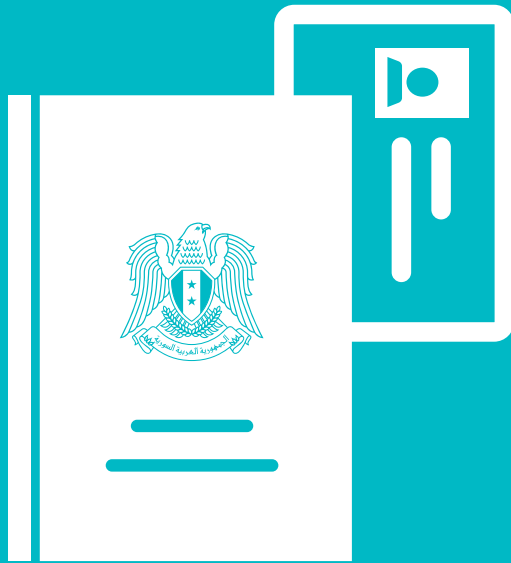
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Please note that all information provided in this booklet is intended as a general guide for the citizens regarding civil documentation and registration. This booklet is not a substitute for seeking legal advice from the civil registry staff on any possible future amendments to the procedures included in this booklet.



Personal Documents



Identity Card (ID card)



The Syrian personal identity (ID) card is considered the legal proof of its bearer's identity (including his/her biodata and nationality), and is issued for all Syrians as of the age of 14

Obtaining an ID card for the first time



At what age should a parent apply for an ID card for his/her minor son/daughter?

Every Syrian citizen (male and female) who reaches 14 years of age must obtain an ID card from the civil registry at which his/her records are kept; this must be done within one year from the date of reaching the age of 14. It is the responsibility of a minor's parents/guardian to apply for the ID card either for the first time or for a replacement later on.



What are the documents required to apply for an initial ID card?

1. Four color photos of the applicant (passport type; on white background).
2. The family booklet and ID card of the father; or, in the absence of the father, the family booklet and ID card of the mother.
3. For men between the ages of 18 to 42, the military booklet, or a status report issued by the relevant Drafting Departments in case the military booklet is not available.
4. Stamps¹ and a fee totaling 1,000 SYP.
5. Persons aged 15 or above and who have not previously obtained an ID card or any other proof of identity², and if the person would be identified by individuals other than the legal guardian, must provide an identification certificate³ with a personal photo from mukhtar⁴, and the person will be fined with 5,000 SYP.
6. Syrians residing abroad who are over 14 and have not previously obtained an ID card and have returned to Syria are required to apply for an ID card in Syria using

1 Official stamps mentioned in this document can be obtained from the authorized centers to sell the stamps or from public libraries.

2 Proof of identity can be provided through an ID card, family booklet, national passport, or driving license

3 A document issued by the mukhtar of the area of the applicant's residence, requiring two adult witnesses, confirming the identity of its bearer.

4 A mukhtar is the chosen head of a village or city neighbourhood.

the passports (Syrian or non-Syrian) they used upon entry within a period of 30 days from the date of entry; otherwise, they will be subject to a fine for the delay.



Where to go after preparing the required documents? What are the steps?

Applicants for an ID card who are minors are required to be accompanied by any of their parents or one of their relatives up to the 4th degree of consanguinity¹ to be identified at the civil registry office at which the family's records are kept, or at the Central Civil Registry Office of the Directorate of Civil Affairs covering their place of residence.

After submission of the ID card application, the applicant receives a receipt containing his/her photo, name, information concerning the governorate of origin and the civil registry office processing the application, as well as the date of application. The applicant is also informed of the tentative processing period. Upon completion, the applicant collects the ID card from the place at which the application was submitted.



Only the applicant, or either of the parents, can collect and receive the ID card if the applicant is a minor

Obtaining a replacement for a damaged ID card



What are the documents required to apply for a replacement of a damaged ID card?

1. A photocopy of the damaged ID card.
2. Four color photos of the applicant (passport type; on white background).
3. The military booklet (for men between the ages of 18 to 42).
4. Stamps and a fee totaling 5,000 SYP.



Where to go after preparing the required documents? What are the steps?

The ID card application form shall be filled at the civil registry office at which the applicant's records are kept, or at the central department of Civil Affairs at the governorate where the applicant resides. The applicant receives a receipt containing a photo, name, information concerning the governorate of origin and the civil registry office processing the application, as well as the date of application. As in the case of initial applications, a tentative date for the replacement card is provided. It should be noted that in such cases (damaged/broken ID cards) no police report is required.

¹This includes relatives of the applicant who are related by blood up to the 4th degree of consanguinity. Alternatively, any two adults (who are unrelated to the applicant) holding valid ID cards can also initiate the identification if the applicant exceeded 18 years old.

Obtaining a replacement for a lost ID card



When an ID card is lost, it must be reported to the police immediately, and a replacement must be applied for within 30 days.



What should I do if my ID card is lost?

Within 30 days of its loss, an application for replacement must be submitted to the civil registry office at which the applicant's family's records are kept. The applicant will need to obtain a police report (from the district in which the ID card was lost) requiring two adult witnesses and submit it together with the required documents (see below) at the responsible civil registry office.

The applicant receives a receipt containing his/her photo, name, governorate of origin, the civil registry office processing the application, as well as the date of application. As in the case of initial applications, a tentative date for the replacement card is provided.



What are the required documents?

1. The original police report or a certified copy of which.
2. Four color photos of the applicant (passport type; on white background).
3. The military booklet (for men between the ages of 18 to 42).
4. If the applicant has no other proof of identity (military booklet, family booklet, driving license, passport), an identification certificate from the mukhtar.
5. Stamps and a fee totaling 5,000 SYP.

Special cases

How would the child obtain an ID card if she/he is separated from family members and has no contact with any of the relatives (until the fourth degree)?

In case of unaccompanied children, the child who completed 14 years old, can apply for an ID card provided that she/he is accompanied by a person who has a legal custody over the child organized by the Shari'a judge. However, if the child is residing at a communal shelter/childcare center, then two adults who have IDs can be assigned by the shelter/center management to identify the child in front of the relevant civil registry. An identification certificate is required in such a case.

How can an applicant with special needs (including disabled or elderly), who cannot approach the civil registry office him/herself, apply for a replacement for a lost or damaged ID?

Any member of the applicant's family can submit to the civil registry office a medical report documenting the applicant's special needs/medical condition, including the applicant's inability to go to the civil registry office; together with a request for a home visit by a committee from the civil registry, in order to fill the ID application form, at the applicant's home. Once processed, the ID card will be delivered to the applicant at the applicant's home.

What are the procedures when a woman (the wife) wants to obtain an ID card from the civil registry record to which she has been transferred (the husband's civil registry record) or in case a correction of data of the citizen's record has been made?

The required documents and procedures (including fees) are the same as those needed when applying for a replacement of ID card providing that they should be submitted within 30 days from the date of the transfer or the correction.

If I want to obtain a new ID card or a replacement for a lost or damaged ID card, and I live in a governorate that is not the governorate where my records are kept (for example, I reside in Damascus and my records are in Aleppo), where should I go to process my documents?

You may apply for the replacement of a damaged or lost ID card at the central departments of the Civil Affairs directorates in the governorates.

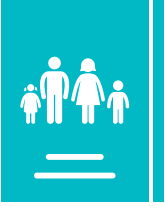
Which civil registry office can provide me with civil documents if my records are held in an inaccessible area?

Should the civil affairs office in the applicant's area of residence not be accessible, the central civil registry office of the Directorate of Civil Affairs in the applicant's area of residence may be approached, and there is no need to approach the civil registry office where the applicant's record is kept or to approach the Directorate of Civil Affairs to which the applicant's record is attached¹.

In order to avoid penalties and/or fines, please take note of the following:

- When providing personal data always provide the correct information.
- Every child born inside the country must be registered within one month of the birth; however, if the birth event occurs outside the country, the registration period is 90 days, which also applies to death, marriage and divorce. Upon reaching the age of 14, every child must apply for an ID card. Legal guardians failing to register their child's birth within one month are subject to a fine of 3,000 to 15,000 SYP; whereas those failing to apply for their eligible child's ID card may be subject to a fine of at least 5,000 SYP.
- Any loss or damage of an ID card must be reported within 30 days. Any delayed notification may lead to a fine of at least 5,000 SYP.
- When an ID card is reported lost, any use of the reportedly lost card by its bearer (who claimed its loss and got a replacement) may lead to a fine of 20,000 SYP and two to six-month imprisonment.
- To avoid being subject to imprisonment or fines, do not use the ID card of another person, or enable such unauthorized use by others.

¹ Look at the list of bodies providing legal services at the end of this Booklet.



Family booklet



What is a family booklet? When can I get it? Why is it relevant?

A family booklet is an extract of the civil registry record confirming the existence of a recognized marriage and the filiation of children. The husband or the wife can obtain it from the civil registry office at which the family's records are kept. The legal custodian who has been appointed by a decision of the Sharia judge may obtain the family booklet in case of the husband and wife's absence (death, travel, imprisonment), or in the event of the death/divorce of the husband and the marriage of his widow/divorcee. The family booklet contains the husband's name and his personal data (including his full name, date and place of birth, religion, address, national number and place of his civil record, any distinctive features, military booklet number, and place and date of its issuance) and the names and personal data of the spouse (including the national number, full name, name of father and mother, date and place of birth, religion, date and place of the civil records, date and place of marriage, date of marriage registration, and any distinctive features) and of any children (including their names, gender, names of the father and the mother, dates and places of birth, dates of their civil records). The family booklet is required for official purposes, such as when applying for a family civil registry statement, accessing basic public services (incl. education and health care), and for the issuance of birth registration and identity documents of the children.



Which authority can be approached to obtain a family booklet?

The applicant has to apply for a family booklet at the responsible civil registry office at which his/her records are kept. The family booklet can only be collected and received by the applicant in person, who has to identify him/herself through a valid ID. If the applicant is unable, due to a serious medical condition or disability, to approach the civil registry office, a state employee can be assigned to deliver the family booklet to the applicant.



A family booklet is an extract of the civil registry record confirming the existence of a recognized marriage and the filiation of children. It can be obtained by either spouse or by the guardian of the minors in special cases

What are the requirements for obtaining a family booklet?

1. Copy of the ID card of the applicant or of any other recognized identification document, as well as the original document.
2. A color photo of the husband (and optionally of the wife¹).
3. Stamps and a fee totaling 2,000 SYP, when obtaining the family booklet for the first time.

The above documents shall be provided to the responsible civil registry office (the same one as for the issuance of ID cards), whereupon the family booklet is issued on the spot; and signed by the civil registrar. The family booklet can be collected by the husband or the wife.

Special cases

The husband is deceased and had more than one wife

Where the husband who is deceased, had more than one wife, and had children with each one of the wives, each wife will have a family booklet of her own containing only her name and the names of her children. However, a note will be written on the husband's page of the family booklet indicating that he also had another wife and other children.

The husband is absent and the wife is non-Syrian

If the husband is out of country, imprisoned or deceased and has children, then the non-Syrian wife/widow can obtain a family booklet if she has not married again.

The family booklet is lost or damaged

1. If a family booklet is lost, a replacement can be issued upon presentation of a police report documenting its loss. In addition, a fee of 5,000 SYP will be due, payable to the civil registry office.
2. No police report is required for the replacement of a damaged family booklet when the damaged booklet is returned to the civil registry office.



The replacement of a damaged or lost family booklet is not granted more than one time a year

How can a child's birth or a second marriage be added to an existing family booklet?

The holder of the booklet shall approach the competent civil registry with all the necessary documentation every time a new civil status event (such as marriage, divorce, death, birth) occurs in order to be added to the family booklet.

¹ While adding the wife's photo is generally optional, where the wife applies for the family booklet (e.g. in cases where the husband is missing or deceased), her photo is mandatory.



Individual and family registry statements

Individual registry statements



What is an individual registry statement?

An individual registry statement is an official document confirming the personal status of its bearer, including his/her identity, and containing the following information: name of the applicant, the father's name, the mother's name, the date and place of birth, the marital status, the religion (only where the individual registry statement is issued for the purpose of civil status paperwork), the number and area of the civil registry record, the date of enrollment in the civil registry, and the individual's unique National Number. It can serve as temporary replacement of a lost or damaged ID card, and is one of the requirements for the issuance of other official documents (such as the marriage certificate and the national passport) and it is also used before court (including for marriage, divorce or lineage authentication).



Where can an individual registry statement be obtained? What are the procedures?

The individual registry statement can be obtained from the central civil registry department in each governorate, at the civil registry directorate of the individual's records or at any of the citizen services centers in the governorate. It can be requested by any member of the family - notably the individual concerned, any of his/her ascendants or descendants, his/her siblings (incl. their families) or a third party (using a power of attorney that is max. 3 months old).

To obtain the individual registry statement, the applicant must present his/her ID card or another recognized proof of identity.



If an individual registry statement contains erroneous information; what are the steps to correct it?

1. If the error is caused by the civil registry directorate, amendments can be made by a duly approved administrative report made by the civil registrar.
2. Certain types of errors in civil registry records (e.g. relating to basic biodata, parentage or concerning marriage documents) require making amendments to the official records. Such amendments can only be made through a ruling by the responsible court.

Family civil registry statements



What is a family civil registry statement? Why is it important? When would I need it?

A family civil registry statement is an official document confirming a family's composition, including the family members' personal status'. It also contains all of the information found in a family booklet (including full names of each member of the family, father's name, mother's name, dates and places of birth, national numbers, religion, sex, marital status, and dates of registration at civil affairs departments, and any additional notes, such as dates of transfer of records of the wife, date of death, divorce/date of divorce, etc.).

A family civil status statement can be used to prove kinship (for inheritance, the Hajj¹, at shelters, and for obtaining access to basic services), and can serve as a temporary replacement of a lost or damaged family booklet, and to prove the number of male children in the family for compulsory military service².



Where and how can a family civil registry statement be acquired?

The family civil registry statement can be obtained from central civil registry departments in each governorate, at the civil registry directorate of the family's records or at a citizen services center. It can be requested by any member of the family – notably the spouses, the ascendants or descendants, the applicant's siblings (incl. their families), or a third party (using a power of attorney that is max. 3 months old) – who must provide an ID Card, a national passport, or a family booklet for identification purposes. If the family civil registry statement is requested from a directorate or authority which does not hold the family records, the applicant must also present the family booklet.



I intend to travel abroad with my minor child, do I need a family civil registry statement?

If a minor travels abroad, a family civil registry statement or family booklet is required to prove the relationship with the adult companion.

1 In most schools of Muslim jurisprudence, a woman may not travel to perform the Hajj alone; she must be accompanied by a mahram.

2 For instance, to prove that one is an only male child and thus exempted from compulsory military service, or to prevent concurrent military service of all male children in a family.



National passport



The national passport is the official travel document for citizens of the Syrian Arab Republic. It confirms the identity and nationality of its bearer.



Who is entitled to obtain a national passport?

Every Syrian national is entitled to a national passport, irrespective of his/her age.



Which authority is responsible for the issuance of passports inside Syria?

The Directorate of Immigration and Passports and its offices in the various governorates are the responsible authorities to issue passports and travel documents inside Syria.



Which authority is responsible for the issuance of passports for Syrian citizens abroad?

Syrian diplomatic representations (including embassies and consulates) abroad are the responsible authorities to issue passports for Syrian citizens abroad. Department of Immigration and Passports is the responsible authority for issuing passports for embassies and consulates which do not have an issuance station.



What is the validity period of the passport?

Passports issued in Syria are regularly valid for 6 years following their issuance, whereas passports issued for Syrians against whom measures have been taken or who have not performed military service yet are valid for up to 2 years only. Passports of male minors below the age of 17 generally have a validity of up to the individual's 17th birthday, but shall not be valid for more than 6 years or less than one year.



What are the documents required to apply for an initial passport?

1. The ID card or individual civil registry statement (bearing a photo of the applicant and authenticated by the moukhtar of the applicant's area of residence).

For applications at Syrian representations abroad, the individual civil registry statement shall be authenticated by the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates.

2. Two color photos of the applicant (passport type; on white background).
3. Completed application form in Arabic and English (available at the immigration offices).
4. Fees:
 - a) If issued in Syria: 10,000 SYP for regular processing (15-7 days); 25,000 SYP for expedited processing (24 hours), in addition to return insurance and stamps.
 - b) If issued by a Syrian diplomatic representation abroad: 300 USD¹ for regular processing (21-10 working days); 800 USD for expedited processing (3 working days), in addition to a regular consular registration fee at the Syrian representation, should the applicant not already be registered there.

Additional documents are required from the following persons:

5. For civil servants: Approval of the department where the applicant works.
6. For men between 18 and 42, who are not otherwise exempted from military service: an approval of the Military Division (Ministry of Defence).
7. For minors: Written consent of the legal guardian or as per a legal guardianship issued by the Sharia judge.
8. For passports applied for by the relatives of the passport holders who are abroad, the passports will be granted either to one of the relatives as per family civil registry statements which prove the kinship, or as per duly certified powers of attorney issued by the Syrian diplomatic missions and certified by the Syrian Foreign Ministry and the Directorate of Civil Affairs in case there is no kinship.
9. For applications at Syrian representations abroad: Birth certificate and family booklet of the applicant in case he/she is married or has children.

Passport renewal



What are the requirements and procedures for renewing a passport?

The same documents (in addition to the expired passport), fees and procedures, as applicable for the initial issuance of a passport, are also applicable for the passport's renewal.

¹ Or its equivalent in Euros or another local currency.

Obtaining a replacement of a lost passport



What should I do if my passport is lost inside Syria?

The applicant must submit a request for replacement to the Department of Immigration and Passports or its offices in the governorates, together with the same documentation that is required for an initial passport and a police report documenting its loss, witnessed by two adult witnesses.

The issuance of a new passport is subject to a fee of 25,000 SYP, in addition to the administrative fees.



What should I do if I lost my passport outside Syria?

The applicant must approach the Syrian diplomatic representation in the country where the passport was lost¹ and submit a local police report documenting the loss. The applicant will be issued a Laissez Passer for a one-way return to Syria, or a new passport (as applicable), subject to the fees applicable for the issuance of a new passport from Syrian diplomatic representations abroad.

Obtaining a replacement of a damaged passport

In order to obtain a replacement for a damaged passport, the applicant must submit a request for replacement, together with the same documentation required for the passport's initial issuance, and the damaged passport to the Immigration Office which issued the passport or the Immigration Office at his governorate.

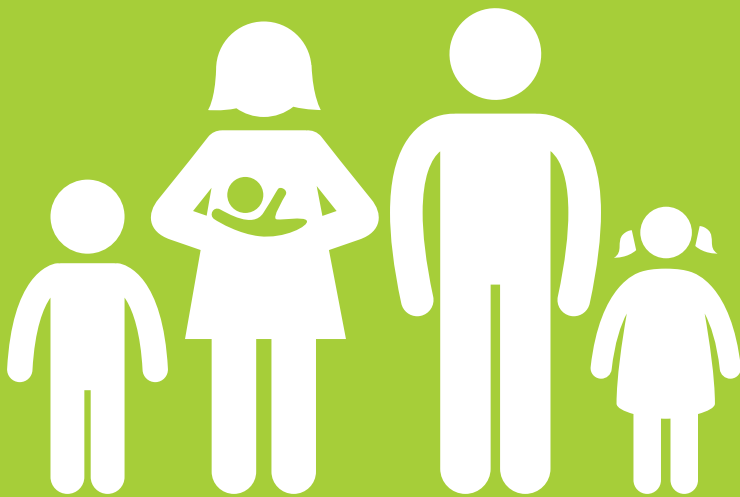


What should I do if my passport pages are all full while it is not expired?

The applicant may apply for a new passport, upon providing the same documents for the initial issuance of the passport, and where the period of the passport's remaining validity is less than one year, an approval from the head of the relevant Immigration Department. Where the remaining period of the passport validity is more than one year, the approval of the Director of the Directorate of Immigration and Passports is required.

Where the full passport includes valid visas which are needed by the passport's holder, the full passport will be marked as cancelled (in English and Arabic), affixed to the new one, and retained by the holder.

¹Where there is no Syrian diplomatic representation in the country where the passport was lost, the applicant shall approach the Syrian diplomatic representation which is in-charge for that country.



Family registration



Marriage

Marriages of Syrians inside Syria



Why is it important to have a marriage contract and document marriages with the competent authority?

The marriage contract is the first step towards formalizing a family in Syria. It is the document that proves that a marriage has taken place. Marriage contracts must be documented with the competent religious court¹ and subsequently at the civil registry, in order to safeguard the rights of both spouses, to document the parentage of children, and to avoid abuse by any of the partners. Both spouses shall keep a copy of the contract.



I want to get married in Syria, what documents and procedures are required?

1. A medical report for each spouse from the Medical Prenuptial Examination Center². Upon completion of the necessary form, the center's doctor will interview and draw blood from both partners for testing. The results will be provided to the couple through a report bearing the center's seal. This requirement for a medical report is waived in case of a child born out of undocumented marriage or of pregnancy of the wife (in this case, a medical report regarding the age of pregnancy, issued by one of the governmental hospitals authorized by the Ministry of Justice, is required.)
2. A copy of each spouse's ID card (provided to the medical center).
3. Two color photos of each spouse (provided to the medical center).
4. Stamps (for ca. 400 SYP) and fees totaling 8,000 SYP, in addition to fees for the medical report that should be provided to the medical center.
5. Individual civil registry statements for each spouse.
6. The required forms, including the medical center's report, which need to be filled and signed by the mukhtar, and then authenticated at the municipality (muhafazah).
7. Irrespective of age, if the bride has never been married before, the presence and approval of her legal guardian is required³.

Additionally:

8. For men between 18 and 42: A marriage license from the Obligatory Military Service Department. The marriage license is waived in case of pregnancy of the wife, or a child born out of an undocumented marriage.

1 For Muslims, this is the Shari'a court; for Christians, the spiritual Rohia court; and for Druze, the Mathhabia court.

2 Address: Damascus, State Council Building, opposite the old Officer's Club Building. Offices of this center exist in each governorate.

3 Where there is no legal guardian, the presiding judge assumes the role of the legal guardian.

The mentioned documents are to be submitted to the competent religious court. After confirming the authenticity of the spouses' ID cards, in the presence of two witnesses and the bride's legal guardian (unless the bride has previously been married), and after the exact specification of the two parts of the *mahr*¹, the spouses recite a reciprocal declaration and sign the standard marriage contract in the presence of the presiding judge or the clerk of the court.

Upon certification by the presiding judge, the marriage is documented and each spouse receives an attested copy of the marriage contract, containing its date and serial number. The court will then transmit the original marriage contract to the civil registry office in its operational area, which will record the marriage and forward the information to the civil registry office where the respective spouse's records are kept, where their individual marital status² will be updated (from single/divorced/widowed to married), and to transfer and merge the wife's civil registry record to/with the one of the husband.



The validity of the marriage license obtained from the obligatory military service department will generally depend on the applicant's situation:

1. If the groom is ready to perform compulsory military service, the license is valid for three months.
2. If the groom has postponed his military service discretionally, the license is valid for six months.
3. If the groom has postponed his military service for educational purposes, the license is valid for one year.
4. If the groom is an expatriate, the permit is valid for five years. In certain cases, subject to the discretion of the Obligatory Military Service Department, its validity may be shorter.
5. If the groom has paid the exemption fee or has finished his military service, the license is of indefinite duration.

¹ A de facto compensation payable to the wife by the husband or his family. The following options exist: prompt mahr, which the wife must receive at or immediately after the marriage ceremony, and deferred mahr, which is payable at any agreed-upon date following the consummation of the marriage.

Marriages of non-Syrian citizens inside Syria



If I am not a Syrian national, what documents and procedures do I need to complete in order to register a marriage inside Syria?

1. Copies of the spouses' national passports.
2. Individual civil registry statements (from the applicants' home countries or their respective embassies in Syria), indicating the applicants' religion and marital status.
3. A medical certificate proving that the partners are eligible to marry and do not carry AIDS or any other transmittable or dangerous diseases.
4. If a spouse's religion is not listed in the civil registry statement or any other official document, s/he must present a certificate of baptism, a certificate of conversion, or another document of similar nature confirming his/her religious affiliation.
5. If the bride is Muslim, the presence of her legal guardian is required. If her legal guardian is unable to attend, she must provide a written and duly-attested approval by the legal guardian of the intended marriage, or a power of attorney granting her the authority to marry at her own discretion.
6. All of the above documents must be attested by the responsible national authorities in the issuing country, as well as by the Syrian representation in that state .

The marriage application is presented by the spouses, and (where required) the bride's legal guardian, before the competent religious court. The application must contain all the required documents and specify the amount of the mahr (where applicable). Having verified the authenticity and completeness of the application, the religious judge will forward the application to an assistant who will have the partners recite the formulaic declaration and sign the standard marriage contract and will then duly document the marriage.

Marriages of Syrian citizens to foreigners inside Syria



Are there any special requirements for the marriage of a Syrian national to a foreigner?

Marriages of Syrian citizens (or Syrian Palestinians¹) to non-Arab foreigners require prior approval from the Syrian Minister of Interior or the person authorized by him (as per Legislative Decree 26 of 2007). Without such approval, a marriage to a foreigner cannot be registered in the civil registry, notwithstanding a court ruling.

In the event of a divorce occurring prior to the registration of the marriage (or the receipt of the formal approval), both the marriage and the divorce will be registered, without the formal approval being necessary any longer.



What are the required documents and steps to obtain approval from the Ministry of Interior?

¹ A person duly registered with the governmental Agency for Palestinian Refugees in Syria.

1. For the Syrian spouse:

- a. An individual civil registry statement stating the religion.
- b. A copy of the ID card.
- c. The application form and the required stamps.
- d. For a Syrian man between 18 and 42: a marriage permit from the Obligatory Military Service Department, or a letter confirming his expatriate status (from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

2. For the foreign spouse:

- a. An individual civil registry statement, or a birth certificate, from the applicant's home country, as well as a certificate confirming the applicant's religion (both translated into Arabic) and both attested by the competent authorities in the issuing country and the Syrian representation in that state and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in the Syrian Arab Republic.
- b. A copy of the applicant's valid national passport, in addition to a transliteration of the applicant's full name into Arabic letters (where applicable).
- c. Where a marriage contract already exists, a copy of the marriage contract, translated into Arabic, and attested by the competent authorities in the issuing country and the Syrian representation in that state¹.

All above documents must be presented to the Ministry of Interior's Directorate of Civil Affairs, from where, the application will be sent to the competent administrative bodies to obtain the requisite approvals.



If an applicant is a maktum or stateless² he/she must also attach an identification certificate issued by his/her mukhtar containing his/her personal data and religion. The identification certificate requires the presence of two witnesses and it must be attested by the municipality.



Marriages of Syrians that are conducted abroad

After the marriage is concluded and a corresponding contract is signed, the marriage must be registered at the Syrian representation in the country where the marriage took place. The Syrian representation will send the information to the competent civil registry office in Syria to register the marriage³.

¹ If there is no Syrian representation in that state, the attestation can be provided by the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in Damascus.

² Pursuant to article 1 of Decree No. 26 on Civil Status (2007), a maktoum person is someone "whose father or parents are registered in Syrian civil records but he has not been registered within the period specified for registration of the newly born". In Arabic, maktoum means hidden/concealed.

³ Pursuant to article 17 (b) of the Syrian Civil Affairs Law (No. 4 of 2017), in case the Syrian citizen is unable to register a civil status event with a Syrian embassy or consulate at the place of the event, the Syrian citizen should obtain a certificate of the event or a certified copy from the competent authorities in the place of the event and submit it to the directorate of civil affairs in Syria, responsible for the concerned person's record.



Birth¹

Birth registration for Syrians



What is birth registration? Is there a specific period within which the registration should be carried out?

Birth registration is the process through which the birth of a newly-born child is recorded in the official records of the state. It allows the child to be recognized before the law and as a Syrian citizen, to obtain corresponding official birth documentation, upon completing 14 years of age to obtain a Syrian ID card, and which protects the child from statelessness.

The parents shall carry-out the registration of the newborn child within 30 days² of its birth (90 days for births outside Syria).



What is the importance of registering a child's birth?

Registering the birth and obtaining official birth registration documentation will confirm the child's relationship with the parents (parentage), as well as the child's legal identity (name, place and date of birth and nationality).

Without a completed birth registration, a child may not be able to prove its Syrian nationality. Without a civil registry record, a national passport, or a Syrian ID card (upon turning 14), the child may be unable to exercise basic rights and freedoms and unable to benefit from public services under Syrian law, such as health care, education and travel.



In case of delay in registering a child, are there any fines, and how much are these fines?

In case of a delay in registering a child's birth for a period of time exceeding one year, a police report shall be submitted (from the police station in the area where the birth occurred) when registering the birth, and a fine may be due, depending on the child's age at the time of registration:

- Less than one month: no fine

¹ See hereto also the UNHCR brochure on "Registering births in Syria", available from humanitarian legal aid providers.

² The day of the birth is not counted. Should the last day fall on a public holiday, the subsequent day shall be counted as the last.

- From one month to one year: 3,000 SYP. In such case, an administrative investigation at the civil registry office is required.
- From one year to 18 years: 10,000 SYP, and a police report.
- 18 years and above: 15,000 SYP, and additional documents are required by the civil registry office.

Births occurring within the Syrian Arab Republic



What are the required documents and steps to register a birth?

1. Birth notification from the administering hospital, doctor or licensed midwife.
2. Birth attestation obtained from the mukhtar as per the birth notification for the births occurring at home, or as per birth attestation issued by the hospital for the births occurring in the hospital.
3. Family booklet, if not available, the personal ID cards of both parents, in addition to a family statement which proves the registration of marriage.

All the above documents shall be submitted to the civil registry department (al-nufus), either where the father's civil records are kept or where the birth took place, and then the birth will be registered and the official birth certificate issued.



Which mukhtar should endorse the birth attestation?

The responsible mukhtar for the birth attestation is either the mukhtar responsible for the area where the birth took place, or the mukhtar of the area where the parents' civil registry records are kept.

Births occurring outside the Syrian Arab Republic



What are the required documents and the applicable procedures to register the birth of a child born outside the Syrian Arab Republic?

1. A birth notification document from the hospital administering the birth.
2. An official birth attestation from a mukhtar and/or birth certificate or the competent authority in the country where the birth took place.

The above documents shall be submitted by the father, the mother or other adult relatives of the newborn, within three months of the birth to a Syrian embassy/consulate, together with copies of the parents' marriage contract, the family booklet, and any other documents that prove that this marriage has been registered in the Syrian civil registry¹.

¹ Pursuant to article 17 (a) of the Syrian Civil Affairs Law (Law No. 4 of 2017), in case the Syrian citizen is unable to register a civil status event (including a birth) with a Syrian embassy or consulate at the place of the event, the Syrian citizen should obtain a certificate of the event or a certified copy from the competent authorities in the place of the event and submit it to the directorate of civil affairs in Syria, responsible for the concerned person's record. Documents going through this process shall have the same power of similar data and documents done in Syria.

The necessary registration form will then be filled and signed by the parents, two witnesses and the Syrian consul. The Syrian representation will then complete the registration process with the responsible civil registry in Syria. This will enable the child to obtain a Syrian civil registry record.

Is it enough to register the birth of my child through a filiation lawsuit, which is filed outside the Syrian Arab Republic?

It is not possible to register the birth of a child born inside or outside Syria unless its parent's marriage is registered.

Special cases

What are the birth registration procedures in case a child was born outside Syria to a Syrian father, non-Syrian mother, out of the wedlock?

Registering a birth event for a child who is born to a Syrian father, out of wedlock outside Syria, requires submitting application by one of the parents or both, either in Syria or in the country of residence, to register the marriage and authenticate the lineage or only to establish the lineage to the Syrian father in case the other non-Syrian party is not willing to register the marriage. A court decision should be issued to establish the lineage of the child to his father in order to register the child.

A Syrian woman, married to non-Syrian man, has a child in Syria. What is required to register this child?

1. A birth attestation issued by the mukhtar of the area where the birth took place on the basis of the birth notification obtained from the hospital or the (registered) midwife.
2. A copy of the father's national passport.
3. An extract of the mother's civil registry record indicating the father's full name and the date of marriage.
4. Stamps.

The above documents are to be presented to the civil registry at the location of the parents' residence, where the birth is then registered and a birth certificate provided. However, In accordance with the applicable Syrian Nationality Law, a child born to a non-Syrian father will not be considered as a Syrian national. However, the child is entitled to a regular residency permit in Syria.

What are the procedures to register a child born to a Syrian mother and an unknown father?

Where the father of a child is unknown, the filiation of the child to the mother can be established through filing a case before a religious court, on the basis of an individual civil registry statement for the mother and the birth attestation of the child. On the basis of the resulting court ruling, the child can be formally registered with the responsible civil registry department and the child will be given a father's name and a grandfather's name, and the latter will be used as the child's surname.

Where a marriage contract was only concluded through a customary/religious marriage (no formal registration took place) and a child is then born, how is such a child registered?

A child born out of a marriage which is not formally registered cannot be registered until the marriage is duly registered through a court ruling, so to legally establish the marriage and the subsequent filiation.

Who is the person of unknown descent?

Under Syrian law, the following persons are considered of unknown descent:

1. A child of unknown filiation who lacks a legal caregiver¹.
2. A child that is lost and that, owing to its age, physical or psychological impairments is unable to provide information about his/her parents and whose parents are hence untraceable.

What should one do if one finds a child of unknown filiation in Syria? How can the child be registered?

1. Immediately inform the police or the mukhtar in order to make a report about the finding. The child of unknown filiation will then be handed over to an institution or a person designated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.
2. The designated institution will issue a birth certificate for the child of unknown filiation, and it will be registered in the civil registry. The civil registry will name the child of unknown filiation and assign assumed names for the parents and for the grandfather so that the name of the grandfather can be used as the child of unknown filiation's surname. The civil registry may also adopt the names suggested by the designated institution/individual.
3. The child of unknown filiation shall be considered a Syrian Muslim, born in Syria in the place in which it was found, unless proven otherwise.
4. The child of unknown filiation may be given the family name of its foster family upon a request made by the head of that family and the approval of the person of unknown filiation after reaching 18 years of age; and his/her surname will then be amended accordingly.

Registration of the birth of a foreigner's child in the Syrian Arab Republic



What documents and steps are required to register the birth of a non-Syrian national in Syria?

1. A birth attestation issued by the mukhtar of the area where the birth took place on the basis of the birth notification obtained from the hospital or the (registered) midwife.
2. Copies of the non-Syrian parents' national passports.
3. A copy of the non-Syrian parents' marriage certificate.

¹ This may include the case of a child born out of wedlock where both parents refuse its recognition.

4. Stamps.

The aforementioned document are to be presented to the civil registry at the location of the parents' residence, where the birth is then registered and a birth certificate provided.

The parents shall then register the child with the responsible representation of their home state(s) in order for a passport to be issued for the child (or to have the child added to the relevant parent's passport).



Divorce



What is a divorce? When is a married couple considered divorced?

Divorce is the termination of a marital union of a previously married couple who consider their marriage unviable.

The three types of divorce under Syrian law are:

1. A divorce based on the unilateral declaration of the husband (talaq).
2. An uncontested or consensual divorce, when both spouses reach a mutual agreement on the termination of the marriage and on financial and other common issues.
3. A divorce through dissolution of marriage; this type of divorce applies to four situations:
 - a. At-fault divorce
 - b. Divorce due to travel/absence
 - c. Divorce due to lack of financial support
 - d. Divorce for personal reasons and/or unsolvable disagreements between the partners



How is a divorce recorded in the civil registry after a divorce judgment? (So to avoid a subsequent family civil registry statement noting the individual as still being married)

Regardless of the type of divorce, a divorce only becomes effective following its pronouncement by the competent religious court. Following the court's decision, it will send an attested copy of the divorce judgment to the civil registry that maintained the married couple's records, which, upon verification of the documentation will record the divorce of the concerned individuals.



Death

Registration of deaths of Syrians inside Syria



Why is the obtaining of a death certificate important?

A death certificate is required to formally document the death of a person. It shall be requested by the heirs of the deceased (incl. the wife, children, parents and siblings) within 30 days of the death (90 days in case of a death outside of Syria), and is required to initiate the processing of any inheritance of the deceased person's assets and to register the deceased person as such in the official records.



What are the documents and procedures required for the registration of an individual's death?

1. A medical report issued by the physician confirming the death.
2. A death attestation issued by the hospital where the death took place, or, where the death took place outside a hospital, from the mukhtar (either the one responsible for the area where the death took place, or the one in-charge of the civil registry), signed by two witnesses.
3. Family booklet of the deceased.
4. The ID card of the deceased, any other recognized proof of identity of the deceased or a written declaration made by the relatives of the deceased proving the loss of the ID card.

The above documents will be submitted to the civil registry office where the deceased's records are kept, for the death to be recorded, and the death certificate will be provided to the applicant, after being duly signed and stamped by the civil registrar.

If the death took place in an area other than where the deceased person's civil records are kept, then the civil registrar will verify the death attestation based on the deceased's ID card, family booklet, or a computerized family civil registry statement, upon which, a copy of the death certificate is transmitted to the civil registry office where the deceased's civil records are kept. If the death is not registered within one month from its occurrence in the country or within 90 days from its occurrence outside the country, a 3,000 SYP fine shall be payable in addition to an administrative investigation at the civil registry office.

However, delays in the registration of the death of a year or more will require a police

report (by the police station located in the area where the death occurred), and payment of a fine of up to 10,000 SYP prior to further processing and registration of the death.



What are the implications arising from delays in registering a death due to the loss of civil documents required for the registration, or for any other reasons? Will the testimonies of the witnesses or the mukhtar suffice to ascertain the death?

When private circumstances prevent registering a deceased person's death and the responsible hospital is no longer in a position to issue a death attestation, the death registration requires a court judgment.



How to register the death occurring in prisons, detention centers and hospitals?

The death attestation along with the medical report shall be provided by the director of such an institution (or his/her delegate), and to be sent to the competent civil registry for issuance of a death certificate. In such cases there is no requirement for witnesses, nor an involvement by a mukhtar.



How to register the death of a stillborn child?

The registration of the death of a stillborn child is conducted through an attestation provided by the treating hospital or from the mukhtar, along with the signatures of two witnesses. In addition, the person who prepares the death attestation shall mention the term "a stillborn child" next to the name of the child, whereupon the death will be registered.



A person incurs in an accident and subsequently dies in hospital, how will such a death be registered?

The death attestation will be arranged by the mukhtar or the director of the treating or overseeing hospital. Together with a copy of the corresponding police report, the death attestation, which shall contain the cause of death, will be sent to the civil registry where the accident occurred in order to register the death and issue the death certificate.

Registration of deaths of Syrians outside of Syria



What documents and procedures are required for the registration of the death of a Syrian national abroad?

A death certificate issued by the physician or the hospital where the death occurred. The certificate should be attested by the competent authority in the country concerned. The foreign death certificate will be submitted to the responsible Syrian embassy/consulate. The death certificate will then be sent by the Syrian consul to the Syrian Ministry of Interior, which will send the death certificate to the civil registry where the deceased person's civil register is kept in order to verify and to record the death on the deceased person's civil registry record¹.

Registration of deaths of non-Syrians inside Syria



What are the required documents and procedures for the registration of the death of a non-Syrian national inside Syria?

The death of a foreign national in Syria is registered in the so-called 'record of deaths' as maintained by the civil registry department at the place where the death occurred. On the basis of a death attestation issued by the hospital where the death took place, or, where the death took place outside a hospital, from the mukhtar, accompanied by a medical report, the civil registrar will send a copy of the individual's death certificate to the Department of Immigration and Passports in Damascus - Ministry of Interior -or its branches in the governorates. Upon request, a concerned person (e.g. family member, spouse, etc.) will be provided with a copy of the death certificate.

Note:

For civil events occurring outside of the country where the Syrian citizen was unable to approach the Syrian diplomatic missions to document them, he/she should obtain a certificate of the event or a certified copy from the competent authorities in the place of the event and submit it to the Directorate of Civil Affairs in Syria, responsible for the concerned person's record. This can be done through the person's relatives or legal representative.

¹ In accordance with article 17 (b) of the Syrian Civil Affairs Law (Law No. 4 of 2017), where the death cannot be registered with a Syrian embassy or consulate at the place of the event, the locally issued death certificate (or a certified copy thereof), issued by the competent authorities in the place of the event, shall be submitted to the directorate of civil affairs in Syria, responsible for the concerned person's record.

For all enquiries relating to the information contained in this booklet, please contact The General Directorate for Civil Affairs, or call the following numbers: 0112311192, 0112326877, 0112313471, 0112313971, or fax number: 0112325026

The General Directorate for Civil Affairs website: civilaffair-moi.gov.sy

For any legal assistance regarding personal civil status documents or the documentation process following civil status events, please contact the following legal aid center or any of the hotlines operated by the partners of the legal aid project funded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Syria, as well as of independently operating NGOs in Syria:

The Legal Support Center (legal aid clinic) of the Syria Trust for Development:
Damascus: Bab Sharqi, Al-Armen Neighborhood, Tel: 0114710722

Hotline numbers:

Partner	Hotline number
The Syria Trust for Development	0960005590 / 0960005596
The Syrian Arab Red Crescent	0950033116



Syrian Arab Republic
Ministry of Interior
Civil Affairs Directorate



UNHCR
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مفوضية الأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين

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