CAMEROONIAN BIOMETRIC PASSPORTS (BP)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Passport applicants must take note of the following:

- Please read the information contained herein in its entirety as you prepare to submit your passport application; there are many changes in the process(es) involved. Being well prepared will undoubtedly contribute to making your experience pleasant and enjoyable!!!

- Cameroonian citizens must be aware that the Embassy of Cameroon in Washington, D.C., no longer accepts passport extension requests, but now, ONLY Biometric Passport (BP) issuance/renewal requests; once the process is complete, the applicant will receive a brand new passport booklet and the previous passport will be cancelled.

- For this process, passport applications must be submitted at the Embassy of Cameroon IN-PERSON AND ONLY BY APPOINTMENT, Monday through Friday, BY THE APPLICANT HIMSELF; in the case of under-aged applicants, a parent or legal guardian must accompany the child to the Embassy.

- All Cameroonian citizens residing in the area of jurisdiction of the Embassy of Cameroon in Washington D.C. – which includes the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, MEXICO, COSTA RICA, the COMMONWEALTH of the BAHAMAS – are advised to submit their application for a BP at this Embassy.

- All eligible Cameroonian citizens who have not yet obtained a Biometric Passport or a Machine-Readable Passport (MRP) are STRONGLY ADVISED to take steps to obtain it. Even if one’s regular or hand-filled, non-machine readable passport is still valid for a few years, one should be aware that many countries will not issue visas to holders of those older passports – Most countries do require visa applicants to have a BP or at least an MRP.

II. APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE

In order to submit a passport application, it is PRIMORDIAL and MANDATORY FOR ALL APPLICANTS to schedule an appointment with the Consular Section prior to coming to the Embassy. Note that access will systematically be DENIED to any passport applicant who comes to the Embassy without having scheduled an appointment.

01. Scheduling an appointment: In order to schedule an appointment with the Consular Section of the Embassy, please call the appointment line: (202) 286-0984. Please, be courteous and patient as the Consular Section typically experiences a very high volume of calls. Someone from the Consular Section will inform you about available appointment dates and times, and you will be asked to choose an open slot that is convenient for you;

02. Preparing for your appointment: Please, carefully review the passport requirements contained in this document, so as to be fully prepared with complete documentation when you come to your appointment. Note that failure to submit a complete application may result in the rejection of said application, and in your having to reschedule another appointment at a later time, which could result in significant delays in the processing of your request;

03. Coming to your appointment: On the day of your appointment, and at the confirmed time, please come to the Consular Section of the Embassy located at

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
CONSULAR SECTION – SUITE 5M
3007 TILDEN STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20008

04. IMPORTANT NOTES:

a. Each individual passport applicant must schedule an appointment with the Consular Section himself/herself. In the case of under-aged applicants, a parent or a legal guardian must contact the Consular Section to schedule an appointment for their child.

b. In the case of families, only one person needs to contact the Consular Section to schedule the appointment for the whole family. When doing so, it will be required to indicate the number and the names of all persons coming to the appointment, whether they are submitting a passport application or not. For example, if an under-aged applicant is accompanied by his father who will not be submitting a passport application, when contacting the Consular Section to schedule an appointment, the father will need to give both names (his and the child’s) – this is necessary in order to ensure that access will be granted to both the father and the child.

c. Once again, service/access will ONLY be granted to those persons whose names are registered when scheduling the appointment. This implies that failure to register one’s name when scheduling the appointment will result in denial of service/access.
III. REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSPORT APPLICATIONS

Applicants are advised to always verify the completeness of their application prior to coming to the Embassy!!!

For all passport requests submitted to the Consular Service of this Embassy, please bring the following documents with you to the Embassy:

01. Applicants must bring along their old Ordinary Passport (if available) whether it is expired or current, to their appointment; applicants who have already been issued a BP or an MRP that has less than SIX MONTHS of validity must submit it; the old ordinary passport or BP or MRP will be returned to them once necessary information has been gathered for the accepted passport application;

02. Two (02) completed “APPLICATION FOR PASSPORT” forms signed by the applicant himself; The forms must be printed from the Embassy website and filled out entirely with accuracy BEFORE COMING to your appointment at the Embassy – Please note that it will not be possible to obtain the application forms to fill out on the spot once you have arrived at the Embassy for your appointment;

03. Application Fee + Passport Fee + Legalization Fee (The total fee will be at least $140.00 and at most $142.00 depending on the number of documents that necessitate certification) paid in Cash or in the form of a money order, certified check or cashier’s check made payable to “Embassy of Cameroon”. Payments with personal checks, checks drawn form a business bank account, or credit cards WILL NOT be accepted;

04. Originals of documents showing the applicant’s residency status in the United States (for examples, see NOTES item Nº 01 below).

05. Four (04) passport-size photographs with white background; Photos must be taken prior to coming to the Embassy – Any application submitted without photos will be deemed incomplete and will systematically be rejected (For photo specifications, See passport photos requirements below, NOTES item Nº 02);

06. The ORIGINAL Cameroonian Birth Certificate(I) which will be returned to the applicant;

(I) If the original Cameroonian Birth Certificate IS NOT AVAILABLE, please refer to the NOTES item Nº 03 for acceptable alternative documentation.

07. The ORIGINAL Cameroonian National Identity Card IF AVAILABLE; (Certified true copies of the National Identity Card or birth certificate will be established at the Embassy upon presentation of the original documents and those originals will be returned on the spot to their bearer)

08. A photocopy of the applicant’s U.S. issued driver’s license or state I.D. if available;

09. Proof of profession: Any relevant diplomas, Original of work I.D. (if available) or student I.D., and a certification by the school or employer confirming that the passport applicant is currently employed or that the student is currently enrolled;

10. If an applicant’s old ordinary passport or previous MRP was lost/stolen, information about the lost document – References, Date and Place of Issue, Photocopies of all Pages if Possible – AND a police report for the loss or a report number to be verified must be provided.

11. PASSPORT APPLICATIONS FOR MINORS:

   For minors, the following is required in addition to all previous requirements:

   11a. The application forms must be signed by a parent or a legal guardian and the nature of the relationship between the under-aged applicant and the signer must be specified in parenthesis (Example: father, mother, or legal guardian); if the child is under the care of a legal guardian, originals of any documents assigning guardianship must be provided.

   11b. A letter of support or a parental authorization signed by both parents or legal guardians requesting that a Cameroonian passport be renewed or established for the benefit of the child; the letter of support or parental authorization MUST BE LEGALIZED AT THE EMBASSY and signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) accompanying the child at the time of the application.

   11c. If one or both parents or guardians are Cameroonian, provide original passport(s) and proof of residency status in the U.S.

   11d. A certified true copy of the parent or legal guardian’s Cameroonian passport or National Identity Card must be made at the Embassy upon presentation of the original, and it will be added to the child’s file, as a proof of identification for the person who signs the parental authorization.

   11e. If a parent or legal guardian is not Cameroonian, provide copy of passport pages bearing photo and validity information.

   11f. For Children who came to the United States with photos attached to their parents’ passports, when applying for their own passport, the original or at least a copy of the passport bearing their photo must accompany their passport request.

   11g. For children born in the United States from at least one Cameroonian parent, a transcription of the American Birth Certificate must be established prior to filing the passport request at the Embassy. Please, refer to the requirements for transcription of a birth certificate for information regarding this process.
12. **MARRIED WOMEN:**
In addition to requirements specified in items 01-09, married women must provide the following:

12a. If a marriage was performed in Cameroon or by Cameroonian authorities abroad, a certified true copy of the marriage certificate, established at the Cameroon Embassy in Washington, D.C. upon presentation of the original marriage certificate, must be included in the file.

12b. Cameroonian women who marry in the United States are required to bring their original U.S. marriage certificate to the Embassy.

12c. Women who went through a first marriage, then remarried must prove that the previous union was dissolved, by providing a copy of the divorce decree from the previous marriage, or the proof that the former spouse passed away, whichever applies.

**IV. NOTES:**

01. **Proof of Residency Status in the United States:**
*Originals* of immigration documents must accompany any passport request submitted to the Cameroon Embassy:
- For permanent residents: the **ORIGINAL** green card,
- For applicants whose case is awaiting a final decision, or about to start: provide any set of documents justifying that a procedure of adjustment of status is in progress or about to start,
- For international students in American schools: **original of the most recent form I-20**, along with a letter from the International Students Office of the school confirming a current enrollment under the F-1 student status.
- For other cases: provide a copy of any available immigration documents.

02. **Passport Photo Requirements:**
Photos provided for passport applications must comply with precise requirements that will allow identifying the passport applicant without hesitation. *Specifications for the passport photos* are as follows:
- **Color Photos – Size: 2 inches by 2 inches**, The head should make about 3/4 of the surface of the photo, should be positioned directly facing the camera, with the eyes open and looking at the camera,
- The background must be plain white,
- **NECK, CHIN, NOSE, FOREHEAD, BOTH EARS AND EYES MUST BE PERFECTLY VISIBLE,** The face in the photo must have a natural expression (*the mouth must be closed, no smiling or frowning*)
- Masks and non-medical eyeglasses are prohibited. If the applicant normally wears medical eyeglasses, he or she can keep them but must ensure that there is no glare on the photo resulting from his or her wearing the glasses,
- There must be no dimmed zone on the photo,
- The photo must reflect the real complexion of the applicant.
*Applications submitted with photos that are deemed unacceptable will be REJECTED!*

03. **Alternatives to the Original Birth Certificate**
If an original birth certificate is not available when preparing a Machine-Readable Passport application, please obtain the following set of documents from the town or city hall of the area where your **ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE** was established, **PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THE PASSPORT APPLICATION FILE FOR PROCESSING** at the Embassy in Washington, D.C.:
- **A Certified True Copy of the Birth Certificate**
- **A Certificate of Conformity and Existence of the birth certificate:** this document shall confirm:
  - on the one hand, that a leaf of the original birth certificate exists in the original birth certificate register where the birth was originally registered, and is available within the archives of the issuing town or city hall,
  - on the other hand, that the aforementioned certified true copy is identical to the leaf of birth certificate kept in the original birth certificate register.

The original copies presented to the Embassy will be retained at the Embassy and kept in the applicant’s passport application file and forwarded to Cameroon along with other application documents for processing. **Also, the set (Certified True Copy + Certificate of Conformity and Existence) must be dated less than 3 months at the time when one submits their passport application in Washington, DC.**
Remarks regarding alternatives to the original Birth Certificate:

1. Please, make sure that these two documents are available as a replacement of your original birth certificate before you take a trip to the Embassy in Washington, D.C., as we will not be able to begin the process and wait for those documents to be obtained from Cameroon and forwarded later on to the Embassy. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS!**

2. Before you begin steps to obtain the set of two documents mentioned above, ensure that your original birth certificate is ACTUALLY MISSING, and that a parent has not been holding on to it, because the **ORIGINAL Birth Certificate** remains the PREFERRED VITAL RECORD documenting the birth of an individual.

V. IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION

01. Cameroonian citizens requesting the services of the Embassy must be aware of the fact that, according to Cameroon Law, they can bear ONE AND ONLY ONE passport!

02. **THE EMBASSY WILL REQUEST ANY ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS DEEMED NECESSARY FOR THE PROCESSING OF ANY PASSPORT APPLICATION OR OTHER REQUEST.**

03. Applicants must allow **AT LEAST ONE MONTH** after their application has been received at the Embassy for the **completion of the passport application process**. Note that the waiting time for receiving one’s new passport can in some cases go up to FOUR or FIVE months. Applicants are therefore advised to apply for the renewal of their passports as early as possible.

04. Once the new BP of a passport applicant is ready for pickup at the Embassy, a notification, listing options available to retrieve one’s passport, will be sent by email to the recipient. It is advised to include cs@cameroonembassyusa.org to your list of email contacts so as to avoid seeing an email notification from the Consular Section treated as undesired email or spam.

05. Passports can be picked up by appointment only between 3:00pm and 3:30pm, Wednesdays, and Fridays except holidays, or by mail;

06. Application forms can be downloaded from the Embassy website: www.cameroonembassyusa.org.

07. For any questions related to the passport application process or requirements, please send an email to cs@cameroonembassyusa.org. The title of your email should give an idea about the problem/issue/question that you would like the Consular Section to address. You may expect a response within 2 to 3 business days. Please be advised that a response may be delayed depending on the volume of emails that the Consular Section must respond to.