

GMS Flash Alert

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India - Deadline Changed to June for Conversion of PIO Cards to OCI Cards

India's government has extended the due date to apply for conversion of the Person of Indian ("PIO") card to the Overseas Citizen of India ("OCI") card until 30 June 2017.¹ The previous deadline had been 31 December 2016.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Immigration advisers and global mobility managers handling the immigration-related concerns and needs of their cross-border employees should be aware of these changes, as should individuals who are currently registered under the PIO scheme.

It is recommended that existing PIO cardholders act without delay and take this opportunity to apply for the conversion of their PIO cards to OCI cards.

Background

In January 2015, the Indian government had merged the Person of Indian Origin (PIO) and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) schemes through the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2015². (For prior coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2015-061](#), 13 May 2015.) Under the merged scheme, existing PIO cardholders could enjoy the same benefits as that of OCI cardholders, and the issuance of new PIO cards was restricted.

Accordingly, the government recommended that all PIO cardholders apply for OCI cards in lieu of their existing PIO cards. The last date for submission of such applications was earlier declared as 31 December 2016.³

Changed Deadline

As per a recent announcement from the government, the due date for submission of applications for conversion of a PIO card to an OCI card has been extended by six months to 30 June 2017.

KPMG NOTE

While conversion of an existing PIO card to an OCI card is not mandatory, the government has indicated that converting existing PIO cards to OCI cards and having an OCI card can mitigate difficulties and inconveniences at immigration check-points. You may refer to detailed FAQs issued by the Ministry of External Affairs for further clarification.⁴

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 See: mha.nic.in .
- 2 For prior coverage, see GMS [Flash Alert 2015-036](#) (6 March 2015).
- 3 See: [MEA press release dated 20 June 2016](#) .
- 4 For a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) Web page on the Ministry of External Affairs that notes the 30 June 2017 deadline.

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