

Brexit And Biometric Cards

By & Copyright to Steve Robinson

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Portugal & SEF (Immigration Department) have been promising to introduce the new Biometric Residency Cards for something in the region of six years & I won't go into why these much promised cards have taken so very long to be introduced but many of us will be delighted to know they are now slowly being introduced & the first recipients are UK passport holders who are already residents of Portugal and also the late arrivers who have been in limbo for several years waiting for their Withdrawal Agreement applications to be processed & this also is beginning to finally happen.

People who registered on the Brexit SEF page are now being contacted by SEF & asked to book an appointment for these cards & my advice would be for people to wait for SEF to contact them & not try to hurry the system by bugging SEF for an appointment as it almost certainly won't work & will only result in wasting the time of SEF which is the last thing that's needed at this point.

Members should bear in mind that the first round of this process sometimes means the only appointments being offered might not be in their local area BUT (note the big BUT) this is only the early stages of the program & if it is inconvenient for you to travel half way across the country (it certainly would be for me!) then the simple solution is not to book the options offered & instead wait for SEF to offer you another appointment in more convenient venues & dates & for what it's worth the actual process takes about 5-10 minutes per person.

NOTE the recent statement from SEF which said: "If you are a UK national living in Portugal and have already been notified by SEF to provide your biometric data, know that the attendance has been decentralized in order to speed up the process.

Altogether, there are 23 bureau services available, from north to south of the country and islands, with previous booking.

If you can't or you don't wish to move outside your residence area, SEF will notify you again"

I also suggest people go in there with the right attitude as the delay is NOT the fault of the issuing officers & it is unfair to give them a hard time over the delay.

Once you have received an email from SEF inviting you to book an appointment go to the site

<https://brexit.sef.pt/en/>

Log in by clicking the Apply Now button (it will not create a new application) and then the blue Authentication box on the next page. You will be taken to your account.

Click on the yellow Calendar button near the top (it looks like a calculator).

Tick the box next to your name. It will say "No scheduling".

Click on the yellow calendar button again.

Select your chosen location from the drop-down.

Click on one of the dates in white on the calendar.

Select a time.

Click on the yellow computer disk symbol.

Read the warning and if everything is correct, click on the computer disk symbol again to confirm the appointment.

You will receive email confirmation of your appointment.

If you need to change the appointment, please follow the process above and select a different date and/or time.

It would be advisable to take absolutely every document that might relate to residency with you to the appointment & it will speed things up dramatically if you also have an A4 document with the following information on it.

Your A4 document should have the following information on it.

Full name Nome completo

Full address Morada completo

Passport number(s) Número(s) do(s) passaporte(s) – (If you have an expired & current passport then both numbers.

Residency card or document number Cartão de residência ou número de documento (if you have one).

QR Code Código QR

Landline phone number Número de telefone fixo

Mobile phone number Número de telefone móvel

Email address Endereço de e-mail

Date & Place of birth Data e Local de Nascimento

NIF tax number Número de contribuinte NIF

Utente/SNS/NHS number. (if you have one)

Social security number Número de segurança social (if you have one).

Father's full name. Nome completo do pai

Mother's full name Nome completo da mãe

At the time of writing the fee is €15 for those with the initial 5-year residence and €18 for those with 10-year residence. If your initial 5 years have expired but you have not previously been issued with a 10-year card, the new card should be for 10 years but note that in a number of cases some have been calculated on the principle of if your original document had 5 years then you will get 5 years & if it had 10 years then you will get 10 years but it is no big deal if you are given 5 years instead of 10 years as it does not affect your right to residency either way.

The payment document may be obtained by logging into <https://brexit.sef.pt/en/> and clicking the yellow icon with the € symbol, then your name, then the date of your appointment and then the yellow icon next to the words 'Payment Document DUC'. Click the computer disk icon to save the document.

You may need to wait at least 48 hours after your appointment for this to work but practical experience has proved that time frame is somewhat hopeful & in my case it only appeared 120 hours after the 'photo shoot' & we were only able to pay 48 hours after the payment details appeared.

You will need the reference number on this document in order to pay via Multibanco or online banking. Under "Payment to State" & you can also pay either online or in a Pay Shop or Post Office and must pay by the deadline shown on the payment document.

A top tech tip if you have problems accessing the relevant SEF or payment pages is to try switching browsers or devices & possibly to try early morning or late evening if you continually get 404 errors as these happen when the page is overloaded with too many people trying to access that page.

Note:

Inside leg measurement, shoe size & national swimming certificates are not usually required. 😊