



Just retired from a job that kept me cooped up in an office for 40 years, I want to travel and enjoy my freedom. My folks came from Sicily a century ago, and I plan to visit family in Palermo, their home town, for Easter. How's the simplest way to get my passport? *PDiG, Jersey City NJ*

A: Dealing with government regs can be scary. We suggest the easiest way is to confer with a trustworthy travel agent in your hometown, who'll take you through the steps.

If you elect to do it yourself, make an appointment at an official government passport agency. If you've never before had a passport, you'll be required to be there in person. Before that day, pick up the required DS-11 passport application forms at your local post office or public library. Have a correctly-sized passport photo taken and bring it with you.

Fill out the forms as directed, and along with letter-sized copies of your Social Security card, driver's license and other current ID documents, show up at the passport agency at the scheduled day and time. Be sure to bring your checkbook and/or credit card to pay the fees, usually up to \$135.

If you take those simple steps, getting your passport can be a trouble-free process. For more information, go to

travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports.html