

## Crossing the Russian-Abkhazian border for Russian citizens

A common question from tourists planning their first trip to Abkhazia is whether they need a visa and a foreign passport. Citizens of the Russian Federation are exempt from visa requirements. To cross the Russian-Abkhazian border, it is sufficient to carry one of the following documents:

- Russian Federation passport
- International passport
- Diplomatic passport
- Service passport
- Seaman's book (seaman's identity card with ship's role or a copy of it)

If you are travelling to Abkhazia by car, you must carry a driving licence and vehicle registration certificate. If you do not own the vehicle, you will need a notarized power of attorney giving you the right to travel abroad (a standard written power of attorney is not acceptable).

Make sure your passport is valid before you travel. Russian passports should be replaced at the ages of 20 and 45, while international passports are issued for 5 or 10 years. Expired documents are not accepted.

## Travelling to Abkhazia for foreigners with Russian residency permits

Foreign citizens with a residence permit in the Russian Federation may enter and leave Russia based on valid identification documents recognised by Russia in addition to their residence permit. Stateless persons with a residence permit in Russia may enter and leave Russia based on their residence permit.

## Documents for travelling to Abkhazia with a child

When crossing the Russian-Abkhazian border, citizens of the Russian Federation may use either a foreign or internal passport, while children under 14 may use a birth certificate indicating Russian citizenship.

## **Consent from the second parent for a child's exit from Russia**

According to Articles 20 and 21 of Federal Law №114-FZ of August 15, 1996, "On the Procedure for Exiting the Russian Federation and Entering the Russian Federation," a minor usually exits Russia with at least one parent, adoptive parent, guardian, or caretaker.

If a minor travels out of Russia with one parent, the consent of the second parent is not required unless they have formally objected to their children's departure from Russia.

Under the new rules, which will come into force in 2021, a dissenting parent can specify certain countries and periods during which the minor's departure is restricted. They can also ban travel to all countries.

The Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation can provide information on whether the second parent has filed an objection to the minor's exit from Russia.

If one parent, adoptive parent, guardian, or caretaker objects to the minor's departure, the matter will be resolved through the court.

If a child is crossing the border with their own passport and has a different surname from the accompanying parent, it is advisable to have additional documents proving the relationship.

### **Traveling from Russia without parental accompaniment**

If a minor is leaving Russia without accompanying parents, adoptive parents, guardians, or caretakers, they must carry a notarized consent from these individuals, specifying the departure period and the countries to be visited. One parent's consent is sufficient if no objection has been filed by the second parent (based on Articles 20 and 21 of Federal Law №114-FZ of August 15, 1996).

Parental consent notarized by a foreign notary must be translated into Russian and appropriately legalized by the consular institution of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For additional information, please visit the Border Service of the Federal Security Service of Russia's website.

### **Travel to Abkhazia for foreign citizens**

According to the Law of the Republic of Abkhazia "On the Procedure for Departure from and Entry into the Republic of Abkhazia," starting April 1, 2016, a visa regime has been introduced for citizens of foreign countries with which Abkhazia has not signed intergovernmental agreements on mutual visa-free travel.

Visa-free entry to the Republic of Abkhazia applies to citizens of the following countries:

- Russian Federation
- Republic of Nicaragua
- Tuvalu
- Transnistrian Moldavian Republic
- Republic of South Ossetia

For residents of Southeastern Ukraine (DPR and LPR), a simplified entry regime is in effect. Entry requires an internal Ukrainian passport with registration in DPR or LPR, or an identification document from DPR or LPR. Registration at the place of stay is mandatory.

Additionally, in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia "On Establishing Visa-Free Entry for Certain Categories of Foreign Nationals," the following categories of foreign citizens may enter the Republic of Abkhazia without a visa:

1. Foreign citizens – tourists (excluding citizens of Georgia) entering Abkhazia as part of an organized tour group for no more than 24 hours.
2. Citizens of the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Kazakhstan entering Abkhazia for

tourism or business purposes for no more than two weeks.

3. Foreign citizens entering Abkhazia for emergency response, maintenance, and commissioning work at energy system facilities for no more than five days.

4. Foreign citizens entering Abkhazia to work at energy generation facilities located in the Gali and Tkvarcheli districts, for up to one year.

Requirements for obtaining an entry permit to the Republic of Abkhazia:

- A copy of the applicant's passport (sent via email or fax). Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond the planned entry date.

- A completed electronic application form. All fields in the form must be filled out. Incomplete forms may be rejected.

**EMAIL ADDRESS FOR SUBMISSION OF YOUR APPLICATION FORM:**  
visa@mfaapsny.org

Processing requests by the Consular Service takes 7 business days. For repeat visitors, processing times may be shorter.

**For inquiries, please contact:** +7(840)226-39-48 (office), +7(940)996-39-48 (mobile)

The entry permit (confirmation) to Abkhazia will be sent to the email address from which the application was sent or by fax to the number provided in the application.

**IMPORTANT:** Upon arrival in Abkhazia, you must visit the Consular Service within 3 business days to obtain a visa for the Republic of Abkhazia.

**NOTE:** Checkpoints on the Abkhaz-Georgian border operate from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

The Consular Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Abkhazia issues the following types of visas:

- Single-entry
- Multiple-entry

**Russian-Abkhaz border operation**

The Russian-Abkhaz border operates around the clock. There are shift changes from 7:45 AM to 8:15 AM and from 7:45 PM to 8:15 PM. Technical breaks on the Russian side occur from 1:00 AM to 3:00 AM.