PRACTICAL GUIDE

PROOF OF LIFE

INSTITUTO DA SEGURANÇA SOCIAL, I.P.

TECHNICAL FILE

TITLE

Practical Guide – Proof of Life

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The information contained in this practical guide does not waive the consultation of the law.

A – What is it?

Proof of life is a procedure that pensioners must complete annually to maintain their right to a pension.

If the proof of life procedure is not completed, the pension payments will be suspended.

It can be done digitally, through documentation, or in person.

B – Who is it for?

In 2026, pensioners with a registered address in Belgium, Cape Verde, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Canada, aged 66 years and 9 months or older.

As from 2027, all pensioners residing abroad, regardless of their age or country of residence.

C – When should it be done?

As from the calendar year following the start of pension payments or the change of residence to a foreign country.

The proof of life is held between **1 May and 15 September**. If you do not do so within this period, the payment of your pension will be suspended in November 2026.

The possibility of carrying out the Proof of Life through the Social Security Portal will only **be available to the universe of pensioners covered**.

If there is no such option in your reserved area on the Social Security Portal, this means that you do not need to do the Proof of Life.

D – Ways to do the Proof of Life

The proof of life can be done in three ways:

- **Digital Proof of Life:**

The digital proof of life is carried out through biometric verification, which compares the photograph on the submitted identification document with the pensioner's facial image captured in real time

- **In-Person Proof of Life:**

The in-person proof of life procedure is carried out through the physical presence of the pensioner at the following services:

  - Embassies and Consular Services;
  - Social Security attachés, in the countries where they are posted;

- Customer information services within the national territory (Social Security services, Municipalities and Parish Councils).

- **Documentary Proof of Life:**

The documentary proof of life procedure is carried out by submitting the Proof of Life Certificate duly completed and signed by one of the entities authorised for this purpose:

1. Social Security Institute, counterpart Social Security entities, Embassies, Consulates.
2. Notaries, Courts, Civil Registry Offices (Portuguese and foreign entities).
3. Local Authorities (Portuguese and foreign entities).
4. Health Establishments where the pensioner is hospitalised (Portuguese and foreign entities).

The documentary proof of life is sent to the Social Security Institute (ISS, I.P.) via one of the following means:

- Through the pensioner's reserved area on the Social Security Portal, if registered
- At any Social Security customer information service and external services, namely Embassies, Consulates, Social Security Attachés, Municipalities and Parish Councils in Portugal.

The external entities issue a document attesting to the pensioner's presence and submission of documents, along with the Proof of Life Certificate.

D1. How to carry out the Digital Proof of Life

- Pensioner registered/authenticated on the Social Security Portal

If you are duly registered on the **Social Security** Portal, you should take the following steps:

1. **Update your contact details**
   - Confirm that your **mobile phone number** and **email address** are correctly registered
   - The **access password** will be received within minutes.
2. **Access the Social Security Portal**
   Click on: ***Vou reformar-me ou sou reformado*** (I am retiring or retired) ***> Pedir ou gerir a reforma*** (Applying for or managing retirement) ***> Prova de Vida*** (Proof of Life) ***> O que posso fazer online?*** (What can I do online?) ***> Consultar e registar Prova de Vida*** (Consult and register Proof of Life).
3. **Alternative through the App**
   - The Proof of Life can also be done through the **Social Security App.**
4. **Biometric recognition**
   - The Digital Proof of Life is carried out through **biometric facial recognition**, following the instructions displayed on the screen.

5. **Mandatory identification document**

   You must have a **valid identification document**:

   - Identity Card
   - Citizen Card
   - Passport

- Pensioner <u>not registered</u>/<u>not authenticated</u> on the Social Security Portal

If you are **not registered on the Social Security Portal**, the Proof of Life procedure can be completed **without authentication** by taking the following steps:

1. In the menu ***Prova de Vida*** (Proof of Life) > Click on the link ***Prova de Vida sem autenticação*** (Proof of Life without authentication)
2. **Provide an email address**
   - Insert a valid email address
   - A **validation code** will be sent to the email address provided.
   - Insert the validation code on the initial link page to begin the procedure.
3. **Insert your personal details:**
   - **NISS (Social Security Identification Number)**
   - **Birth date**
4. **Complete the digital Proof of Life procedure:**
   - The procedure is completed through **biometric facial recognition**, following the instructions displayed on the screen.

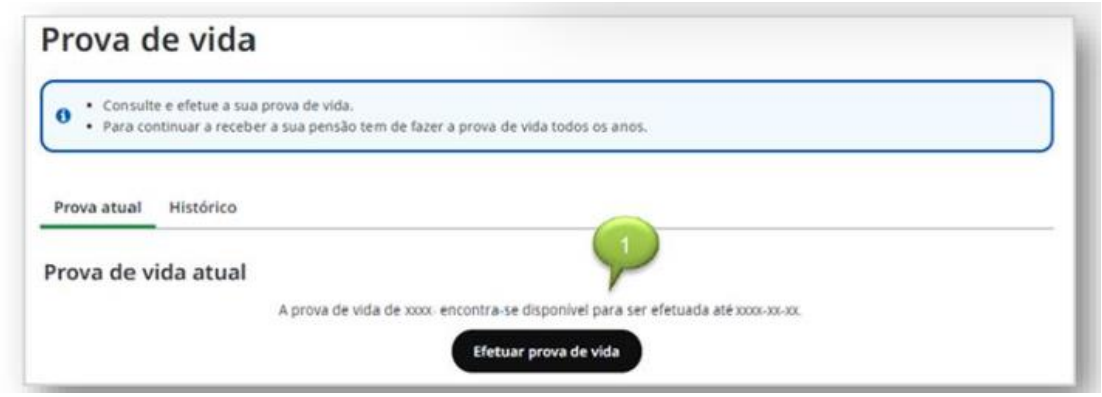
5. **Mandatory Identification document**

   You must have a **valid identification document**:

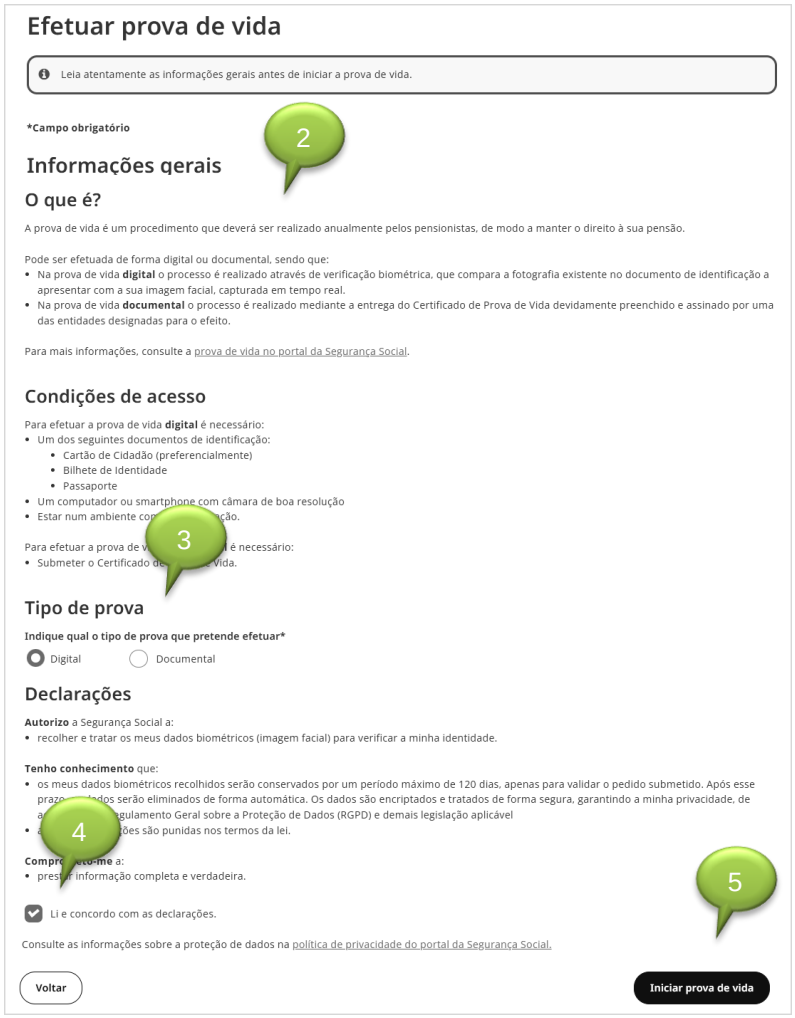
   - Identity Card
   - Citizen Card
   - Passport

- Step by step to carry out the Digital Proof of Life

1. In the ***Prova atual*** (Current proof of life) tab, click on ***Efetuar prova de vida*** (Carry out proof of life).



2. Check the ***Informações gerais*** (General Information) and ***Condições de acesso*** (Access Conditions) required to carry out the Proof of Life.



3. In the ***Tipo de prova*** (proof of life type) options, click on ***Digital***.

4. Click on:

Li e concordo com as declarações (I have read and agree with the statements).

5. Click on ***Iniciar Prova de Vida*** (Start proof of life).

6. Select the type of document:

Cartão de cidadão – *Portugal* (Citizen Card – Portugal); ***Bilhete de Identidade*** – *Portugal* (Identity Card – Portugal); ***Passaporte*** (Passport).

7. Click on ***Avançar*** (Forward).



Notes: Follow the steps for the digital proof of life, choosing a location with good lighting, for:

- Collection of biometric data

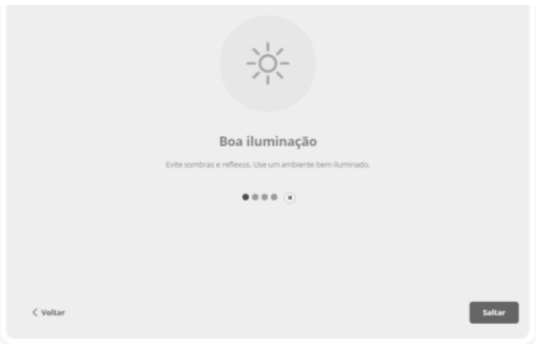
- Photograph of the face in two moments

- Photograph of the civil identification document (front and back)

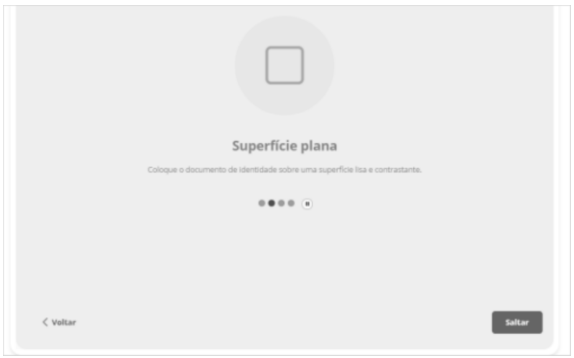
8. Click on ***Cartão de cidadão – Portugal*** (Citizen Card – Portugal).



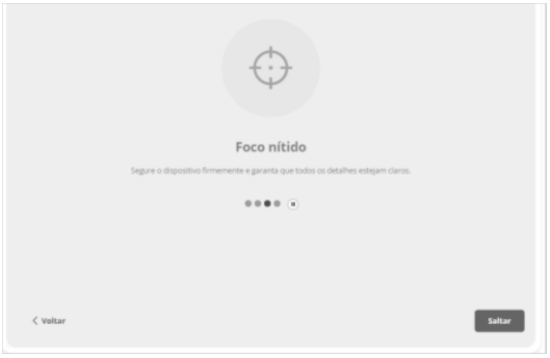
9. Before proceeding, you should pay attention to the following recommendations:



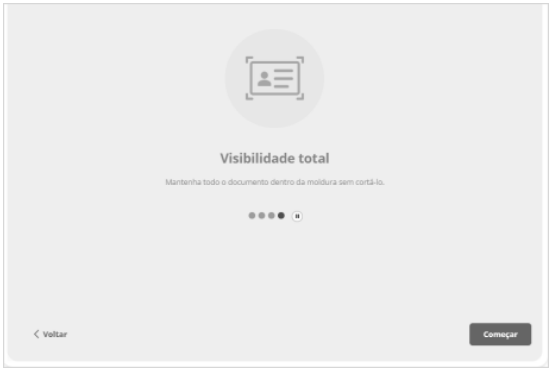
- Use a bright environment



- Flat surface



- Sharp focus



- Keep the document within the frame

10. To continue, click on ***Avançar*** (Next).

11. A message appears asking for permission to use the camera. Click the option you want.



12. Place the front of the ID document centred in the camera (within the frame displayed) and click on the button to take a photo.

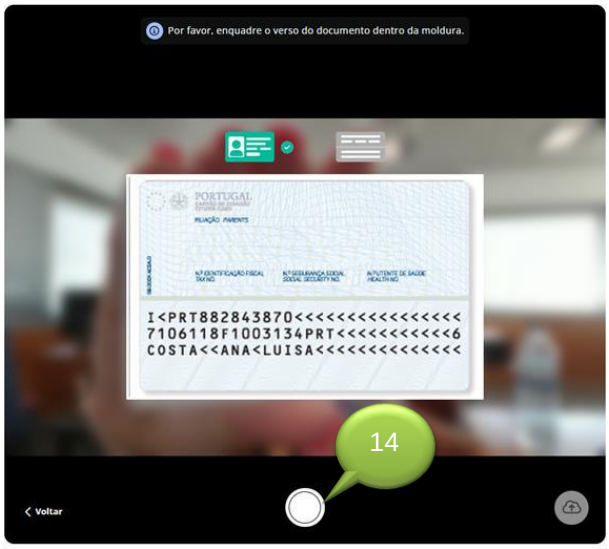


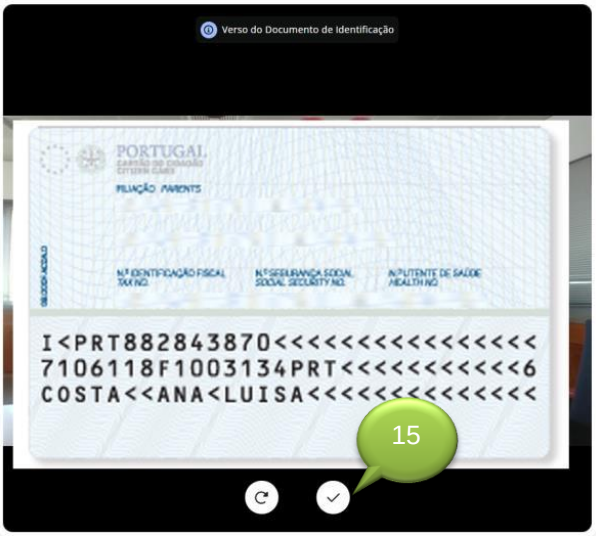
13. Click on the **check mark** to confirm.



14. Then, place the back of the ID document centred in the camera (within the frame displayed) and **click on the button to take a photo**.

15. Click on the **check mark to confirm**.

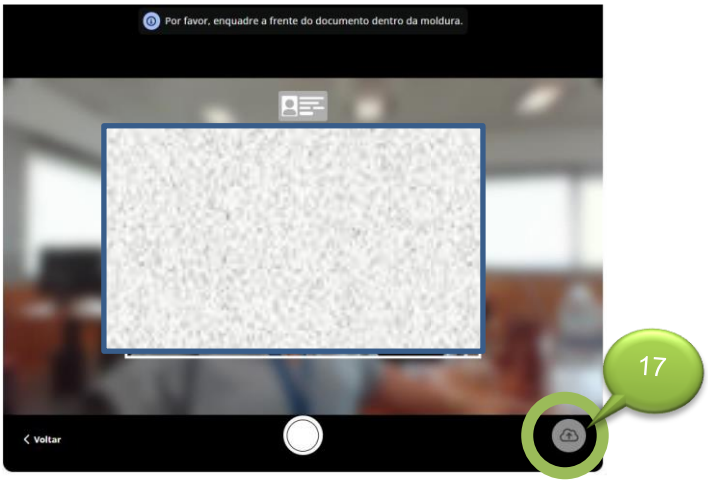




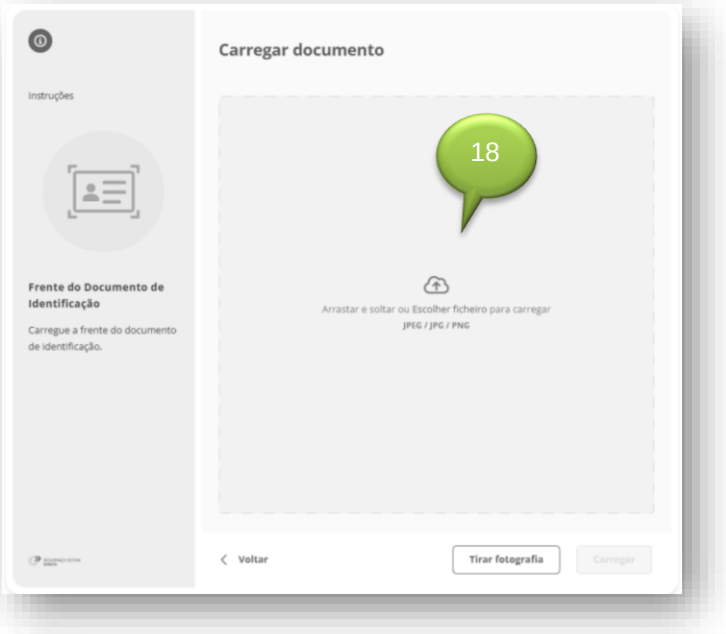
16. Check your personal details.



17. Alternatively, you can insert the file containing the document to be validated and click on *upload*.



18. Drag and drop the previously saved file in JPEG/JPG/PNG format.



19. Click on ***Carregar documento*** (Upload document).



Repeat the previous steps to load the back of the ID document.

After uploading the ID Document, your personal details are displayed.

Next, you must perform the **facial proof of life**. To do so:

- Click on ***Continuar*** (Continue)
- Position your face in the indicated space and follow the instructions to complete the facial validation.
- A message will appear indicating that the proof of life has been successfully completed.

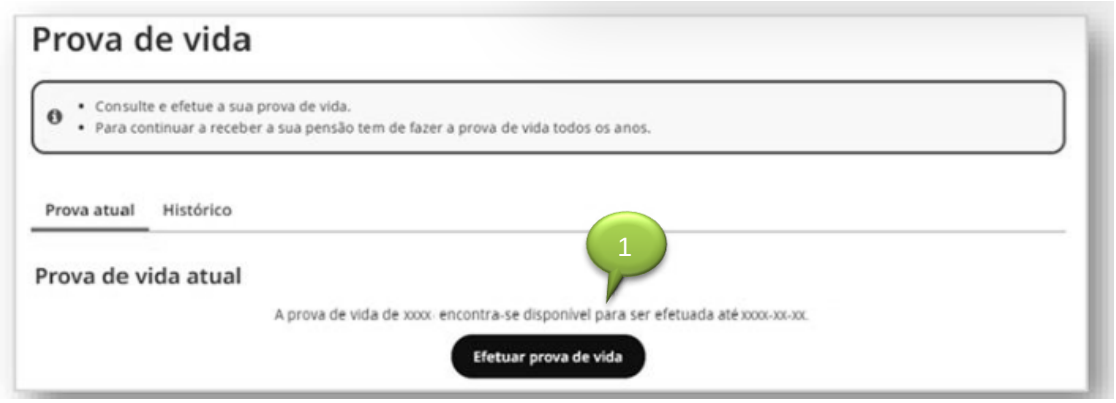
D2. How to carry out the Documentary Proof of Life

The documentary proof of life requires authentication/registration on the Social Security Portal.

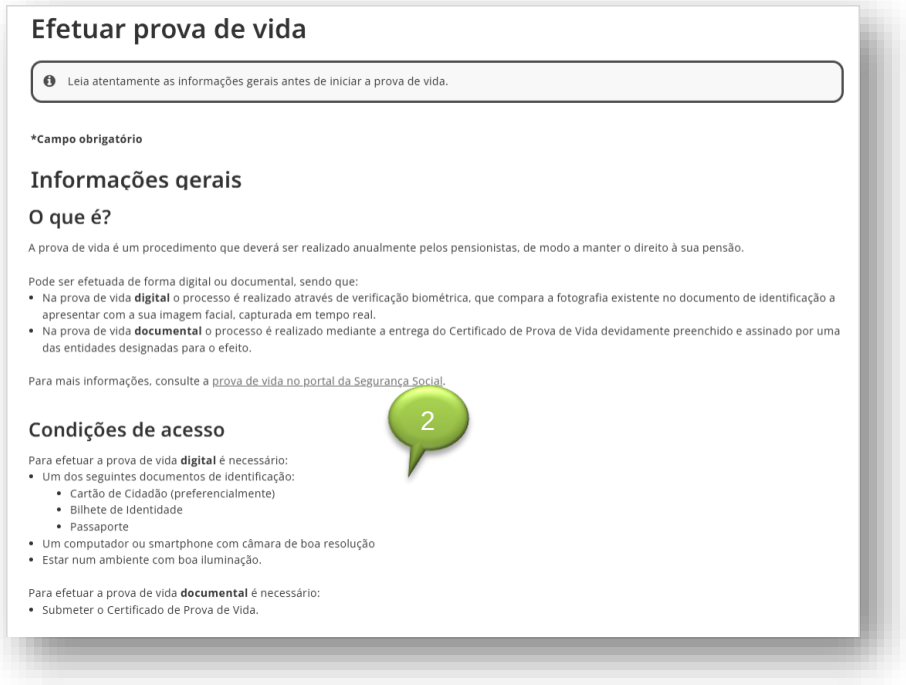
The documentary proof of life on the Social Security Portal can be done by uploading the proof of life certificate completed and signed by the competent authorities.

- Step by step to carry out the Documentary Proof of Life

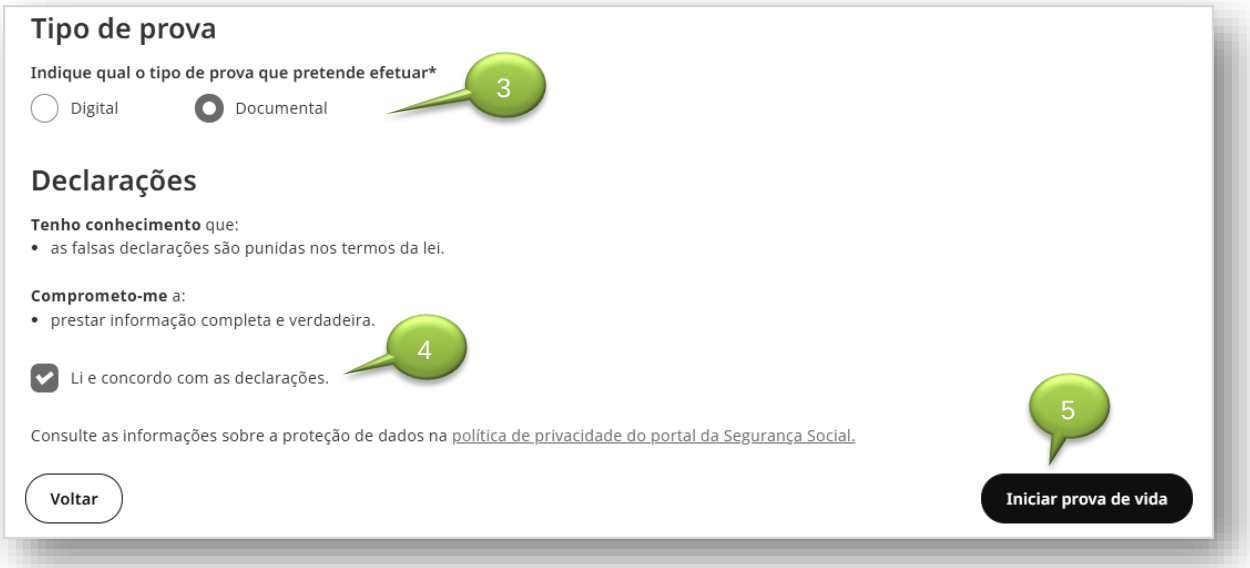
1. In the ***Prova atual*** (Current proof of life) tab, click on ***Efetuar prova de vida*** (Carry out proof of life).



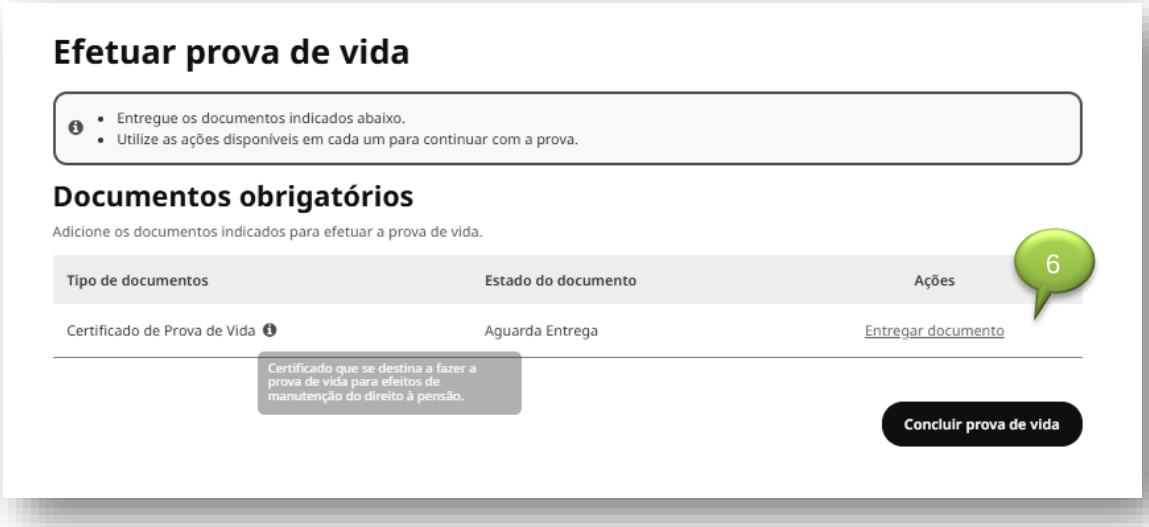
2. Check the ***Informações gerais*** (General Information) and ***Condições de acesso*** (Access Conditions) required to carry out the Proof of Life.



3. In the ***Tipo de prova*** (proof of life type) options, click on ***Documental*** (Documentary).
4. Click on ***Li e concordo com as declarações*** (I have read and agree with the statements).
5. Click on ***Iniciar prova de vida*** (Start proof of life).



6. Click on ***Entregar documento*** (Submit document).

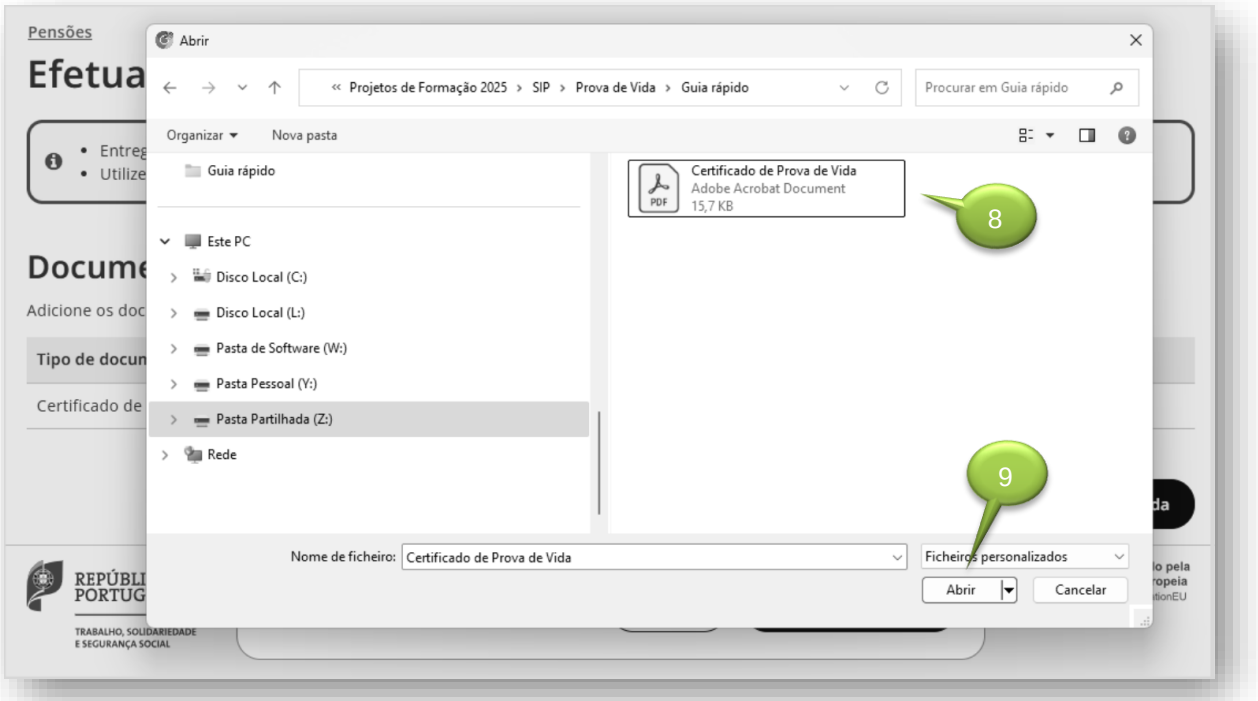


7. Click on ***Selecionar documento*** (Select document) (this document must already be saved on your computer in one of the following formats: JPEG/PDF/PNG).

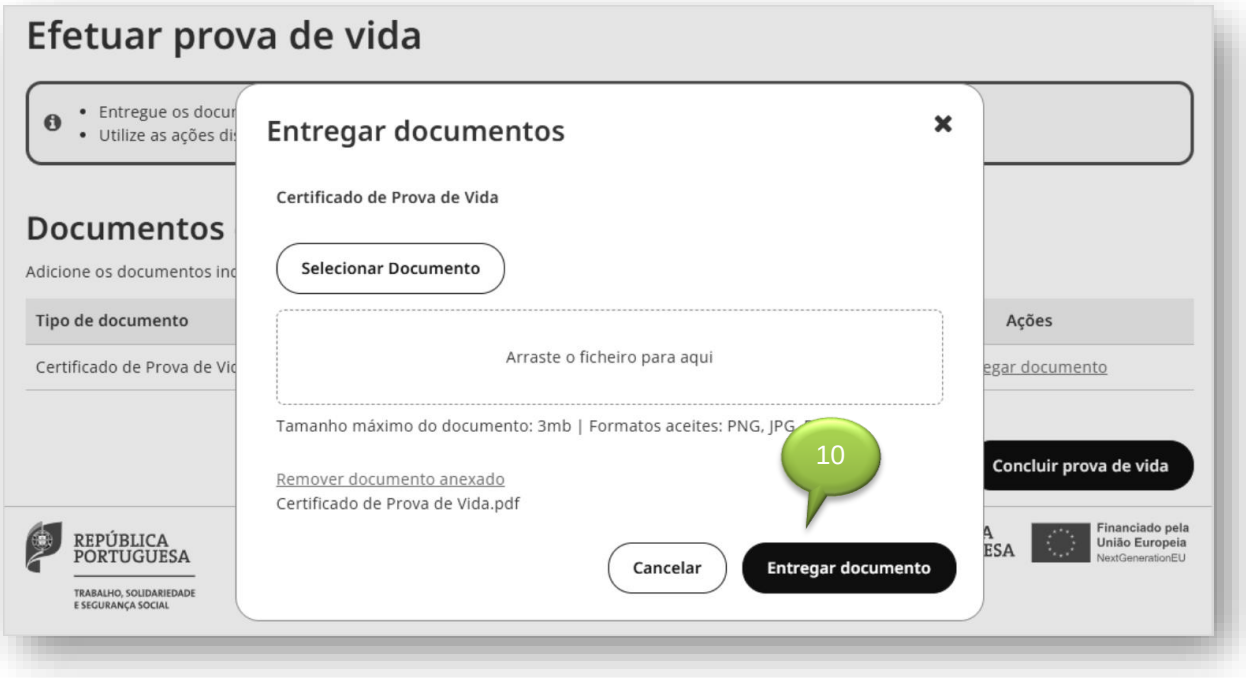


8. **Select the document.**

9. Click on ***Abrir*** (Open).



10. Click on ***Entregar documento*** (Submit document).



11. The document has been successfully added. When accessing ***Ações*** (Actions) you have the following option available: ***Consultar documento*** (View document) or ***Substituir documento*** (Replace document).



12. Click on ***Concluir Prova de Vida*** (Complete proof of life).



13. The Documentary Proof of life has been successfully registered



D3. How to carry out the Proof of Life in person

In order to **complete the proof of life procedure in person**, the pensioner must go to one of the following services:

- Embassies and Consular Services;
- Social Security Attachés;
- Customer information services within the national territory (Social Security services, Municipalities, and Parish Councils).)

If the in-person proof of life is not immediately registered on the Social Security Portal, you will receive a document attesting that the procedure was carried out in person, issued by the service concerned at the time of the appointment.

E – What are the pensioner's duties?

To continue receiving your pension without any interruption, you must submit your **Proof of Life**.

You must keep your details up to date, such as your **address** and the pension **payment method**.

If you want to change any of your details, please consult the information available on the **Social Security Portal** to find out how to make the change.

Please note that if you have a **Citizen Card**, the change of address must be made at the **Citizen Card services** or at the **consular services**, where applicable.

F – Supporting Documentation

F1. Applicable Legislation

Ministerial Order no. 225/2026/1 of 19 May

Establishes the first amendment to Ministerial Order no. 274/2025/1 of 31 July, which regulates the proof of life procedure at the national level, to be carried out by invalidity, old-age and survivors' pensioners under the general social security scheme, residing abroad.

Decree-Law no. 40/2025 of 26 March

Amends Decree-Law no. 322/90 of 18 October, which defines and regulates protection in the event of death of beneficiaries covered by the general social security scheme, and Decree-Law no. 187/2007 of 10 May, which defines and regulates the legal scheme of protection in the event of invalidity and old-age under the general social security scheme.

Ministerial Order no. 274/2025/1 of 31 July

Regulates the proof of life procedure at the national level, to be carried out by invalidity, old-age and survivor's pensioners under the general social security scheme, residing abroad.

G – Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Proof of Life?

The Proof of Life is a **mandatory annual procedure** to confirm that a pensioner is alive, and is required to maintain pension payments to **pensioners residing abroad**.

Who must complete the Proof of Life in 2026?

All **invalidity, old-age, and survivor's pensioners** under the General Social Security Scheme who reside abroad.

In 2026, the Proof of Life is required for pensioners with a registered address in **Belgium, Cape Verde, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Canada**, who are **aged 66 years and 9 months or older**.

When should it be done?

As from the calendar year following the start of pension payments or the change of residence to a foreign country.

In **2026**, the proof of life must be done between **1 May and 15 September**. If you do not do so within this period, the payment of your pension will be suspended in November 2026.

How will I be notified?

- By letter, sent to the address registered in the Social Security Information System, for pensioners who have not logged in to the Social Security Portal for more than two years or who are not registered.
- Through the Portal's message box, if you are registered and have been logged in for less than two years.

What methods are available to do the Proof of Life?

- **Digital:** Through the Social Security Portal, with or without authentication, and display of the identification document and facial recognition.
- **In person:** At embassies, consulates, local authorities, or Social Security services.
- **Documentary:** Submission of a certificate issued by a reputable entity in the country of residence.

You should choose the digital proof of life. If you are not registered in the Social Security Portal, request a password. Avoid travel and waiting times.

is the difference between digital Proof of Life with authentication and without authentication?

With authentication:

- The pensioner logs in to the Social Security Portal using his/her personal information
- The Proof of Life is directly associated with the pensioner's account
- Allows the consultation of evidence and the status of the request

This is the safest and most recommended option.

Without authentication:

- Does not allow access to the account on the Social Security Portal
- Access is exclusively for completing the Proof of Life.

Both options are valid and accepted.

Am I required to complete the digital Proof of Life with authentication?

If you are not registered, then no.

The digital Proof of Life can be done without authentication.

How can I register on the Social Security Portal?

You need your Social Security Identification Number and a password, which you can obtain immediately if your information is up to date (mobile phone number and/or email).

Find out how to register in the leaflet available in Proof of Life Supporting Documentation.

What can I do on the Social Security Portal?

- Deal with pension-related matters
- Complete the digital Proof of Life
- Receive notifications

I am a pensioner, but I live abroad. Can I use the Social Security Portal?

Yes. Pensioners residing abroad can and should use the Social Security Portal.

I have never used the Social Security Portal. Can I complete the Proof of Life through the Portal?

Yes. Even if you have never used the Social Security Portal, you can:

• Log in and complete the Proof of Life with authentication, or

• Complete the Proof of Life without authentication

Can I send the Proof of Life by letter or email?

No. The Proof of Life procedure must be completed using the following methods:

• Digital

• In person

• Documentary, which is done by submitting the documents through the Social Security Portal, or at a Consular Post or Embassy in the country where you reside, or to the official responsible for Social Security matters abroad (Attaché), if one is available in your country of residence.

If my residence is in Portugal, do I have to complete the Proof of Life?

This condition applies only if, in the previous year, your address registered in the Social Security Information System was abroad.

In **2026**, pensioners who, in **2025**, had an address in Belgium, Cape Verde, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Canada must complete the Proof of Life procedure.

If I have an address in Portugal and a foreign IBAN, do I have to complete the Proof of Life?

Proof of Life is only required for pensioners residing abroad. The payment method is not a condition for completing the Proof of Life procedure.

What identification documents are accepted?

• **Portuguese nationals:** Citizen Card, Identity Card and Passport

• **Foreign citizens:** Passport

The identification document of the country of residence may be accepted if the aforementioned documents are out of validity.

If I am hospitalised or unable to travel, how can I do the Proof of Life?

If you are unable to travel or debilitated, the Proof of Life form can be completed by an authorised entity, namely the health establishment in which you are hospitalised.

How do I know that the Proof of Life has been accepted?

You will receive a proof of acceptance either by letter or message sent to your inbox in the Social Security Portal. This is valid for any of the three submission methods (digital, in person, or documentary).

If the proof of life is completed through the Social Security Portal **without authentication**, you will receive an **email** confirming that the Proof of Life has been successfully completed.

What happens if I do not complete the Proof of Life?

If you do not complete the Proof of Life procedure **between 1 May and 15 September**, the payment of your pension will be **suspended** with effect from **November 2026**.

When will the pension payments be resumed?

Once the Proof of Life has been completed and validated, the pension payments will be resumed with retroactive effect as from **the date of suspension**.

What should I do if the pension holder has died?

Family members or third parties must communicate the pensioner's death and send a copy of the death certificate to Social Security via the e-Clic Channel, clicking on *Criar pedido* (Create request) > *Evento de Vida* (Life event) > *Óbito* (Death) > *Assunto* (Subject) > *Participação de óbito* (Death notification) > *Motivo* (Reason) > *Comunicar uma alteração ou nova informação* (Communication of a change of circumstances or new information); or the form *Certificado de Prova de Vida* (Proof of Life Certificate), with tables 1.1 and 3 completed.

I have no computer skills. Can I complete the digital Proof of Life?

To complete the digital Proof of Life, you can ask a family member or friend for help, or you can do the Proof of Life in person.

I do not have a computer. Can I complete the digital Proof of Life?

You can use your cell phone to complete the Digital Proof of Life through the Social Security App.

If the digital Proof of Life fails, can I try again?

Yes. You can repeat the process or choose another available method.

Do I have to go to Portugal to do the Proof of Life?

No. You can do the Proof of Life from your country of residence.

After completing the digital Proof of Life, do I need to send paper documents?

No, it is not necessary to send any documents.