



Travel Tips for Older Americans

Travel Tips for Older Americans

...who are planning to travel abroad

Foreword

International travel can be a rich and rewarding adventure. Whether you have waited a lifetime to take the perfect trip or are an experienced world traveler, we would like to offer some advice to help you plan a safe and healthy trip.

American consuls at U.S. embassies and consulates abroad are there to help if you encounter serious difficulties in your travels. It is their duty to assist American citizens abroad in times of emergency—at hospitals or police stations, for instance. This pamphlet is written in the hopes that it will help you to prevent such emergencies from arising.

Any additional guidance not specifically addressed in this publication may be obtained at the [Department's Internet site](#).

DEPARTMENT OF STATE PUBLICATION

Bureau of Consular Affairs

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Preparing for Your Trip Abroad

Start Early. Apply for your passport as soon as possible. Three months before your departure date should give you plenty of time. See the section, *Passports and Visas*, for details on how to apply.

Learn About the Countries You Plan to Visit. Before you go, read up on the culture, people, and history for the places you will travel. Bookstores and libraries are good resources. Travel magazines and the travel sections of major newspapers tell about places to visit and also give advice on everything from discount airfares to international health insurance. Many travel agents and foreign tourist bureaus provide free information on travel abroad.

For up-to-date travel information on any country in the world that you plan to visit, obtain the [Department of State's Consular Information Sheet](#). They cover such matters as health conditions, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security conditions, drug penalties, and areas of instability.

In addition, the State Department issues [Travel Warnings](#) when it recommends Americans defer travel to a country because of unsafe conditions. Travel Warnings are under continuous review by the Department of State and are removed when conditions warrant.

The Department of State also issues [Public Announcements](#) as a means to disseminate information quickly about relatively short-term and/or transnational conditions, which would pose significant risks to the security of American travelers.

Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, and Public Announcements

The State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs is responsible for providing assistance and information to U.S. citizens traveling abroad. Consular Affairs issues Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, and Public Announcements. Consular Information Sheets are issued for every country in the world. They include such information as the location of the U.S. Embassy or consulate in the subject country, health conditions, political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties.

The State Department also issues Travel Warnings and Public Announcements. Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department decides to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. Countries where avoidance of travel is recommended will have Travel Warnings as well as Consular Information Sheets. Public Announcements are issued as a means to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers.

How To Access Consular Information Sheets, Public Announcements and Travel Warnings

Online: The most convenient source of information about travel and consular services is the [Consular Affairs Web site](#).

Telephone: Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings may be heard any time by dialing the office of Overseas Citizens Services toll free at (888) 407-4747.

Mail: Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped business-size envelope to: Office of Overseas Citizens Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, 2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, SA-29, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520-4818. On the outside envelope, write the name of the country or countries needed in the lower left corner.

Registration. As you travel, keep abreast of local news coverage as conditions in the country can change quickly. We encourage you [register your travel plans online](#).

Registration will make your *presence and whereabouts known to the Department of State and to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in case of civil unrest or any other emergency situation. This will help in locating you, should someone in the United States wish to confirm your safety and welfare or need to contact you urgently.

In order to register, you will be asked for your new address abroad, passport information and the name, address and phone number of an emergency contact.

You can also register in person at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate nearest where you are visiting. If you register in person, you should bring your U.S. passport with you. Your passport data will be recorded, thereby making it easier for you to apply for a replacement passport should it be lost or stolen.

***Please Note: In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare or whereabouts may not be released without your expressed authorization.**

Leave a Detailed Itinerary. Give a friend or relative your travel schedule. Include names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons and places to be visited; your passport number and the date and place it was issued; and credit card, traveler's check, and airline ticket numbers. Keep a copy of this information for yourself in a separate place from your purse or wallet. If you change your travel plans—for example, if you miss your return flight to the United States or extend your trip—be sure to notify relatives or friends at home.

Don't Over Program. Allow time to relax and really enjoy yourself. Even if this is your once-in-a-lifetime trip, don't feel you have to fill every available minute.

When visiting a country such as China, physical activity can be quite strenuous and sudden changes in diet and climate can have serious health consequences for the unprepared traveler. Consult your physician before you depart.

What to Pack. Carefully consider the clothing you take. Don't pack more than you need and end up lugging around heavy suitcases. Wash-and-wear clothing and sturdy walking shoes are good ideas. Consider the climate and season in the countries you will visit and bring an extra outfit for unexpectedly warm or cool weather. A sweater or shawl is always useful for cooler evenings and air-conditioned planes and hotels. Dress conservatively—a wardrobe that is flashy or too casual may attract the attention of thieves or con artists.

Include a change of clothing in your carry-on luggage. Otherwise, if your bags are lost, you could be wearing the same clothes you were traveling in during the entire time it takes to locate your luggage—an average of 72 hours.

Do not pack anything that you would hate to lose such as valuable jewelry, family photographs, or objects of sentimental value.

Traveling with Young Children. In an effort to prevent international child abduction, many governments have initiated procedures at entry/exit points. These often include requiring you to have documentary evidence of relationship and permission for the child's travel from the parent(s) or legal guardian. If you have such documentation on hand, even if not required, the progress of your entry/departure may be less complicated.

To obtain a U.S. passport for a minor under age 14, see the section, "**Obtaining a U.S. Passport for a Minor.**"

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

U.S. Passport Information

It is a good idea to apply for your passport several months before your trip. If you need a visa(s) to visit a foreign country, you must have your passport first. If this is your first passport, or if you don't otherwise qualify to renew your previous passport by mail, you will need to apply in person.

There are 7,000 designated passport application acceptance facilities across the U.S. They provide routine service for receipt of your passport within 6 weeks or within 2 weeks with an additional charge for expedited service; if you are traveling in less than 2 weeks, you must make an appointment at one of 14 Regional Passport Agencies. (It may be more difficult to get an appointment at an Agency during the spring and summer because those are their busy seasons. **Please apply early to avoid the rush.**)

To apply for a passport, you will need:

- *Proof of U.S. citizenship (usually a certified copy of your birth certificate, a previous U.S. passport, a naturalization certificate, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad);
- 2 identical (2" x 2") color passport photos (taken within the last 6 months);
- Proof of identity (such as a valid driver's license or other photo I.D.);
- Appropriate fees (Passport fees are subject to change);
- Completed (but unsigned) passport DS-11 *Application for a US Passport*; and
- If applying at a Regional Passport Agency, proof of travel within 14 days (usually, an airline itinerary, ticket, or employer's letter on company letterhead that details need for urgent travel).

**Please Note: Your citizenship document will be returned to you after your passport is issued.*

When you receive your passport, be sure to review the picture/data page for accuracy, sign your name in ink where indicated, and pencil in contact information. This will help

us notify your family or friends in case of an accident or other emergency. *Do not designate your traveling companion as the person to be notified in case of an emergency.*

Make a record or photocopy of the data from your passport's identification page and from your visas. Also, make a copy of the addresses and telephone numbers of the U.S. Embassies and Consulates in the countries you will visit. Put this information, along with two passport photos, in a place separate from your passport to be available in case your passport is lost or stolen.

For more passport information (including how, when, where to apply, and current fees), visit: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

On effective dates below, all travelers to or from the Americas, the Caribbean and Bermuda will be required to have a passport or other document that establishes the bearer's identity and nationality to enter or re-enter the United States.

- On December 31, 2006: Requirement applied to all air and sea travel to and from Bermuda, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Mexico, and Canada.
- On December 31, 2007: Requirement extended to all air, sea, and land border crossings.

For more information or to confirm effective dates, visit the [State Department's consular web site](#) or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's web site at www.dhs.gov.

Obtaining a U.S. Passport for a Minor. All minors must appear in person. Minors under age 14 traveling with you will need to:

- Appear in person **with** both parents or legal guardian(s);
- Proof of U.S. citizenship (usually a certified copy of a birth certificate, a previous passport, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad);
- Evidence of parental or guardian relationship (usually parents' names on child's birth certificate or court order of guardianship)
- Parents' identification (as previously mentioned for adults);
- 2 identical (2" x 2") color passport photos (taken within the last 6 months);
- Appropriate fees (Passport fees are subject to change.)

If only one parent appears, the applying parent must submit:

- Second parent's notarized written statement consenting to passport issuance for the minor, or
- Primary evidence of sole authority to apply or
- Written statement explaining the second parent's unavailability

Third party *in loco parentis* should submit notarized statement or affidavit from both parents or custodial parent(s) authorizing the third-party to apply for a passport.

For more information on applying for a minor, please visit http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/minors/minors_834.html.

Visas. Many countries require a visa—an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government that permits you to visit that country for a specified purpose and a limited time. A number of countries require you to obtain a visa from the embassy or consular office nearest to your residence.

The addresses of foreign consular offices can be found in telephone directories of large cities or in the Congressional Directory, available in most libraries. You may also write to the appropriate embassy in Washington, D.C. and request the address of their consulate that is nearest to you.

You can also obtain the Department of State booklet, *Foreign Entry Requirements* (FER), which lists visa and other entry requirements and locations of all foreign embassies and consulates in the U.S. To order FER see the section, “**Planning Another Trip?**” Apply for your visa directly to the embassy or consulate of each country you plan to visit or ask your travel agent to assist you with visas. U.S. passport agencies cannot obtain visas for you.

An increasing number of countries are establishing entry requirements regarding AIDS testing, particularly for long-term residents and students. Check with the embassy or consulate of the countries you plan to visit for the latest information.

HEALTH

Health problems can sometimes affect your travel plans. General guidance on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect-bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or via the CDC’s Internet site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>.

For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization’s web site at <http://www.who.int/en>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/ith>.

Health Insurance. U.S. medical insurance is generally not accepted outside the United States. We urge you to review your health insurance policy before traveling to find out if it is accepted at your travel destination. In some places, particularly at resorts, medical costs can be as high or higher than in the United States.

Obtaining medical treatment and hospital care abroad can be expensive and medical evacuation to the U.S. may cost more than \$50,000. If your insurance policy does not cover you abroad, we strongly recommend that you purchase a policy that does. There are short-term health insurance policies designed specifically to cover travel. Many travel agents and private companies offer insurance plans that will cover health care expenses incurred overseas including emergency services such as medical evacuations.

The names of some of the companies offering short-term health and emergency assistance policies are listed in the Bureau of Consular Affairs flyer, [*Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad*](#).

Medicare/Medicaid. The Social Security Medicare and Medicaid programs do **not** provide coverage for hospital or medical costs outside the United States. The U.S. government **cannot** pay to have you medically evacuated to the United States.

Trip Insurance. One sure way to ruin a vacation is to lose money because an emergency forces you to postpone or cancel your trip. Except for tickets on regularly scheduled airlines, almost any travel package you purchase will have a penalty for cancellation and some companies will give no refund at all. Regularly scheduled airlines usually give a refund if an illness or death in the family forces you to cancel. Airlines require a note from the doctor or a death certificate. Take careful note of the cancellation penalty for any other large travel purchase you make, such as a tour package, charter flight, or cruise. Unless you can afford to lose the purchase amount, protect yourself by buying trip insurance.

If you invest in trip insurance, make sure your policy covers all reasonable possibilities for having to cancel. For instance, if an emergency with a family member would force you to cancel, insure against that as well.

Some trip insurance policies will give a refund if the company goes out of business or otherwise does not make good on its offering. The best insurance against company default is to choose a reputable company that guarantees a refund if they do not provide the services procured.

However, if you are tempted to purchase a tour at a great bargain price and you can't find a guarantee of delivery in the fine print, protect yourself by purchasing trip insurance that covers company default.

Shop around for the trip insurance policy that offers the most benefits. Some credit card and traveler's check companies offer travel protection packages for an additional fee. Benefits may even include accident and illness coverage while traveling.

Medication. If you require medication, bring an ample supply in its original containers. Don't use pill cases. Because of strict laws concerning narcotics throughout the world, bring along copies of your prescriptions and, if possible, carry a letter from your physician explaining your need for the medication. As an extra precaution, carry the

generic names of your medications with you because pharmaceutical companies overseas may use different names from those used in the United States.

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair with you. Pack medicines and extra eyeglasses in your hand luggage so they will be available in case your checked luggage is lost. To be extra secure, pack a backup supply of medicines and an additional pair of eyeglasses in your checked luggage.

If you have allergies, reactions to certain medications, foods, or insect bites, or other unique medical problems, consider wearing a “medical alert” bracelet. You may also wish to carry a letter from your physician explaining required treatment should you become ill.

Medical Assistance Abroad. If you get sick, you can contact a consular officer at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for a list of local doctors, dentists, and medical specialists, along with other medical information. (A list of English-speaking doctors is also available at http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_doctors_hospitals.html.) If you are injured or become seriously ill, a consul will help you find medical assistance and, at your request, inform your family or friends.

Health Precautions. Air pollution abroad may sometimes be severe. Air pollution and high altitudes are a particular health risk for the elderly and persons with high blood pressure, anemia, or respiratory or cardiac problems. If this applies to you, consult your doctor before traveling.

In high altitude areas, most people need a short adjustment period. If traveling to such an area, spend the first few days in a leisurely manner with a light diet and reduced intake of alcohol. Avoid strenuous activity; this includes everything from sports to rushing up the stairs. Reaction signs to high altitude are lack of energy, a tendency to tire easily, shortness of breath, occasional dizziness, and insomnia.

If possible, drink only bottled water or water that has been boiled for 20 minutes. Be aware of ice cubes that may not have been made with purified water. Vegetables and fruits should be peeled or washed in a purifying solution. A good rule to follow: *if you can't peel it or cook it, don't eat it.*

Diarrhea may be treated with antimicrobial treatment, which may be prescribed or purchased over the counter. Travelers should consult a physician, rather than attempt self-medication, if the diarrhea is severe or persists several days.

Charter Flights. Before you pay for a charter flight or travel package, read your contract carefully and see what guarantee it gives that the company will deliver the services that it is trying to sell you.

Tour operators sometimes go out of business in the middle of a season, leaving passengers stranded, holding unusable return tickets and unable to obtain a refund for the unused portion of their trip.

Unless you are certain a company is reputable, check its credentials with your local Better Business Bureau (BBB). Local BBB contact information can be found at <http://www.bbb.org/>. The BBB maintains complaint files for a year.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

Don't Take Your Money in Cash. Depending on your destination, bring most of your money in traveler's checks. Have a reasonable amount of cash with you, but not more than you'll need for a day or two. Convert your traveler's checks to local currency as you use them rather than all at once.

You may also wish to bring at least one internationally recognized credit card. Before you leave, find out what your credit card limit is and do not exceed it. In some countries, travelers who have innocently exceeded their limit have been arrested for fraud.

Leave unneeded credit cards at home. Sometimes credit card companies block the account to avoid fraud when they see an international transaction. It may be useful to inform your credit card company about your upcoming travel before your trip to avoid interruption of access to your line of credit when you are in a foreign country.

ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) are becoming popular in many countries abroad. Often these ATMs can be accessed by your local bankcard depending on which service is available. The exchange rates are comparable to the going rate of exchange. Check with your local bank to find out which ATM service is available in the country you plan to visit. Because ATMs may not always be available, this should be used as only a backup method and not depended on solely for all your financial transactions abroad.

If you must take jewelry or other valuables, use hotel security vaults to store them. It is wise to register such items with U.S. Customs before leaving the United States to make customs processing easier when you return.

It is a violation of law in some countries to enter or exit with that country's currency. Check with a travel agent or the embassy or consulate of the countries you plan to visit to learn their currency restrictions. Before departing from the U.S., you may wish, if allowed, to purchase small amounts of foreign currency and coins to use for buses, taxis, telephone calls, and other incidentals when you first arrive in a country. You may purchase foreign currency from some banks or from foreign exchange dealers. Most international airports also have money exchange facilities.

Once you are abroad, local banks generally give more favorable rates of exchange than hotels, restaurants, or stores for converting your U.S. dollars and traveler's checks into foreign currency.

YOUR TRIP

Driving. U.S. auto insurance is usually not valid outside of the United States and Canada. When you drive in any other country, be sure to buy adequate auto insurance in that country. When renting a car abroad, make certain that adequate insurance is part of your contract; otherwise, purchase additional coverage in an amount similar to that which you carry at home.

Also, prior to driving in a foreign country, familiarize yourself with the metric system since countries abroad display speed limits in kilometers per hour. **REMEMBER:** If you plan to rent a car, keep in mind which side of the road traffic moves. Unlike the U.S., many countries drive on the left hand side of the road. Check the [Consular Information Sheet](#) for the country you plan to visit to obtain information about road conditions and check the [U.S. Department of State Road Safety page](#) for information on how to get an International Driving Permit.

Flying. To avoid the chances of developing a blood clot or deep vein thrombosis (DVT) during a long flight, try, if possible, to exercise during the flight to keep blood flowing to the heart. Another way to help move blood to the heart is to wear compression stockings, which put gentle pressure on the leg muscles. Studies in healthy people have shown that wearing compression stockings minimizes the risk of developing DVT after long flights. These stockings are available at medical supply stores. For information about DVT, please check the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services web site at <http://www.fda.gov>.

Reservations. Upon arrival at each stopover, **reconfirm** your onward reservations. When possible, obtain a written confirmation. International flights generally require confirmation 72 hours in advance.

If your name does not appear on the reservation list, you could find yourself stranded.

PRACTICAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Local Laws and Customs. While abroad, you are subject to the laws and regulations of your host country and are not protected by the U.S. Constitution. If detained by local authorities, ask them to notify a U.S. consular officer. Under international agreements and practice, you have a right to contact an American consul. Although U.S. consuls cannot act as your attorney or get you out of jail, they can provide you with a list of local attorneys and inform you of your rights under local laws. They also monitor the status of detained Americans and make sure they are treated fairly under local laws.

Guard Your Passport. Your U.S. passport is the most valuable document you carry abroad. It confirms that you are an American citizen. Do not carry your passport in the same place as your money or pack it in your luggage. In some countries, you may be required to leave your passport overnight or for several days with the hotel management. This may be local practice—do not be concerned unless the passport is not returned as

promised. If your passport is lost or stolen abroad, you should report the loss immediately to the local police and to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. (Contact information for U.S. embassies and consulates is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_embassies.html .) If you can provide the consular officer with the information contained in your passport, it will facilitate issuance of a new passport. Therefore, it is a good idea to make two photocopies of the data page of your passport. Keep one copy separately from your passport to take with you on your trip, and leave the other copy with a relative or friend in the United States. It is also a good idea to carry two extra passport photos with you.

Be Alert. Move purposefully and confidently. If you should find yourself in a crowded area, such as in an elevator, subway, marketplace, or in busy tourist areas, exercise special caution to avoid theft.

Robbery. Help prevent theft by carrying your belongings securely. Carry purses tucked under an arm and not dangling by a strap. Carry valuables hidden in an inside front pocket or in a money belt, not in a hip pocket. You may wish to wrap your wallet with rubber bands to make it more difficult for someone to slip it from your pocket unnoticed. Money belts or pouches that fit around your shoulder, waist or under clothing are available through some luggage shops and department stores.

Useful tips for victims of crime can be found the Bureau of Consular Affairs flyer, “ [Help For American Victims Of Crime Overseas.](#)”

ASSISTANCE FROM U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES

Emergencies. If you encounter serious legal, medical, or financial difficulties or other problems abroad, contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for assistance. Although consular officers cannot serve as attorneys, they can help you find legal assistance. Consular officers cannot cash checks, lend money, or act as travel agents. However, in an emergency, consular officers can help you get in touch with your family back home and to let them know of your situation and inform them on how to wire necessary funds to you.

Consular officers can also provide you with the latest information about adverse conditions abroad. For more information, please see the Bureau of Consular Affairs information on [Emergencies and Crises abroad](#) .

Non-emergencies. Consular officers also provide non-emergency services such as information on absentee voting and acquisition or loss of U.S. citizenship. They can arrange for the transfer of Social Security and other benefits to Americans residing abroad, provide U.S. tax forms, notarize documents, and advise U.S. citizens on property claims. For more information, please see our information on [help for Americans abroad](#).

Safeguarding Your Health. If you are injured or become seriously ill abroad, a U.S. consular officer will assist you in finding a physician or other medical services, and, with

your permission, will inform your family members or friends of your condition. If needed, consular officers can assist your family in transferring money to the foreign country to pay for your treatment.

Death Abroad. Each year, over 6,000 Americans die abroad. Most of them are Americans who live overseas, but a couple thousand Americans per year die while on a short visit abroad. Consular officers contact the next of kin in the United States and explain the local requirements. It is a worthwhile precaution to have insurance that covers the cost of local burial or shipment of remains home to the United States (check with your insurance provider). Otherwise, this cost must be borne by your next of kin and can be extremely expensive. The U.S. government cannot pay for shipment of remains to the United States.

SHOPPING—SOME THINGS TO AVOID

Beware of purchasing souvenirs made from endangered wildlife. Many wildlife and wildlife products are prohibited either by U.S. or foreign laws from import into the United States. You risk confiscation and a possible fine if you attempt to import such things. Watch out for and avoid purchasing the following prohibited items:

- *All products made from sea turtles*
- *All ivory, both Asian and African elephant, and rhinoceros*
- *Furs from spotted cats*
- *Furs from marine mammals*
- *Feathers and feather products from wild birds*
- *Most crocodile and caiman leather*
- *Most coral, whether in chunks or in jewelry*

You may import an object made of ivory if it is an antique. To be an antique the ivory must be at least 100 years old. You will need documentation that authenticates the age of the ivory. You may import other antiques containing wildlife parts with the same condition: they must be accompanied by documentation proving they are at least 100 years old. Certain other requirements for antiques may apply.

For more information, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 3247, Arlington, VA 22203-3247, or call 800-358-2104 or visit www.fws.gov.

Preparing for Your Return Home

Be Prepared. Upon arrival in the United States, have your passport ready when you go through immigration and customs controls.

Keep receipts for any items you purchased abroad. U.S. citizens may bring back and orally declare \$800 worth of merchandise duty free. Visit the U.S. Customs web site at <http://www.customs.gov> for further information.

Currency. There is no limit on the amount of money or negotiable instruments that can be brought into or taken out of the United States. However, any amount over \$10,000 must be reported to U.S. Customs on Customs Form 4790 when you depart from or enter into the United States.

Foreign Produce. Do not bring home any fresh fruits or vegetables. Such items will be confiscated.

OTHER USEFUL TRAVEL PUBLICATIONS

For the official word on immunizations, customs, what you can legally bring into the United States, and how to protect yourself from business fraud, you may order one of the following U.S. Government publications:

Crisis Abroad—What the State Department Does

— Summarizes the work by the State Department during a crisis and its efforts to obtain reliable information from local authorities abroad for concerned relatives and friends of Americans located in the disaster area.

Overseas Citizens Services

— Provides information about the assistance that the Office of Overseas Citizens Services provides, including information on deaths, arrests, welfare/whereabouts inquiries and financial and medical emergencies.

Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts: Guide for Business Representatives

— Lists the names of key officers and addresses for U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and missions abroad. This publication is available on the Web at <http://www.foia.state.gov/MMS/KOH/keyoffcity.asp>.

Health Information for International Travel- (Also know as the “Yellow Book”)

— Provides a comprehensive listing of immunization requirements of foreign governments. In addition, it gives the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommendations on immunizations and other health precautions for international travelers. This book is available on the Internet at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yb/index.htm>.

Know Before You Go – Regulations for U.S. Residents

— Provides detailed information on U.S. Customs regulations, including duty rates. This booklet can be ordered and/or viewed at <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>. You may also call and request a copy from U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Washington, D.C., at 1-877-CBP-5511 or 202-354-1000.

Don't Pack a Pest

— Lists the regulations on bringing agricultural items into the United States from most parts of the world. Fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, potted plants, pet birds, and other items are prohibited or restricted. This booklet is available on the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/travel/>.

Buyer Beware!

— Provides information about restrictions on importing wildlife and wildlife products. This book is available on the World Wildlife Fund's web site at <http://worldwildlife.org/buyer beware/>.

Advance Fee Business Fraud

— Provides tips to U.S. citizens doing business abroad on how to identify business scams and information about what the U.S. Government can or cannot do to assist them.

Background Notes

— Contain information on all the countries of the world with which the United States has relations. They include facts on the country's land, people, history, government, political conditions, economy, and its relations with other countries and the United States.

PASSPORT AGENCIES WITH PUBLIC COUNTERS

For Those Traveling Most Urgently

These serve customers departing internationally within 2 weeks/14 days, or needing passports for foreign visas within 4 weeks. Customers must make automated appointments in advance.

Boston Passport Agency

Thomas P. O'Neill Federal Building
10 Causeway Street, Room 247
Boston, MA 02222-1094

Chicago Passport Agency

Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn Street, Suite 1803
Chicago, IL 60604-1564

Colorado Passport Agency

Cherry Creek III
3151 South Vaughn Way, Suite 600
Aurora, CO 80014

Connecticut Passport Agency
50 Washington Street
Norwalk, CT 06854-2749

Honolulu Passport Agency
Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse
300 Ala Moana Blvd., #1-330
Honolulu, HI 96850

Houston Passport Agency
Mickey Leland Federal Building
1919 Smith Street, Suite 1400
Houston, TX 77002-8049

Los Angeles Passport Agency
Federal Building
11000 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000
Los Angeles, CA 90024-3615

Miami Passport Agency
Claude Pepper Federal Office Building
51 SW First Avenue, 3rd Floor
Miami, FL 33130-1680

New Orleans Passport Agency
One Canal Place
365 Canal Street, Suite 1300
New Orleans, LA 70130-6508

New York Passport Agency
Greater Manhattan Federal Building
376 Hudson Street
New York, NY 10014

Philadelphia Passport Agency
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Room 103
Philadelphia, PA 19106-2970

San Francisco Passport Agency
95 Hawthorne Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

Seattle Passport Agency
Federal Office Building

915 Second Avenue Room 992
Seattle, WA 98174-1091

Washington Passport Agency
1111 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

For information on how, when and where to apply for a U.S. passport, contact the

National Passport Information Center
(NPIC)
1-877-487-2778
(TDD/TDY 1-888-874-7793)

Customer Service Representatives Are Available

Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Eastern Time (excluding Federal holidays)

Call this number 7 days/week, 24 hours/day to:

- Get automated information;
- Schedule an appointment at a Regional Passport Agency for regular business hours (if you are leaving within 2 weeks/14 days or needing your passport for foreign visas within 4 weeks).

Or

Visit travel.state.gov

- For extensive passport (requirements, how to apply, current fees, download forms, etc.) and international information;
- Where to apply – find which of the 7,000 U.S. locations is nearest you, for those planning to leave in more than 2 weeks;
- Email a question to the National Passport Information Center;
- Making an online inquiry for a pending application.

Planning A Trip?

General travel information: *Consular Affairs also publishes the following general travel guides:*

A Safe Trip Abroad

— Contains helpful precautions you can take to minimize the chance of becoming a victim of terrorism or crime.

Tips for Americans Residing Abroad

— Contains information for U.S. citizens living abroad on dual citizenship, tax regulations, voting, and other consular services.

Your Trip Abroad

— Contains tips on obtaining a passport, considerations in preparing for your trip and traveling, and other sources of information.

Hard copies of the above publications can be purchased from the ***U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)**. Copies of Consular Affairs' publications are available for a fee (**from \$1.25 to \$3each**) from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, Tel: 202/512-1800, fax: 202/512-2250. Internet: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/index.html> .

Hard copies of the following publications are available for **\$1 each** from the ***Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC), Pueblo, CO 81009. Website:** www.pueblo.gsa.gov

Foreign Entry Requirements

— Contains information on foreign visa and other entry requirements and locations of all foreign embassies and consulates in the U.S.

Passports: Applying for Them the Easy Way

— Contains information on how, when, and where to apply for your U.S. passports.

Tips for Women Traveling Alone

— Contains safety and travel information for women traveling alone in foreign countries.

Tips for Travelers with Disabilities

— Contains useful tips for persons with disabilities traveling in foreign countries.

Travel Smart/Travel Safe

— Contains general safety tips and travel information.

Where Are You Going?

Country Specific Information: The following travel tips brochures contain information on currency regulations, customs, dual nationality, and safety issues for specific areas of the world:

Tips for Business Travelers to Nigeria

Tips for Travelers to Canada

Tips for Travelers to the Caribbean

Tips for Travelers to Central and South America

Tips for Travelers to China

Tips for Travelers to Mexico

Tips for Travelers to the Middle East and North Africa

Tips for Travelers to Russia

Tips for Travelers to South Asia

Tips for Travelers to Sub-Saharan Africa

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