

THE ANDZNAGIR

News for the American citizen community in Armenia

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For further information:

- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for the [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and [Country Information for Armenia](#).
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Contact the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan, Armenia, located at 1 American Avenue, at tel. (374-10) 46-47-00 and fax (374 10) 46-47-42, Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. After-hours emergency number for U.S. citizens is (374-10) 49-44-44.

From the American Citizen Services (ACS) Chief: First and foremost, I want to offer you all our warmest holiday wishes and to thank you for your continued readership of the Andznagir. I also want to take this opportunity to remind you, in light of the recent uptick in violence along Armenia's borders, how important it is for all American citizens here to register their presence with the embassy. Registration can be completed quickly and easily online at step.state.gov/step/. In addition, the insertion of extra visa pages will be discontinued after December 31. Starting January 1, you will need to apply for a new passport when your current one runs out of space. Please allow 2-3 weeks for this when making your travel plans.

All the best,
Adam Colvin

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! SHNORHAVOR AMEN OR!!

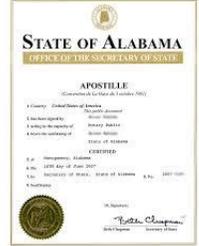
American citizen children born in Nagorno-Karabakh

Because Nagorno-Karabakh is not internationally recognized as either independent or as part of Armenia, the State Department must list the place of birth in the passport as Azerbaijan. In most instances, regulations permit the parents, if they object to a birth country, to replace it with the name of the birth city, though this could cause the child some problems when traveling with a U.S. passport to a third country. However, in this instance, the city name Stepanakert, for instance, could not be used; its Azeri equivalent, Khankendi, would have to appear. If you object to this policy, please plan for births to take place in Armenia proper.

The U.S. Embassy will be closed for the following holidays—December 31 (New Year's Eve day), January 1 (New Year's Day), January 4, January 5 (Armenian Christmas Eve), January 6 (Armenian Christmas), January 18 (Martin Luther King Day), January 28 (Army Day), February 15 (Presidents' Day), and March 9 (Women's Day).

ACS insight of the quarter

Do you know what an apostille is? An apostille is a seal affixed to a civil document (a birth certificate, a death certificate, a marriage certificate, a name change decree or a divorce decree) that allows that document to be recognized in another country. Occasionally the Armenian government requests an apostille on a U.S. civil document and sends an American to the embassy to get it. However, the American system differs from that in many other countries in that our civil documents are issued by **states**, and the embassy is a branch of the **federal government**. Therefore, we cannot provide you with an apostille, which can only be affixed by the state that issued the document. You'll need to go on the Internet and find instructions from your state's Secretary of State office explaining how to obtain an apostille by mail for your civil document.



Visa question of the quarter

My friend or relative was not approved for a tourist visa even though I included an invitation letter and a personal guarantee that they would return to Armenia. Why not? The answer is that, under U.S. immigration law, such invitation letters and personal guarantees carry no weight and cannot be considered by the visa officer. Each visa applicant is presumed to be an intending immigrant to the United States and must prove that they have sufficient ties to Armenia to ensure their return here after a short stay. *Only the applicant's* information—financial situation, family connections, employment status, etc.—is relevant under the law. If an applicant has strong ties to Armenia—and stronger ties to Armenia than to the United States—they may be eligible for a visa. Invitation letters and personal guarantees from American contacts can never overcome weak ties.



Staying safe and healthy in Armenia

Have you heard of brucellosis? Also known as Malta fever, brucellosis is a serious illness that is contracted by ingesting unpasteurized dairy products. Instances have been reported in Armenia, particularly among people who have eaten homemade cheeses, particularly those made with goat milk. Pregnant women should be especially careful. This is not to say that you should never eat such cheese, but if you think that you may have contracted brucellosis, it is vital that you seek medical treatment right away. Key symptoms include high fever, excessive sweating, and joint and muscle pain. Brucellosis can generally be cured with antibiotics, but sufferers may be banned from ever donating blood or organs.

We will be hosting a Town Hall for American citizens at the embassy one evening in March. We hope you'll come out to meet the ambassador, the consular chief and the ACS staff and to ask any questions you may have. Look for more information in our next issue as well as by email, via Facebook, and on the embassy webpage.

Thanks for reading! Please feel free to send us comments and suggestions for future issues! Write us at acsyerevan@state.gov . Till next time...