

This Travel Warning is being issued to urge U.S. citizens to carefully consider the potential risk of travel to The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands at this time due to the threat posed by Hurricane Irene. The Department of State has authorized the departure, on a voluntary basis, of family members of U.S. Embassy personnel.

U.S. citizens in areas likely to be impacted by Hurricane Irene who do not have access to adequate and safe shelter should consider departing until the storm has passed while commercial transportation is available and ports are open. U.S. citizens staying in The Bahamas or the Turks and Caicos despite this Travel Warning should locate shelter, monitor media reports, and follow all official instructions. Visitors to The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos should be familiar with their hotel or cruise ship evacuation plans, policies, or procedures.

U.S. citizens are also urged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> to receive the most up-to-date security information. Travel enrollment will enable receipt of emergency and other messages via email. Current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States and Canada, or, from other countries, 1-202-501-4444 .

The U.S. Embassy in Nassau can be reached at (242)322-1181; the after-hours emergency number is (242)328-2206; the fax number is (242)356-7174. The U.S. Embassy in Nassau is located at Queen Street #19, Nassau, The Bahamas.

For the latest information, U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website at <http://www.travel.state.gov/> where the Worldwide Caution http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_4787.html , Country Specific Information for The Bahamas http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_989.html , Hurricane and Typhoon Season 2011 alert http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_5472.html , Travel Warnings http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html , and Travel Alerts http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html can be found. Follow us on Twitter <http://twitter.com/travelgov> , foursquare <https://foursquare.com/travelgov> , and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/travelgov> as well.