



ACS NEWSLETTER

American Citizen Services, Recife

SEPTEMBER 2015

Welcome to Michael Cathey, new Consular Section Chief!

Michael comes to Recife after nearly 10 years in the State Department, having served in Mexico City, Bogota and most recently Chennai, India. Born in North Carolina and a long-time resident of Los Angeles, where he worked for many years for Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Michael looks forward to the next three years in Recife:



“

My wife, son and I are so excited for the opportunity to live and work here in Recife, and especially excited to get to know the U.S. citizen residents in this great area of Brazil. We have lots of challenges coming up – the Olympics next year, the move to our new facility in 2018, and, especially high on my agenda, creating an extensive network of U.S. citizens to greater serve everyone in this area. I hope all the U.S. citizens out there will contact us and we will try to find time to visit everyone when we are in their area. It's going be a great three years!”



United States Consulate General Recife

Rua Gonçalves Maia, 163, Boa Vista

Recife, PE, Brazil 50070-125

+55 (81) 3416-3050

After Hours Emergency Line: +55 (81) 99916-9470

New Consulate General location at Reserva do Paiva



Our new location has been announced! Scheduled to open in 2018, the new Consulate General building will be located in the Reserva do Paiva, located in the city of Cabo de Santo Agostinho, part of the Greater Metropolitan area of Recife. This move will provide the Consulate General staff a bigger and better space to work in order to improve our service to both those seeking visas as well as American citizens. The new Consulate General building is pictured here, in the same complex with the Sheraton Reserva do Paiva Hotel & Convention Center.

A message from Richard Reiter, Consul General



“ The Consulate General has been in Recife for 200 years, but our work goes beyond the city. We represent the United States in eight states in the Northeast of Brazil and our team works hard throughout the year to be present in these states - to visit, meet people and promote an important connection between the United States and the region as a whole. And we continue to grow. Last year we issued nearly 100,000 visas. But for us, the work is not finished. We are eyeing the next 200 years. For that reason, we recently signed an agreement to move the Consulate to the Reserva do Paiva. We have been in the neighborhood of Boa Vista for the past 50 years, and it's time we moved to a more modern building. We are looking forward to the move in 2018!”

Elimination of Visa Pages Inserts



Effective January 1, 2016, the Department will eliminate the consular service of supplemental 24-page Visa Page Inserts (VPIs) for passports. Requests for VPIs on Form DS-4085 will only be accepted for current (legacy) passports until December 31, 2015.

The determination to eliminate VPIs was made after considering document utility, cost effectiveness, customer service, internal controls, security, international practice, and operational factors.

While the Department understands frequent travelers may be inconvenienced by this change, we are phasing out VPIs because they pose vulnerabilities to the physical security of the passport and to the issuance process. When applying for a new passport, some customers may need to update residence permits or foreign entry/exit visas to comply with foreign country immigration practices. U.S. citizens are advised to renew their passports early to make sure they have enough blank pages for visa stamps and residence permits. In some instances, issuing an emergency passport (EPDP) or second passport may be considered.

For information about passport renewal appointments access brazil.usembassy.gov

Looking for Warden Volunteers



Looking for Volunteers! The US Embassy and consulates in Brazil would like to know if you are interested in being a warden volunteer.

Wardens are usually private U.S. citizens residing abroad who volunteer to assist the U.S. Embassy or Consulate by disseminating official U.S. government information regarding safety or travel to other U.S. citizens in their area. Every U.S. Embassy and Consulate has a warden system that they use to send important messages to Americans in their districts. We are particularly interested in having wardens at popular tourist locales and at businesses and institutions where Americans work and study.

If you would like to be a warden, please send an email to RecifeACS@state.gov with your full name, phone numbers and address. We will contact you with more information about the program.

ELECTION 2016



Did you know that we can help you file your absentee ballot? Generally, all U.S. citizens 18 years or older who are or will be residing outside the United States at the time of an election are eligible to vote absentee in any election for federal office. Some states even allow overseas voters to vote in state elections. To confirm eligibility and residency requirements, contact your state or territory's chief election administrative office or visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website at www.fvap.gov. The FVAP website makes voting absentee easy.

You can drop off your voter registration requests, absentee ballot requests, and completed absentee ballots at the U.S. Consulate General Recife for delivery to your local election official in the United States. You do not need to make an appointment with us to do so. The U.S. Government offers this service to U.S. Citizens living overseas to make absentee voting as easy as possible. Any U.S. Citizen can drop off the mail items listed above and the we will send them via Diplomatic Pouch to the United States Postal Service (USPS) in Virginia. The mail will then enter the USPS system. It will take approximately three weeks for the mailed item to reach your local election official. You must include proper postage and complete "to" and "from" addresses on envelopes. Proper postage is needed for domestic mail, as if the envelope was deposited in a mailbox in the United States. If the envelope says postage paid on it, then no additional postage is necessary. Voting for candidates for federal offices does not affect your federal or state tax liability. Questions? Please email us at voterecife@state.gov.



New Service available for receiving U.S Federal Benefits

Now it is easier for recipients of American Federal Benefits residing in Brazil to receive their pension. Mail continues as an option but payment time can take up to 40 days. Now, in order to better serve the Brazilian recipients, Santander Brazil Bank has been authorized to receive federal direct deposit payments.

Banco Santander provides a safer and more secure payment option whereby the monthly pensions can be directly deposited in Brazilian reais into your account. However, there is a service fee in Brazilian reais equivalent to \$8.00 per transfer received.

If you are already a Santander Brazil client you can contact your account officer or go to the nearest branch with the Form-1199, found at <http://www.ssa.gov/deposit/1199a.pdf>. If you are not a current client, you can open an account in order to receive your benefits there.

- Questions? Please send an email to contactus@santander.com.br, call the nearest branch, or visit their website: www.santander.com.br or email RecifeSSA@state.gov
- Santander Call Center 4004-3535 (state capitals and main cities) 0800-702-3535 (other locations) Client Services 0800-762-7777 Ombudsman 0800-726-0322.

Please note that not all Santander employees are fluent in English. In addition, as per the Brazilian Central Bank regulations, in order to open your account, forms in Portuguese will need to be completed. In compliance with local and international regulations, Santander Brasil reserves the right to request additional documentation during the account opening process and has no obligation to open an account in case the documentation presented does not meet its requirements.



Localização próximo o Consulado Geral dos EUA em Recife

RECIFE– BOA VIAGEM
AV ENG.DOMINGOS FERREIRA 3042 Boa Viagem, Recife, PE 51020-030

Manager: Ana Isaura Gomes (81) 3198-8900

Localização próximo a Agência Consular - Fortaleza

PCA PORTUGAL - FORTALEZA CE
AV SANTOS DUMMONT 2829 ALDEOTA, CE 60151-161

Manager: Giuliano Sousa (81) 3486-5600

USEFUL LINKS:

Travel Warnings & Advisories: www.travel.state.gov

Registration with the Consulate General: step.state.gov

Brazilian Federal Police: www.dpf.gov.br

Absentee Voting Information: www.fvap.gov

Federal Benefit Information: <http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA>

Social Security Administration: <http://www.ssa.gov>

UPCOMING HOLIDAY:

OCTOBER 12 — COLUMBUS DAY

The Consulate General will be closed on this day.

In an emergency, please call the after-hours duty phone:

+55 (81) 99916-9470



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from the U.S. Consulate General Recife:*

@consuladoeua_nordeste