



# CONSULAR CORNER

ISSUE VI      AUGUST 2013

## Ambassador's Message:



Over the next few weeks, many of our U.S. citizen families are preparing to return to Georgia after going to the U.S. and other destinations for a visit. Welcome back! If you are new to Georgia, I encourage you to contact the U.S. Citizen Services office within Consular Affairs at the Embassy at your earliest convenience (contact information is inside this newsletter). I am pleased to announce that the Consular Corner will now be distributed quarterly instead of bi-annually in an effort to increase outreach to American citizens in Georgia.

The U.S. State Department provides an opportunity for you to receive important messages and travel warnings via email and cell phone when you enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Plan ([STEP](#)). I encourage those who have not done so already to register for STEP. This program plays an important role in keeping Americans traveling abroad safe and informed.

Before the next issue of the Consular Corner, we will celebrate Labor Day (September 2), Columbus Day (October 14), and Veteran's Day (November 11). The Embassy will be closed for those U.S. holidays. In addition, we will be closed for the Georgian holiday The Day of the Virgin (August 28). The U.S. Citizen Services [online](#) appointment system reflects these holiday closures.

As Ambassador, my highest priority is the safety and security of our fellow Americans here in Georgia. Our U.S. Citizen Services section endeavors to provide excellent assistance to our citizens, whether you are a long-term Georgia resident or are experiencing Georgia for the first time. Please take some time to read about the resources available for both long-term residents and short-term visitors in Georgia available through the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi by visiting the U.S. Citizen Services section of our [website](#).

For those of you with children beginning a new school year, Mary and I wish them a safe and successful academic year!

Sincerely,

Ambassador Richard B. Norland



Click here to view [CONSUL'S PODCAST](#) on American Citizen Services on YouTube



**Emergency Contact: (995 32) 227-7000**

Includes Crime Victims, Arrest, Death, Child Abduction, Life Threatening Illness or Medical Conditions, Lost/Stolen U.S. Passport, or other safety and welfare issues of a U.S. citizen.

**HOURS OF OPERATION & CONTACT INFORMATION**

U.S. Citizen Services are available by appointment only. To make an appointment for citizen services please visit

<http://georgia.usembassy.gov/service.html>

Address: # 11 George Balanchine Str.  
0131 Tbilisi  
Telephone: (995 32) 227-77-24  
After hours emergency number:  
(995 32) 227-70-00  
E-mail:  
[askconsultbilisi@state.gov](mailto:askconsultbilisi@state.gov)

**Special Point of Interest:**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR U.S. CITIZENS !!!**

In case of a crisis and/or natural disaster U.S. citizens in Georgia may tune in to the following FM radio stations for updated U.S. Embassy emergency messages and information for U.S. citizens:

- Radio Syndicate — 104.3 FM (Tbilisi and Gori)
- Radio GIPA — 94.3 FM (Tbilisi)
- Radio Atinati — 105.9 FM (Zugdidi)
- Radio Hereti— 102.8 FM (Lagodekhi and Kakheti)
- Radio Dzveli Kalaki — 107.9 FM (Kutaisi)
- Radio Harmonia — 100.5 FM (Poti)

## Message on U.S. Passports (July 2, 2013)



As the summer season is here and you begin your travel planning, it is essential that you take time to review your passports, both to ensure that they will be valid during the period in which you plan to travel, and that they still contain a sufficient number of blank pages for immigration stamps. Some countries require that a traveler's U.S. passport be valid at least six months or longer beyond the dates of the trip and we strongly suggest that all U.S. citizens renew their passport prior to the six month validity expiring. Processing for tourist passport renewals generally takes approximately two weeks. Adding pages to your current passport can generally be done within two days. Instructions and the appointment system for renewing your tourist passport or adding pages to any valid passport can be found [here](#).

The [Country Specific Information for Georgia](#) was updated on June 26, 2013. If you are currently in Georgia or are planning to travel to Georgia you may find updated information on this site.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Georgia enroll in the Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP). STEP enrollment provides you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. Embassy to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the U.S. Embassy.

Regularly monitor the [State Department's website](#), where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. You can also read the [Country Specific Information for Georgia](#). For additional information, refer to "[A Safe Trip Abroad](#)."

Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Download our free Smart Traveler App, available through [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#), to have travel information at your fingertips.

[The U.S. Embassy](#) is located at # 11 George Balanchine Street; 0131 Tbilisi, and The Consular Section is open 8:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M., (Tel: 995-32) 227-7724. **If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance, the after-hours emergency number for the U.S. Embassy is (995 32) 227-7000.** If calling from the local cell phone: (032) 227-7000.





## Help Your Fellow Citizens: Become an Embassy Warden

Do you want to help your fellow U.S. citizens or respond in time of crisis? Then please consider joining our warden network. Wardens are our eyes and ears on the ground. We rely on this volunteer network to disseminate critical information and to assist U.S. citizens in times of need.

We are looking to build our warden network throughout Georgia. Do you live off the beaten path? Are you a doctor in Batumi or Lagodekhi? A missionary in Gori? Run a hotel in Kazbegi? We're looking for you to join us and to help us make Georgia an even more welcoming place for your fellow citizens. If you'd like to volunteer then please email us at [AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov](mailto:AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov) for more information about becoming a geographic warden.

We are also looking for wardens at organizations that employ U.S. citizens. If your employer has more than 10 U.S. citizens on staff, we encourage someone at your organization to volunteer with us as your organization's warden or alternate. The work is much the same, but the area of responsibility is more specific. If you'd like to volunteer as the point of contact for your organization then please email us at [AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov](mailto:AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov) for more information.

In the meantime, please visit the Department of State's Country Specific Information Sheet on Georgia—and most countries—online at: <http://travel.state.gov>. It contains a wealth of information on health, safety and security, entry/exit requirements, etc. It is the first stop for any question or concern regarding Georgia. Please feel free to pass this information to all U.S. citizens in Georgia.

Your help is very much appreciated!



**PLEASE NOTE!!!**

**ACS UNIT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ASSIST WITH VISA INQUIRIES  
ALL VISA INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE CALL CENTER  
LISTED ON THE LEFT. PLEASE NOTE ALL VISA APPLICATIONS ARE  
ONLY ACCEPTED ONLINE. FOR THE VISA PROCESS PLEASE VISIT  
[WWW.USTRAVELDOCS.COM](http://WWW.USTRAVELDOCS.COM)**

**NOTICE: New Electronic I-94 Process:**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has a new electronic I-94 process at air and sea ports of entry. Under the new CBP process, a CBP officer will provide each admitted nonimmigrant traveler with an admission stamp in their passport. CBP will no longer issue a paper Form I-94 upon entry to the U.S., with some exceptions. [Learn more](#) on the CBP website.

**Contact Information for Visa Correspondence and Scheduling**

Email: To reach a customer service representative email [support-georgia@ustraveldocs.com](mailto:support-georgia@ustraveldocs.com)

Telephone: Contact a customer service representative using one of these telephone numbers:

- **Callers in Georgia** Call +995 32 2471 160.
- **Callers in the United States** Call 703 988 7103.

**NEW!!** Visit [here](#) to get live chat assistance, track the status of your passport or application, or Skype with a representative during business hours.

To contact the  
Consular section  
during business hours

**Call:**  
(995 32) 227-77-24

**Email:**  
[AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov](mailto:AskConsulTbilisi@state.gov)

For after-hours  
Emergencies call  
(995 32) 227-70-00

## Reminder: Appointments Required for Routine ACS Services

All of our American Citizen Services are available by appointment only. Visitors may receive multiple services during the same visit — please make a separate appointment for each service (e.g., to apply for passports and obtain a notary service, make two appointments). Arrive a few minutes before your appointment to allow time to go through security.

ACS appointments must be made using our website:  
<http://georgia.usembassy.gov/service.html>

In case you need an emergency appointment please contact us via phone or email and we will try to accommodate your request at the earliest convenience.

The following services do not need an appointment and you may stop by the Consular any business day from 2 pm to 4 pm:

- ☑ Report an emergency or urgent matter (e.g., death, hospitalization, or arrest of a U.S. citizen)
- ☑ Report a lost or stolen passport
- ☑ Pick up passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA)
- ☑ Pick up Social Security or tax refund checks



## Leaving Georgia?

If you are departing Georgia and have been enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)), please do not forget to end your enrollment when you leave.

If you previously enrolled online, you can end your enrollment by visiting <https://step.state.gov/step/>. If you previously submitted a paper registration form at the U.S. Embassy Consular section in Tbilisi, you may unregister yourself by sending an email request to close your enrollment with the Embassy to:

[askconsultbilisi@state.gov](mailto:askconsultbilisi@state.gov)



## What does the consular section do?

Have a friend who wants to visit the US? Need a new passport? Just had a baby and need to obtain a consular report of birth abroad? Has your nephew lost his passport while visiting you over the summer vacation? Bought real estate in the US and need documents notarized? Did your friend get arrested? Check the U.S. Citizen Services section of our [website](#) for information on how to apply for a US non-immigrant visa.

Has your sister's alien relative petition been approved by [USCIS](#)? Did you lose a Legal Permanent Resident card (Green Card)? Are you finalizing your child's adoption and bringing him/her to the US? Check the immigrant visa section of our [website](#) for more information.

### Preparation for a Notary Appointment

- Bring a valid US government-issued photo ID (passport, U.S. state driver's license, or military ID card).
- Make sure you understand your document. We are not allowed to explain the contents to you and are prohibited from notarizing if you do not understand it.
- Please complete the document with the appropriate names, places, and dates before you arrive.
- **Do not sign the form!** You will sign it at the Embassy in front of a Consular Officer. Please note we cannot notarize blank documents.
- Please mark the pages where you and the notary need to sign. The Consular staff cannot advise you in any way on what is required of you for your documents.
- Pay the appropriate fee: \$50 PER notary seal in the document. All fees are payable in U.S. dollars or GEL at the Embassy's exchange rate. A combination of U.S. dollars and GEL cannot be accepted.
- If your document requires the presence of witnesses in addition to the notarization, you are responsible for providing these witnesses. Please include their names on your appointment request or they will not be granted entry to the Embassy. Consular staff are prohibited from serving as witnesses.

**Follow Us on Social Media OR Get More Travel Information by Selecting the Icons Below:**



<http://twitter.com/TravelGov>

<https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/statephotos>

<http://blogs.state.gov/>

[http://www.travel.state.gov/news/news\\_3162.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/news/news_3162.html)

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/165020.htm>

<http://pinterest.com/consularcorner/>

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

[https://www.facebook.com/tbilisi.usembassy/app\\_256579511063777](https://www.facebook.com/tbilisi.usembassy/app_256579511063777)

**Facebook Q&A Sessions**



On the first Friday of each month at 10:00 EDT, an expert from the Visa Office, in collaboration with the New Media Unit in CA/P, answers questions via the Consular Affairs Facebook Page [www.Facebook.com/TravelGov](http://www.Facebook.com/TravelGov).

## FOCUS ON STAYING CONNECTED:

### Sample Pinterest Hot Topics!



Children can enjoy CPSC's educational videos and interactive activities while learning about pool safety and family fun in the water.

From [www.poolsafety.gov](http://www.poolsafety.gov)

The Library of Congress presents



Discover the stories of America's past, like Buffalo Bill and Harriet Tubman; find out about interesting inventions and get fascinating historical facts.

From <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/>



The Federal government's official job list. Shown are employment search, information center, veteran information and forms.

From [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)



The official benefits website of the U.S. government. Informs citizens of benefits they may be eligible for. Provides information on how to apply for assistance.

From [www.benefits.gov](http://www.benefits.gov)

**Emergency-response center  
112**

(Includes Patrol Police, Medical-Emergency Center, Fire and Rescue Services)

**Information Centre**

Tel: 118 09

**Airport Hotline**

Tel: +995 32 2310421;  
+995 32 2310341

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**LIST OF DOCTORS**

**LIST OF ATTORNEYS**

No Doctors or Attorneys are affiliated with the U.S. Embassy and the lists are provided for informational purposes only.

**CIVIL REGISTRY AGENCY**

Issues residency permits, Georgian passports, civil documents, and Apostille on Georgian documents.

**DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**

Information on Tourism activities, entertainment, cultural events.

**E-map of Georgia**



**Important Security Announcement**

When visiting the Embassy, please remember not to bring mobile phones or any electronic devices (such as Blackberries, iPods, or PDAs), food/drinks, medicine or cosmetic products, as they are not allowed within the Embassy. We also strongly advise that you do not bring large bags, such as backpacks, suitcases or packages to the interview as there are no storage facilities on Embassy grounds.

**WE WELCOME YOUR IDEAS...**

The U.S. Citizen Services Unit is constantly thinking of new ways to improve our service and efficiency.

If you have an idea or a suggestion about how we can make your visit easier or about items or subjects you'd like to see covered in this newsletter or future public broadcasts please let us know by email:

[askconsultbilisi@state.gov](mailto:askconsultbilisi@state.gov)

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)