



# ACS Newsletter

VIETNAM

MAY 2015

*The monthly newsletter of the American Citizen Services Units of the U.S. Embassy Hanoi and the U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City*

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## Upcoming U.S. Citizens Services Visits

Officials from the U.S. Citizen Services unit in Ho Chi Minh City will offer consular services in May at the following location:

**Nha Trang** on Friday, May 15 2015, from 9am-12pm at the InterContinental Hotel Nha Trang located at 32-34 Tran Phu Street.

Consulate officials will offer notarial services, deliver federal benefits checks, and U.S. citizens will be able to apply for U.S. passports. Federal benefits annuitants may sign in during the visit.

At this time, officials will not be interviewing for consular reports of birth abroad. Also, visa and immigration services will not be provided. Only the services listed will be available during the visits.

For additional information concerning applying for U.S. passports and notary services please see our Website at: <http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/service.html>



## May Holiday Closures

The Embassy and Consulate will be closed on the following days:

- Friday, May 1st– International Labor Day\***
- Monday, May 25th– Memorial Day+**

A complete list of all of our holiday closings for 2015 is available on-line at <http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>

\*Vietnamese Holiday  
+American Holiday

# Memorial Day

Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day, named for the practice of laying flowers, wreaths, and flags at the graves of fallen service members.

Memorial Day dates back to 1882 but did not become the official name of the holiday until 1967.

Memorial Day is always observed on the last Monday of May.

## Services for U.S. Citizens

The Consulate General in **Ho Chi Minh City** uses a service-by-appointment system. Please visit our Website at <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=HCM&appcode=1> to make an appointment to apply for a U.S. passport, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, as well as for notary services, authentications, and additional visa pages.

Those with genuine emergencies, such as the death, arrest, or life threatening illness of a U.S. citizen, can appear on a walk-in basis from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday (except Vietnamese and American public holidays) or call us any time at (84-8) 3520-4200.

Every day we have a number of no-shows for routine services. If you make an appointment and find you cannot keep it, please log back into the appointment system and cancel the appointment so that the appointment slot will be available to another client.

Those picking up passports, Federal Benefits checks/correspondence, or submitting additional information related to a Consular Report of Birth Abroad case do not need to make an appointment but can do so between the hours of 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, excluding Vietnamese and American holidays.

Hours for **Hanoi** are 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. All services in Hanoi are by appointment only. You may book an appointment by going to the website: [http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/acs\\_appointmentsystem.html](http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/acs_appointmentsystem.html). For emergencies you can call the Embassy any time at (84-4) 3850-5000.

# Celebrities and Diplomats Unite to Save Rhinos



Members of the Consulate General Economic team and John Baker, Managing Director of WILDAID, support the “Stop Using Rhino Horn” campaign.

industry representatives, Maggie Q inspired Vietnamese celebrities to use their influential voices to change the awareness of Vietnamese people in protecting the rhinos. WILDAID and CHANGE will keep up their work of raising awareness in protecting rhinos on social media, and the two organizations are planning more public activities this year.

On April 12, Economic Officer Nate Rettenmayer attended the “Ticket To The Wild” event at the Tajmasago Castle in HCMC. The event was organized by WILDAID and the Center of Hands-on Actions and Networking for Growth and Environment (CHANGE). Ticket To The Wild is an activity of the Stop Using Rhino Horn Campaign funded by WILDAID and the African Wildlife Foundation. Hollywood star Maggie Q, serving in her capacity as one of WILDAID’s Global Ambassadors, delivered remarks at the event. Speaking in front of entertainment

*WILDAID is a U.S. based NGO that works towards ending the illegal wildlife trade in the world by reducing demand through public awareness campaigns and comprehensive marine protection. CHANGE is a Vietnamese NGO that promotes environmental sustainability across Vietnam and seeks to protect communities and ecosystems by fostering serious change towards sustainable behaviors and policies. CHANGE is also the official patron for [350.org](http://350.org) Vietnam, the largest grassroots climate change movement in Vietnam.*

**For more information regarding WILDAID and the fight to save rhinos, please see WILDAID’s website at:**

**<http://www.wildaid.org/rhinos>**



## Did You Know?

**For more information about obtaining or renewing a Vietnamese visa you can go to the website for the Embassy of Vietnam in**

**Washington DC at:**

**<http://vietnamembassy-usa.org/>**

## Information on New Vietnamese Immigration Law

On **January 1, 2015**, the new law on Entry, Exit, Transit, and Residence of Foreigners in Vietnam came into effect. The new law may affect procedures for obtaining and using Vietnamese visas by foreign citizens. Under the new law, individuals can only use their

Vietnamese visa for the purpose that it was granted (i.e., an individual may not enter Vietnam as a tourist and then seek to change their visa class to be able to work or study). Those intending to work in Vietnam must first obtain a work permit *before*

applying for their work visa. For further information about these and other changes under the new law, please contact local immigration authorities or the Embassy of Vietnam in Washington DC.

# Safety and Security Information

Pick pocketing and bag snatchings are a constant threat in Vietnam. When on the streets be mindful of your possessions. Keep them close, and don't let them out of your sight. An unattended bag can be gone in an instant. Do not carry unnecessary IDs (such as your U.S. driver's license) nor all of your credit cards with you. If you need to carry a credit card, carry just one. Leave the others in your hotel safe, hotel safe-deposit box, or at home. It is also wise not to carry all of your cash with you.

Do not carry your passport with you unless you absolutely have to. Carry a copy of your passport and visa and leave the passport in

your hotel safe or at home. A new trend we are seeing is



thieves on motorbikes hanging out near hotel entrances. When a passenger is getting out of a taxi and is distracted with paying the driver, retrieving bags, etc., the thief grabs the handbag or backpack and flees.

*This newsletter is also available on the U.S. Consulate's website at: <http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/service/monthly-newsletters.html>*

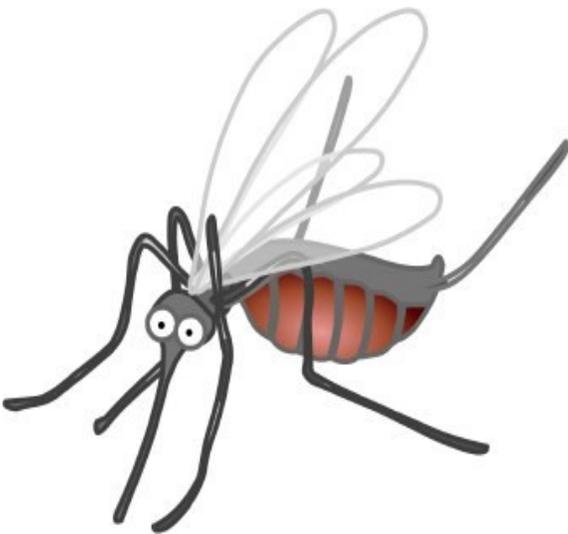
*Please pass this newsletter on to any other U.S. citizens in Vietnam and encourage them to enroll in STEP (<https://step.state.gov/step/>) to receive the newsletters in the future.*

## Dengue Fever Cases on the Rise

There have been over **3,000 Dengue Fever cases** in Vietnam this year, an increase of 43% from this time last year (source: VNS).

Dengue virus is present in all tropical and many subtropical areas worldwide. The mosquitoes that carry dengue bite most often in the morning and evening and during hot, wet times of the year. However, they can bite and spread infection all year long and at any time of day.

Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. An effective repellent will contain 20% to 30% DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide). DEET in high concentrations (>30%) may cause side effects, particularly in children. Therefore, avoid formulas containing >30% DEET. Use aerosols in an open space to avoid inhalation. Avoid applying repellent to the hands of children. Wear long-sleeved clothing and long pants if you are outdoors during the day and evening.



# Travel Alerts and Warnings

The U.S. Department of State regularly issues travel alerts or travel warnings for various countries and regions. Travel warnings and alerts issued in the last month or so include Yemen and Mexico.

The State Department has also issued an alert regarding potential implications for travel because of Ebola in parts of West Africa.

For information regarding all travel alerts and warnings, please go to this site: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html)

On January 9, 2015, the Department of State issued a Worldwide Caution on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world.



U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness.



For the current advisory please visit <http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html>

## How to Subscribe/Unsubscribe to this Newsletter

The U.S. Embassy in Hanoi and U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City are sending this monthly newsletter via the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) as a public service to U.S. citizens in Vietnam.

If you are departing Vietnam after a long stay, please be sure to update your status in STEP: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

Updating your status if you move away from Vietnam will remove you from the mailing list for this newsletter and other Embassy and Consulate Messages for U.S. citizens in Vietnam.

If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about the travel registration website, please send an e-mail to [CASTEP@state.gov](mailto:CASTEP@state.gov)

Please note: Inclusion of Non-U.S. Government links or information does not imply endorsement of contents.

## Contact Us

### Hanoi

American Citizen Services  
U.S. Embassy in Hanoi  
170 Ngoc Khanh, Ba Dinh District  
Hanoi, Vietnam

Email: [acshanoi@state.gov](mailto:acshanoi@state.gov)  
Telephone: (84-4) 3850-5000  
Fax: (84-4) 3850-5010

### Ho Chi Minh City

American Citizen Services  
U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City  
4 Le Duan, District 1  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

For routine inquiries, submit your question via: [http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/contact\\_acs.html](http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/contact_acs.html)  
Telephone: (84-8) 3520-4200 (for urgent assistance involving an arrest, death or life threatening illness)  
Fax: (84-8) 3520-4244