



January 2010
Istanbul, Turkey

American Consulate General
Üçşehitler Sok. No:2
İstinye/Sarıyer 34460
İstanbul



ACS News

Official Newsletter for American Citizens in Istanbul



Greetings from Consular Section Chief Susan Abeyta

Happy New Year and hello to all of you! I hope you enjoyed the holidays. This is our first newsletter for American citizens in the Istanbul consular district, and we're excited about this new way to keep in touch with you. I arrived in Istanbul in late July and I'm the new chief of the consular section in Istanbul. I'm looking forward to spending the next three years here and getting to know you and this wonderful part of the world.

The American Citizen Services (ACS) section at the U.S. Consulate General Istanbul is here to provide routine and emergency consular services to American citizens in the Istanbul consular district. Our ACS section is staffed by dedicated and knowledgeable individuals. Lisa Gisvold is the new chief of the ACS section and she will be here for the next three years as well. I'm sure you're all familiar with Leylâ Ertan, Nazan Zülfikâröğlü, and Pınar Peksu, who have been assisting American citizens in Istanbul for many years and have a wealth of experience and knowledge. Please don't hesitate to contact ACS (acs_istanbul@state.gov) should you need assistance.

Best wishes,

Susan Abeyta

Consular Section Chief
U.S. Consulate General
Istanbul, Turkey

Message from American Citizen Services

Dear Americans,

Happy New Year from all of us at the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul! With the start of the new year, this is an ideal time to launch our quarterly newsletter. Our quarterly newsletter allows us to share additional information to Americans in the Istanbul consular district. We'll post the newsletters on our website (<http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov>) so we encourage you to share the news with others, who might be interested. Our next edition will be published in April. If you have suggestions for future topics, please send us an email at acs_istanbul@state.gov. We wish you good health and much happiness in 2010!

Lisa Gisvold

Chief, American Citizen Services



American Citizen Services Appointment System

The American Citizen Services unit at the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul now has an online appointment system. Since December 1, 2009, all customers are required to make an appointment to avail themselves of routine passport, reports of birth abroad, and notarial services. The system allows customers to plan their visit in advance, ensure shorter wait times, and allow more efficient handling of individual cases.

To make an appointment, customers should visit the Consulate General's website at http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/acs_appointments.html. Customers requiring immediate attention or emergency service should contact the Consulate General at (90) 212-335-9000.

It's a New Year, So Don't Forget to Review . . .



January is a good time to plan for the future – check your passport's expiration date, update your registration with the Consulate General, and don't forget to request an absentee ballot.

Check your (and your family's) passport expiration dates. School breaks are just around the corner. Before you book the tickets and make the hotel reservations, check the expiration dates of your passport and your family's passports (remember that your child's passport is only valid for five years). Renewing passports early can save you both time and expense. Remember all American citizens must enter and exit the United States on a valid U.S. passport. For more information on renewing passports for adults and children, please visit our website at <http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/service.html>.

Update your registration. It is very important that you keep your registration information current. This allows us to communicate with you and assist you in the event of an emergency. If you recently moved or have a new phone number, please take a minute to update your information at the U.S. State Department's travel registration site, <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. If you haven't registered with us, please take the time to register now.

Request an absentee ballot. Each State has its own respective deadline for requesting an absentee ballot. Request your ballot today in order to vote in your State's next election. Please consult your State-specific instructions on the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website at <http://www.fvap.gov> for more information on how to submit your request for an absentee ballot. Remember that many States, but not all, allow for electronic submission (via either fax or e-mail) of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and this can save valuable time in meeting the State-specific deadlines. Either fax or email (and always subsequently mail) your FPCA to your local State government entity responsible for voter registration according to the instructions for your State. Additionally, Voting Information News (VIN) is a monthly newsletter that contains information on upcoming elections. You can view the newsletter at <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/vin.html>.