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American Consulate General
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ACS News

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Dear Americans,

Happy Independence Day!

With many of you traveling for summer vacation now, we've decided to focus this month on travel. In addition to information about visas to Turkey, we highlight summer hints for easier passport services and the redesign of the State Department's www.travel.state.gov website. Finally, as we celebrate Independence Day, we want to remind you that voting is a civic responsibility that connects all overseas Americans together, regardless of party affiliation. Don't forget to ensure your vote counts in the upcoming primary elections in the United States. We hope you have a wonderful holiday, and a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Best regards,

Lisa Gisvold
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Istanbul, Turkey

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Summer Hints for Easier Passport Services

In order to avoid any last-minute travel complications, please read the following suggestions.

- Check your passport's expiration date. Some countries require that a U.S. passport be valid for at least six months for visa issuance or visa-free entry.
- Check the expiration of your children's passports. Remember that passports for children under 16 are only valid for five years.
- Make an appointment early for passport services. All non-emergency consular services require an appointment. You can make an appointment online through our website, http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/acs_appointments.html. It typically takes 7-10 working days from the time you apply to receive your passport. There is a lot of demand for appointment slots in the days and weeks before a holiday and during the summer months so make your appointment early.
- Avoid a long wait. Avoid scheduling your appointment on Mondays or the days immediately before or after a holiday when wait times are longest.
- Check our website. You can find answers to common questions and required forms and instructions on the Consulate General's website, <http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/service.html>.

Redesign of www.Travel.State.Gov

On May 25, 2010, the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs unveiled a new design of www.travel.state.gov. This website is the State Department's preeminent tool for sharing security updates with Americans traveling abroad. Please make sure to visit the site and register your travel plans so that embassies and consulates around the world can better serve you. Additionally, the site provides helpful information on passports for American citizens, visa requirements for foreign citizens, and foreign adoption issues. The new design is easier to navigate and more user-friendly.

Visas to the United States

If your Turkish friends are planning to travel to the United States, please advise them to check their visa's expiration date. If they need to apply for a visa, please remind them to apply early as this is the busiest time of the year and our visa wait time is approximately four weeks. For further information on the visa application process, please visit our website: <http://istanbul.usconsulate.gov/visas.html>.

Visas to Turkey

American citizens traveling to Turkey on U.S. passports must obtain a visa. Currently, holders of all types of passports can purchase a 90-day visa at the port of entry for \$20 cash if they are traveling to Turkey as tourists. For further information, travelers in the U.S. may contact the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Washington D.C. Information may also be found at the following internet site: <http://www.turkey.org>. Americans overseas may contact the nearest Turkish embassy or consulate. All travelers planning to stay more than three months for any purpose are required to obtain a visa from a Turkish embassy or consulate. Such travelers must also apply for a residence/work permit or Turkish ID card within the first month of their arrival in Turkey. This includes anyone who plans to spend more than three months doing research, studying, or working in Turkey. The Consulate General is unable to provide any information regarding the renewal or extension of Turkish visas. Holders of such visas are encouraged to contact Turkish authorities.

Ensure Your Vote Counts!

Register and request your ballot now! Ballot applications and further information is available at www.fvap.gov/FPCA. Click on your state on the map and follow the instructions to register and request an absentee ballot.

The following States will hold primary elections during the months of July, August, and September 2010 –

July 20, 2010: Georgia

July 27, 2010: Oklahoma

August 3, 2010: Kansas, Michigan, Missouri

August 5, 2010: Tennessee

August 10, 2010: Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota

August 17, 2010: Washington, Wyoming

August 24, 2010: Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Vermont

August 28, 2010: Louisiana (1st Party Congressional)

September 14, 2010 – Delaware, Washington DC, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Wisconsin

September 18, 2010 - Hawaii