



AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES CORNER

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ISSUE III

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Ambassador's Message:

Dear Fellow Americans,

I am delighted to have the chance to introduce myself to you all, shortly after arriving in Kosovo. I hope to see many of you in the coming months at one event or the other. I have many responsibilities in my new job, but you should know that ensuring the safety and welfare of Americans is one of my top priorities.



It gives me a great pleasure to learn that communication with the American community in Kosovo is growing stronger. Thank you to those of you who volunteer already to serve as consular wardens in an emergency. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the consular section directly. I encourage all citizens to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Plan ([STEP](#)). STEP plays an important role in keeping U.S. citizens abroad safe and informed.

In this edition of the ACS newsletter you will find information that addresses some common questions and service updates. I hope you'll enjoy your stay in Kosovo.

Sincerely,
Ambassador Greg Delawie

FOLLOW AMBASSADOR DELAWIE ON TWITTER



To contact the ACS section during business hours

Email [here](#)

Call:

038-5959-3119

For after-hours

Emergencies call

038-5959-3000



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



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 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

Reminder: ACS Services - Passports, Reports of Birth and Notarial Services

As we are in the midst of the summer travel season, we'd like to remind you to check the validity of your passport. If your U.S. passport has less than twelve months of validity left, it is time to renew it. Most countries will not admit a traveler whose passport has less than six months of validity remaining.

Check the website links below for instructions, and remember that appointments are required for services. To make an appointment, please [click here](#). Please arrive a few minutes before your appointment to allow time for security.

Minimize processing time with the following steps:

Fill out and print your application online. Fill out your passport application online and print it. Failure to fill out and print your passport application online may cause delays in processing your application. Bring the printed copy of your application with you to the Embassy.

Be Prepared. If you do not bring all required information and documentation, you may be required to make a new appointment. Prior to your appointment, please review the requirements for your requested service (passport, CRBA, or notarial service). See the following links for up-to-date information on requirements.

- [Passport instructions](#)
- [Extra pages instructions](#)
- [Consular Report of Birth Abroad](#) for child born in Kosovo to U.S. citizen parent (at the time of birth).
- [Notarial Instructions](#) for documents to be used in the United States.

All applicants must bring their confirmation page at the time of appointment and follow all security screening rules. Please see additional information on our website about prohibited items.



Where to obtain U.S. Birth, Marriage or other public records

Should you need to apply for a first time U.S. passport or you need to register your child at a school in Kosovo, you can write to Vital Records at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>.

To use this valuable tool, you must first determine the state or area where the birth, death, marriage, or divorce occurred, then click on that state or area. Please follow the provided guidelines at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/guidelines.htm> to ensure an accurate response to your request.

Less than six month passport validity?

Many countries require that your U.S. passport have as much as 6 months validity remaining for entry. If your passport doesn't have the required validity, you should renew it today and avoid the stress of waiting to renew until the last minute. Learn more about requirements for renewing your passport below <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TORqyF1nsE>:



[Six Month Passport Validity Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TORqyF1nsE)

A Recipe for Applying in Person for a U.S. Passport

Applying in person for a U.S. passport is as easy as following a recipe. With this step by step video guide, we give you all of the ingredients you'll need to make a passport so you can get out and enjoy a tasty, travel treat!



IMPORTANT NEWS

Elimination of Visa Page Inserts

After December 31, 2015, there will no more extra visa pages added to U.S. passports. Instead, 52-page passport books will be issued at no extra cost to U.S. citizens applying from outside the United States. Please see the [following flyer for details](#).

Renew your passport early to make sure you have enough blank pages for visa stamps from other countries. Some countries require two blank pages for entry and exit.

Why STEP registration matters?

Did you know that since the last newsletter and beginning of March, the U.S. Embassy in Pristina has disseminated in total 17 messages to registered U.S. citizens?

Out of these messages: 16 were security messages including demonstration notices and 1 was a routine message with reminders for U.S. citizens.

U.S. citizens living or visiting in Kosovo should make informed decisions and determine their travel plans based on the information received through the U.S. Embassy.

Current Messages

29 July 2015 – The Department of State is updating the Worldwide Caution to provide information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. Recent terrorist attacks, whether by those affiliated with terrorist entities, copycats, or individual perpetrators, serve as a reminder that U.S. citizens need to maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This replaces the Worldwide Caution dated January 9, 2015. Full text on State.gov at <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html>.

Health, safety, or other emergency? Dial 192

U.S. citizens living or visiting Kosovo should dial 192 for any emergency, including reaching out to the police. However, please note that dialing 192 may not be possible when using internet apps like Skype, Viber and other such services.

Travel Checklist

Do you have a valid passport?

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required, and fill in (in pencil) the emergency information page of your passport. It's a good idea to keep a copy of your passport data page with you while traveling.

Does your passport have a minimum of 6 months validity?

Check your passport expiration date. To enter, many countries require travelers to have at least 6 months validity on their passports beyond their planned duration of stay. If your passport expires in six months or less you need to renew it now. Don't wait until the last minute; passports are printed in the United States and take an average of 4 weeks to come back. For complete information on how to renew a passport please visit of our [website](#).

Does your passport have sufficient pages?

Check your passport to make sure you are not about to run out of pages for visas and entry/exit stamps. For more information visit our [website](#).

Are you are well informed about the local conditions and laws of the places you will be visiting?

Remember that while in a foreign country you are subject to its laws. [Look up Country Specific Information](#) about the places you plan to visit, as well as [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#). In addition, make sure to check with the embassies of your destination countries for information on prohibited items.



Have you enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)?

Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. It's easy and it's free! Doing so will help your family and friends get in touch with you in case of an emergency and the U.S. Embassy or Consulate contact you in case of a crisis in the places you visit.

Are your friends or relatives aware of your travel plans?

Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends, so you can be contacted in case of an emergency. In addition, check out the Department of State's webpage on [Tips for Travelling Abroad](#).

Did you read the World Wide Caution?

The Department of State updated the [Worldwide Caution](#) on July 29, 2015 to provide information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world.



Travel Checklist Continued

Entry, Exit and Visa Requirements for Kosovo

U.S. citizens need a passport to enter Kosovo. No visa is required for tourist trips of up to 90 days. Visitors may be asked to provide documentation stating the purpose of their visit. If you intend to work, study, or visit for longer than 90 days, you will need to apply for a temporary residence permit with the Directorate for Migration and Foreigners in Pristina. To apply for a temporary residence permit, you will need to provide proof of local health insurance and an official police background check report from your U.S. state of residence in the United States or from law enforcement authorities in the country where you normally reside. The U.S. Embassy is not able to assist with obtaining background checks, certificates of conduct, or fingerprints for this purpose. For more information please visit our [web site](#).

Special Note on Travel to Serbia

Kosovo is an independent, sovereign country, but Serbia and several other countries still consider it to be part of Serbia. As a consequence, Serbian border officials will prevent foreigners, including U.S. citizens, from entering Serbia from Kosovo without a valid, recent Serbian entry stamp obtained from a Serbian point of entry that is not on the Kosovo-Serbia border. For example: if travelers enter Serbia from Belgrade airport, or neighboring Macedonia or Montenegro, and receive a Serbian entry stamp upon entry, they may travel through Serbia into Kosovo and then back into Serbia without difficulty. However, if they first enter Kosovo from a country other than Serbia, including from any country through the airport in Pristina, and then try to cross into Serbia from Kosovo, the Serbian authorities will not allow the traveler to enter Serbia. Serbia does not recognize entry stamps by Kosovo border authorities at Kosovo ports of entry, including Pristina Airport. In rare cases, Serbian border guards have defaced existing Kosovo entry/exit stamps by covering them with an "invalid" stamp. This does not affect the validity of your U.S. passport or ability to re-enter Kosovo. For more information please visit our [web site](#).

Children traveling with one parent, legal guardian or in a group

Did you know that you could subscribe and receive automatic updates from CBP website? For more information on creating an account with CBP, please [click here](#).

Due to the increasing incidents worldwide of child abductions in disputed custody cases and as possible victims of child pornography, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) strongly recommends that unless the child is accompanied by both parents, the adult should have a note from the child's other parent (or a note signed by both parents, in the case of a child traveling with grandparents, uncles or aunts, sisters or brothers, friends, or in groups).

The note should state: "I acknowledge that my wife/husband/etc. is traveling out of the country with my son/daughter/group. He/She/They has/have my permission to do so." For more information see [this page](#) on the CBP website. No parent should sign this under duress.



Local United States Citizen Skills/Resources Survey

U.S. citizens abroad may possess critical skills and resources invaluable for helping other U.S. citizens in a time of crisis. The Consular Section in Pristina would appreciate your assistance in identifying these skills and resources.

If you are interested in contributing information to the Consular "Skills Bank" please complete this survey and email a copy to

consularpristina@state.gov.

We will keep your responses confidential.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/108268.pdf>



Leaving Kosovo?

If you are departing Kosovo 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 Pristina, you may unsubscribe yourself by sending an email request to close your enrollment with the Embassy at:

consularpristina@state.gov

U.S. Visa Updates—Nonimmigrant Visa Services in Pristina

Applicants for nonimmigrant visa categories **A, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, L, M, O, P, Q, R**, can apply in Pristina. Please proceed to our public [website](#) to schedule an appointment.

Residents of Kosovo who hold a **B1/B2, C, D, I, F, M, or J** visa (still valid or expired no more than 36 months ago) and provided a complete set of fingerprints, may be eligible for the Visa Interview Waiver Program in Pristina. Please proceed to our public [website](#) to review the instructions and apply.

All immigrant and all other business and tourist applicants, must apply in Skopje.

For complete visa information, visa fee payment and appointment scheduling information:

- Online: <http://usvisa-info.com>
- Telephone: (+389) 2 317 1042 in Kosovo or (703)439-2346 in the U.S.
- Skype: **usvisamacedonia**

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

DS-160 application: If you are eligible to apply in Pristina, please choose KOSOVO, Pristina on the application. If you are required to apply in Skopje (Tourist visa requiring interview or Summer Work and Travel), you must choose Macedonia, Skopje in the application system, otherwise you will be denied entry at the U.S. Embassy in Skopje.

IMPORTANT VISA MRV FEE INFORMATION!

All visa applicants eligible to be processed in U.S. Embassy Pristina must pay in cash (Dollars or Euro, but not a combination of currencies) at the Consular Section on the date of interview. Do not pay at Raiffeisen bank. Any payments made to Raiffeisen bank will only be accepted in U.S. Embassy Skopje. MRV fees are not refundable.

Upcoming Holidays and ACS Office Closures

The U.S. Embassy Pristina will be closed on the following dates for the rest of 2015:

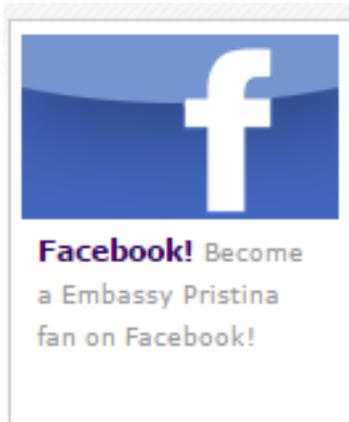
**September 24	Thursday	Eid-Al-Addha (Small Bajram - KSV)
October 12	Monday	Columbus Day (U.S.)
November 11	Wednesday	Veterans Day (U.S.)
November 26	Thursday	Thanksgiving Day (U.S.)
December 25	Friday	Christmas Day (U.S./KSV)

* Actual holiday falls on a weekend or on a non-working day and will be observed as noted.

** The Date depends on the lunar cycle - therefore the dates may change.

U.S. citizens who require emergency assistance during holidays should contact the Duty officer at 038-5959-3000.

Stay Connected!



Click [here](#) to view U.S. Department of State videos and [here](#) to view U.S. Embassy Pristina videos



Important Security Announcement

Electronic devices, large bags, weapons, and glass bottles are not allowed within the Embassy grounds. Visitors who do not follow these instructions will experience considerable delays at the security check point, which may result in the appointment being cancelled. There are no storage facilities on the facility.

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<http://twitter.com/TravelGov>

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

<http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english/news.html>

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

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