

U.S. Embassy - Manila American Citizen Services

ACS Newsletter - March 2008

2008 Absentee Voting Information for Americans

Continued on page 3

The 2008 U. S. presidential and state primary season has begun. We encourage you to act now so that your opinion is heard – not only in the November 2008 presidential and general elections, but also in the presidential primary and state primary elections! The official U.S. Government website for overseas absentee voting assistance is the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website www.fvap.gov.

Generally, all U.S. citizens 18 years or older who are or will be residing outside the United States during an election period are eligible to vote absentee in any election for Federal office. This includes primary, run-off, and special elections that occur throughout the year, as well as the general election in November 2008. Some states allow overseas voters to vote in elections for state and local offices, and for state and local referendums.

Voting eligibility and residency requirements are determined by the various U.S. states, and are available on-line at <http://fvap.gov/pubs/vag.html>. Your "legal state of residence" for voting purposes is the state where you last resided immediately prior to departure from the United States. Voting rights extend to overseas citizens even though they may no longer own property or have other ties to their last state of residence, and even if their intent to return to that state may be uncertain. For

those who have never resided in the U.S., sixteen states, to date, allow eligible U.S. citizens to register where a parent would be eligible to vote.

To register to vote and/or apply for an absentee ballot, you can use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). The on-line version, the OFPCA, is accepted by all states and territories except American Samoa and Guam. Voters from American Samoa and Guam must use the standard form of the FPCA, available at the Consulate General or through many American civic groups. The on-line OFPCA form must be completed legibly, printed, signed, dated, and mailed to your local election officials. Your state may allow faxing to speed the process, but you will still need to send in the original by mail. Use an envelope and affix proper postage. The official U.S. Government website for overseas absentee vot-

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March 2008

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Economic Stimulus Payments

Updated March 6, 2008

Starting in May, the Treasury will begin sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million households. To receive a payment, taxpayers must have a valid Social Security number, \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal tax return. IRS will take care of the rest. Eligible people will receive up to \$600 (\$1,200 for married couples), and parents will receive an additional \$300 for each eligible child younger than 17. Millions of retirees, disabled veterans and low-wage workers who usually

are exempt from filing a tax return must do so this year in order to receive a stimulus payment.

But there are more details to know about. Find out more here and visit this page regularly for the latest updates: <http://www.irs.gov/irs/article/0,,id=177937,00.html>

Also see the additional information on pages 6 & 7, as well as the IRS fliers on pages 8 & 9 of this issue of the ACS newsletter!



Dates of Interest

2008 U.S. Embassy Holiday Closings

Maundy Thursday (PHL)	Thurs, Mar 20
Good Friday (PHL)	Fri, Mar 21
Bataan & Corregidor / Heroism Day (PHL)	Mon, Apr 7
Labor Day (PHL)	Thurs, May 1
Memorial Day (U.S.)	Mon, May 26
Independence Day (PHL)	Mon, June 9
Independence Day (U.S.)	Fri, July 4
Ninoy Aquino Day (PHL)	Mon, Aug 18
National Heroes Day (PHL)	Mon, Aug 25
Labor Day (U.S.)	Mon, Sept 1
Eid-ul-Fitr (Subject to Proclamation)(PHL)	TBD
Columbus Day (U.S.)	Mon, Oct 13
Veterans Day (U.S.)	Tues, Nov 11
Thanksgiving Day (U.S.)	Thurs, Nov 27
Bonifacio Day (PHL)	Mon, Dec 1
Christmas Day (U.S./PHL)	Thurs, Dec 25
Additional special non-working Day (PHL)	Fri, Dec 26
Last Day of the Year (PHL)	Wed, Dec 31

2008 Outreach Schedule

Thursday	March 13	Legaspi
Thursday	April 3	Angeles
Friday	April 4	Olongapo
Thursday	April 17	Baguio
Friday	May 16	Davao
Thursday	June 5	Cebu
Friday	June 6	Cebu
Thursday	July 17	Angeles
Friday	July 18	Olongapo
Friday	August 15	Pangasinan
Friday	September 12	Cagayan De Oro
Thursday	October 2	Angeles
Friday	October 3	Olongapo
Thursday	October 23	Baguio
Friday	November 7	Davao

Dates are only tentative and subject to change

American Citizen Services U.S. Embassy 1201 Roxas Blvd. Ermita, Manila, Philippines

Consul General: Richard D. Haynes

ACS Chief: Linda Daetwyler

Office: (63)(2)-301-2246 or 301-2555

Fax: (63)(2)-522-3242

Passports

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 11:00am

By phone: M-F, 2-4pm x5187

For applications: FedEx - 02-879- 4747 or

<http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Citizenship and Birth Registration

By phone: M-F, 2-4pm x5188

By appointment only for forms/applications: FedEx - 02-879-4747 or <http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Notary Services

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 10:00am

Legal Capacity to Marry

Mon through Fri 7:30am - 10:00am

EMERGENCIES: For emergencies after hours please call 63-2-301-2000 and ask for the Duty Officer.

Website: <http://manila.usembassy.gov>

Email: acsinfomanila@state.gov

Virtual Consulate Davao:

<http://www.usvirtualconsulatedavao.org.ph>

Online Registration: <https://travelregistration.state.gov>

Cebu Consular Agency - Waterfront Hotel, Lahug Tel: (032) 231-1261 Fax: (032) 231-0174

Hours: Mon through Fri 9:00am - 11:00am

2008 Absentee Voting Information for Americans Abroad (continued from page 1)

ing assistance, <http://www.fvap.gov>, has a wealth of information about absentee voting, including the state-specific instructions for completing the FPCA form, links to state and local officials, and a downloadable emergency ballot for use by those who register in time but fail to receive an official ballot.

As a general rule, you should try to send in the FPCA so that it reaches your local election officials at least forty-five days before the first election in which you are eligible to vote — ample time for them to process the request and send you a blank ballot. If applying for both registration and an absentee ballot, you may want to mail the FPCA earlier. One FPCA will qualify you to receive all ballots for Federal offices for the next two regular Federal elections (through 2010). However, we recommend that you submit a new FPCA in January of every year, and whenever you move, to ensure that your most recent mailing and e-mail addresses are on file with your local election officials.

Under normal circumstances, most states and territories begin sending ballots to overseas citizens 30-45 days before an election. However, if you haven't received your ballot within three weeks of your state's ballot receipt deadline, and you are required to return your voted ballot by mail, you should download, complete, sign, date, and send in a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB), available at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefwab.html>. **Make sure it is witnessed if required by your**

state. If you subsequently receive your regular absentee ballot, execute it and return it regardless of when you receive it. Court decisions sometimes require late counting of ballots voted by Election Day, but received by local election officials for a specified period of time following Election Day.



Be an Educated Voter

Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues is widely available and easy to obtain via the Internet. Use the links appearing on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/links/otherlinks.html>, read your hometown newspaper on-line, or search the Internet to locate articles and information.

The Voting Assistance Officers at [U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas](http://usembassy.state.gov/) (<http://usembassy.state.gov/>) are available to answer questions about absentee voting.

Information taken directly from: http://www.travel.state.gov/law/info/info_2964.html#

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

U.S. Embassy representatives from the **American Citizen Services, Non-Immigrant Visa, and Immigrant Visa Units of the Consular Section; Department of Homeland Security; Social Security Administration; Veterans Affairs; Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment** and the **Joint US Military Assistance Group** will be in:

ANGELES CITY

Thursday, April 3, 2008

8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

G/F, Rafael Lazatin Hall

Hotel Stotsenberg

Gil Puyat Avenue corner A. Soriano Street

Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

U.S. Embassy representatives from the **American Citizen Services, Non-Immigrant Visa, and Immigrant Visa Units of the Consular Section; Department of Homeland Security; Social Security Administration; Veterans Affairs; Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment** and the **Joint US Military Assistance Group** will be in:

OLONGAPO CITY

Friday, April 4, 2008

8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

G/F, Museum Chinese Restaurant

Legenda Hotel and Casino

Waterfront Road, Subic Bay Freeport

Olongapo City



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

**Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations**

**Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov**

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2008

VA Increases Travel Reimbursement for Eligible Veterans

Peake: Disabled Veterans Earned Increase

WASHINGTON – Over a million eligible veterans will see their mileage reimbursement more than double starting tomorrow, for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities.

“This increase helps veterans – especially those living in rural areas – offset some of the gasoline costs as they travel to VA’s world-class health care,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. “Increasing the mileage reimbursement is one more step by VA to help veterans access the health care they deserve.”

The 2008 appropriations act provided funding for VA to increase the beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement rate from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile. The increase goes into effect on Feb. 1.

After little more than a month on the job, Secretary Peake used his authority to establish the first increase in the mileage reimbursement in 30 years, fulfilling a pledge he made during his Senate confirmation hearing last month.

While increasing the payment, VA, as mandated by law, also equally increased the deductible amounts applied to certain mileage reimbursements. The new deductibles are \$7.77 for a one way trip, \$15.54 for a round trip, with a maximum of \$46.62 per calendar month. However, these deductibles can be waived if they cause a financial hardship to the veteran.

#

For the latest news releases and other information, visit VA on the Internet at

<http://www.va.gov/opa>.

To receive e-mail copies of news releases, subscribe to VA’s list server at:

http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opalist_listserv.cfm.

U.S. PASSPORT CARD APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED AS OF FEB 1st

U.S. citizens began applying in advance for the new U.S. Passport Card beginning February 1, 2008, in anticipation of land border travel document requirements. We expect cards will be available and mailed to applicants in spring 2008.

The passport card will facilitate entry and expedite document processing at U.S. land and sea ports-of-entry when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. The card may not be used to travel by air. It will otherwise carry the rights and privileges of the U.S. passport book and will be adjudicated to the exact same standards.

The Department of State is issuing this passport card in response to the needs of



border resident communities for a less expensive and more portable alternative to the traditional passport book. The card will have the same validity period as a passport book: 10 years for an adult, five for children 15 and younger. For adults

who already have a passport book, they may apply for the card as a passport renewal and pay only \$20. First-time applicants will pay \$45 for adult cards and \$35 for children.

To facilitate the frequent travel of U.S. citizens living in border communities and to meet DHS's operational needs at land borders, the passport card will contain a vicinity-read radio frequency identification (RFID) chip. This chip will link the card to a stored record in secure government databases. There will be no personal information written to the RFID chip itself.

Learn more about the U.S. Passport Card at: http://travel.state.gov/passport/ppt_card/ppt_card_3926.html

Cashier Services:
For American Citizen Services, our cashier accepts dollars, pesos, and major credit cards (American Express, Visa, Master Card) for payment. We cannot accept other currencies or do bank transfers.

Philippine Bureau of Immigration's Visa Issuance Made Simple (VIMS) System

The Philippine Bureau of Immigration (BI) Commissioner has issued an official Memorandum advising departing foreign tourists with expired Philippine tourist visas that they may no longer update their visas at the airport.

BI stated that all requests for tourist visa extensions filed at any international port of entry/exit shall immediately be referred to the Visa Extension Section of the BI Main Office (Magallanes Drive, Intramuros, Manila) or concerned sub-port/field office for appropriate action.

The Embassy encourages Americans to keep their visas updated to avoid unnecessary inconvenience. Details on the new procedure can be found on the Philippine Bureau of Immigration's website: www.immigration.gov.ph.

Transportation Security Administration

Quick Tips for Passengers

Passengers may bring to the checkpoint:

- Travel-size toiletries (3 ounces or less) that fit comfortably in ONE quart-size, clear plastic, zip-top bag.
- Prescription liquid medications, baby formula and diabetic glucose treatments in excess of 3 ounces if these items are declared to Transportation Security Officers at the security checkpoint.

And beyond the checkpoint:

- Beverages and other items purchased in the secure boarding area may be brought onto the aircraft.

Check www.tsa.gov or contact your air carrier for more specific information.





Economic Stimulus Payments Information

Media Relations Office

Washington, D.C.

Media Contact: 202.622.4000

www.irs.gov/newsroom

Public Contact: 800.829.1040

More Information on Stimulus Payments Posted to IRS.gov; New Details for Recipients of Social Security, Veterans Benefits

IR-2008-21, Feb. 15, 2008

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service released additional information today about the upcoming economic stimulus payments in a specially designed section for taxpayers on IRS.gov.

The new information includes an extensive set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the stimulus payments, with a special emphasis on recipients of Social Security and certain veterans' benefits. Millions of people in this group who normally don't file a tax return will need to do so this year in order to receive a stimulus payment.

For recipients of Social Security and certain veterans' benefits and low-income workers who don't normally need to file, the IRS also released a special version of a [Form 1040A](#) that highlights the simple, specific sections of the return that can be filled out by people in these categories to qualify for a stimulus payment.

"Most taxpayers just need to file a 2007 tax return in order to automatically receive the stimulus payment," said Acting IRS Commissioner Linda Stiff. "But we are especially concerned about recipients of Social Security and veterans' benefits who may need to take special steps this year to file a tax return in order to obtain a stimulus payment. IRS.gov will help taxpayers get what they need."

The Frequently Asked Questions section – accessible through the front page of IRS.gov -- includes an extensive set of information for all taxpayers with questions about the stimulus payments, commonly referred to as rebates. The questions and answers include important information for low-income workers and certain recipients of Social Security, Railroad Retirement benefits and veterans' benefits.

The [special IRS.gov section](#) also features extensive examples of how much taxpayers can expect to receive in stimulus payments. The page includes more than two-dozen payment scenarios affecting different types of taxpayers.

IRS.gov will be updated frequently to provide taxpayers with all they need to understand the stimulus payments.

The IRS will begin sending taxpayers their economic stimulus payments in early May after the current tax season concludes. In most cases, the payment will equal the amount of tax liability on the tax return, with a maximum amount of \$600 for individuals (\$1,200 for married couples who file a joint return). Payments to more than 130 million households will continue over several weeks during the spring and summer. A payment schedule for taxpayers will be announced in the near future on IRS.gov.

The IRS reminds taxpayers when they file their 2007 tax return to use direct deposit, which is the fastest way to get both regular refunds and stimulus payments. However, taxpayers who use Refund Anticipation Loans (RALs) or enter into any other loan or financial agreement with their tax professional cannot receive their stimulus payments by direct deposit and instead will get a paper check.

The only way to receive a stimulus payment in 2008 is to file a 2007 tax return. The vast majority of taxpayers must take no extra steps to receive their stimulus payment beyond the routine filing of their tax return. No other action, extra form or call is necessary.

Special Guidelines for Recipients of Certain Social Security, Veterans and Railroad Benefits

Certain people who normally are not required to file but who are eligible for the stimulus payment will have to file a

Economic Stimulus Payments Information (continued)

2007 tax return. This includes low-income workers or those who receive Social Security benefits or veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors' benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2007. These taxpayers will be eligible to receive a payment of \$300 (\$600 on a joint return) if they had at least \$3,000 of qualifying income.

Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits, certain Railroad Retirement benefits, certain veterans' benefits and earned income, such as income from wages, salaries, tips and self-employment. For taxpayers filing joint tax returns, only a total of \$3,000 of qualifying income from both spouses is required to be eligible for a payment.

The special version of the Form 1040A unveiled today on IRS.gov shows taxpayers in these groups the specific sections of the form they need to fill out to qualify for the stimulus payment. The mock-up is designed to be used as a guide for filling out an actual Form 1040A.

"People who don't normally need to file have a roadmap on how to fill out the Form 1040A quickly and easily," Stiff said. "We encourage recipients of Social Security and veterans' benefits who don't normally need to file a tax return to use this mock-up of the form as a guide to help them get their stimulus payment."

The Form 1040A illustration on IRS.gov shows the limited number of lines that will need to be filled out for recipients of Social Security, certain Railroad Retirement and certain veterans' benefits. A key line is reporting their 2007 benefits on Line 14a of Form 1040A. The IRS reminds taxpayers they can also use Line 20a on Form 1040 to report these same benefits.

In addition, taxpayers in these groups should write the words "Stimulus Payment" at the top of the 1040A or 1040.

For now, taxpayers in this group filing a tax return can only file a paper copy of the Form 1040 or Form 1040A. The IRS is working to update its systems to accept electronic versions of these limited-information returns for taxpayers who otherwise have no need to file a tax return. The IRS is also working with the software community to handle these returns electronically at a future date.

The IRS also reminded taxpayers with Social Security, Railroad Retirement or veterans' benefits who have already filed but did not report their qualifying benefits on either Line 14a of Form 1040A or Line 20a of Form 1040 that they may need to file an amended return in some situations to receive a larger stimulus payment.

Taxpayers who already have filed but did not report these benefits can file an amended return by using Form 1040X, which can only be filed with a paper form.

The IRS reminded taxpayers who don't have any other requirement to file a tax return that submitting a tax return to qualify for the economic stimulus payments does not create any additional tax or trigger a tax bill. In addition, the stimulus payments will not have any effect on eligibility for federal benefits.

The IRS is working with the Social Security Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs and other organizations to ensure that recipients are aware of the need to file a tax return to receive their stimulus payment in 2008.

Economic Stimulus Payments Information - Veterans

▶ Did you receive

DISABILITY COMPENSATION, PENSION OR SURVIVORS' BENEFITS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LAST YEAR?

Even if you are not otherwise required to file a tax return, you may still be entitled to an economic stimulus payment from the federal government.

WHAT YOU COULD GET: You could receive a payment of \$300 for individuals or \$600 if you are married and file a joint tax return with your spouse. Eligible taxpayers who qualify for a payment may receive an additional \$300 for each qualifying child. To qualify a child must be under age 17 as of December 31, 2007.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO: All you have to do to get the stimulus payment is file a 2007 IRS Form 1040 or Form 1040A and report at least \$3,000 in qualifying income on the form. You can include the amount of your VA benefits to qualify for the stimulus payment.

QUALIFYING INCOME: Add the amount of your VA disability compensation, pension, or survivors' benefits to any other qualifying income you have to reach the \$3,000 requirement. Other qualifying income would include wage earnings or Social Security benefits.

WHAT YOU FILL OUT: Enter your name, address, Social Security Number, and filing status on the form. Then just enter the amount of VA and Social Security benefits you received on line 14a of the Form 1040A or line 20a of Form 1040. You can estimate the benefits you receive from VA or the Social Security Administration by taking the monthly amount you received last year and multiplying it by the number of months you received payments. If you need to include wage earnings to reach the \$3,000 qualifying level, enter that amount on Line 7 of Form 1040A or 1040. In addition, you should write the words "Stimulus Payment" at the top of the 1040A or 1040.

IS THE STIMULUS PAYMENT TAXABLE NEXT YEAR? No!

WILL THIS PAYMENT AFFECT THE AMOUNT OF VA BENEFITS YOU RECEIVE? No!

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY PAYMENT? For those who file a 2007 tax return, IRS will begin mailing checks in May.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: In late March 2008, the IRS will mail a packet of information to recipients of VA benefits who did not file a tax return last year. The packet will contain guidance to help you claim the stimulus payment. If you need information in the interim, you can visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov.



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
www.irs.gov

Publication 3046 (3-08) 806
Relating to the Economic Stimulus Payments Act of 2008

STIMULUS ←
PAYMENT

Economic Stimulus Payments Information - Social Security



▶ Did you receive
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS LAST YEAR?

Even if you are not otherwise required to file a tax return, you may still be entitled to an economic stimulus payment from the federal government.

WHAT YOU COULD GET: You could receive a payment of \$300 for individuals or \$600 if you are married and file a joint tax return with your spouse. Eligible taxpayers who qualify for a payment may receive an additional \$300 for each qualifying child. To qualify a child must be under age 17 as of December 31, 2007.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO: All you have to do to get the stimulus payment is file a 2007 IRS Form 1040 or Form 1040A and report at least \$3,000 in qualifying income on the form. You can include the amount of your SSA benefits to qualify for the stimulus payment.

QUALIFYING INCOME: Add the amount of your Social Security benefits to other qualifying income, such as wage earnings or certain benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs, to reach the \$3,000 requirement. However, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) does not count as qualifying income for the stimulus payment.

WHAT YOU FILL OUT: You will enter your name, address, Social Security Number, and filing status on the form. Then just enter the amount of benefits reported to you in January on Form 1099-SSA on Line 14a of Form 1040A or Line 20a of Form 1040. If you don't have Form 1099-SSA, you can estimate your Social Security benefits by taking the monthly amount you received last year and multiplying it by the number of months you received a check. If you need to include wage earnings to reach the \$3,000 qualifying level, enter that amount on Line 7 of Form 1040A or 1040. In addition, you should write the words "Stimulus Payment" at the top of the 1040A or 1040.

IS THE STIMULUS PAYMENT TAXABLE NEXT YEAR? No!

WILL THIS PAYMENT AFFECT THE AMOUNT OF SSA BENEFITS YOU RECEIVE? No!

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY PAYMENT? The IRS will begin mailing checks in early May.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: In late March 2008, the IRS will mail a packet of information to recipients of Social Security benefits who did not file a tax return last year. The packet will contain guidance to help you claim the stimulus payment. If you need information in the interim, you can visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov.



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
www.irs.gov
Publication 4044 (3-2008)
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Informational Attachments



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U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

Consular Information Sheet

The Department of State provides information to assist travelers in better understanding foreign countries they may visit and the known risks that they should consider. Travelers are encouraged to inform themselves about their country of destination prior to commencement of travel. It is the traveler's responsibility to obtain a U.S. passport from the Department of State and appropriate visas from the embassy or consulate of the country of destination. Canceling a scheduled trip abroad may cost money. When making reservations, travelers should discuss cancellation policies with their travel agent, travel insurer or airline. The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation; Medicare does not cover medical expenses abroad.

Philippines

Americans planning travel to *Philippines* should read [Intercountry Adoption Philippines](#), [International Parental Child Abduction Philippines](#), [Travel Warning for Philippines](#), [Avian Flu Fact Sheet](#) and [Worldwide Caution Public Announcement](#) available on the Department of State web site at <http://travel.state.gov>

October 03, 2007

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: The Philippines is a developing nation with a democratic system of government, located in Southeast Asia. The archipelago consists of more than 7,000 islands, of which over 800 are inhabited. The major island groupings are Luzon in the north, the Visayas in the center, and Mindanao in the south. Tourist facilities are available within population centers and the main tourist areas. English is widely spoken in the Philippines, and most signs are in English. Read the [Department of State Background Notes on Philippines](#) for additional information.

ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS: U.S. citizens may enter the Philippines without a visa upon presentation of their U.S. passport, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the Philippines, and a return ticket to the United States or an onward ticket to another country. Upon arrival immigration authorities will annotate your passport with an entry visa valid for 21 days. If you plan to stay longer than 21 days you must apply for an extension at the Philippine Bureau of Immigration and Deportation's main office at Magallanes Drive; Intramuros, Manila, Philippines, or at any of its provincial offices (<http://www.immigration.gov.ph>).

Persons who overstay their visas are subject to fines and detention by Philippine immigration authorities. American citizens are urged to remain aware of their visa status while in the Philippines and to strictly follow immigration laws and regulations. Travelers departing the country from international airports must pay a Passenger Service Charge in Philippine Pesos. For further information on entry/exit requirements, please contact the Embassy of the Philippines at: 1600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (telephone: (202) 467-9300) or one of the Philippine consulates in the United States (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco) or via the Internet at <http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org>.

Special requirements exist for the entry of unaccompanied minors. In an effort to prevent international child abduction, the Philippine government requires that a waiver of exclusion be obtained from a Philippine Embassy or Consulate or from the Bureau of Immigration and Detention in Manila for a child under 15 years of age who plans to enter the Philippines unac-

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

accompanied by either a parent or legal guardian prior to the child's entry into the Philippines.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the prevention of [international child abduction](#) can be found on our web site. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information](#) sheet.

SAFETY AND SECURITY: The Department urges Americans contemplating travel to the Philippines to carefully consider the risks to their safety and security, including those due to terrorism. While travelers may encounter such threats anywhere in the Philippines, the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago are of particular concern. Travelers should exercise extreme caution in both central and western Mindanao as well as in the Sulu Archipelago.

Kidnap-for-ransom gangs operate in the Philippines. In January 2007, one such gang abducted two U.S. citizen children outside their home in Tagum City, Davao Del Norte, in Mindanao. The New People's Army (NPA), another terrorist organization, operates in many rural areas of the Philippines, including in the northern island of Luzon. While it has not targeted westerners in several years, the NPA could threaten U.S. citizens with extortion methods, especially those citizens engaged in business or property management activities.

Terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Jema'ah Islamiyah, and groups that have broken away from the more mainstream Moro Islamic Liberation Front or Moro National Liberation Front, have carried out bombings resulting in deaths, injuries and property damage. Recent incidents have occurred in urbanized areas in Mindanao. On January 10, 2007, separate bombings in the cities of Kidapawan, Cotabato and General Santos killed seven people and injured 41. Manila is not immune to bombing activities; as recently as August 2, 2007, two improvised explosive devices were planted in the Taguig and Mandaluyong areas of greater Manila. While both devices failed to detonate, these incidents highlight that the entire country is at risk from these groups. While these incidents do not appear to have targeted Westerners or Western interests, travelers should remain vigilant and avoid congregating in public areas.

Many people who reside in or visit areas that face terrorist threats, such as in Mindanao, travel with their own security force, avoid an obvious presence, or both. In some areas of the Philippines, especially in Mindanao, visitors should avoid travel at night outside metropolitan areas. U.S. Government employees must seek special permission for travel to Mindanao or the Sulu Archipelago. When traveling in Mindanao, U.S. official travelers attempt to lower their profile, limit their length of stay, and exercise extreme caution.

Americans residing or traveling in the Philippines should also always remain aware of their surroundings, listen to news reports, and ensure that travel documents are current. The Department strongly encourages Americans in the Philippines to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manila through the State Department's travel registration web site, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. 63-2-528-6300. The Consular American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is 63-2-522-3242 and the ACS web page is at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/www3004.html>.

For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the [Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet site](#) at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current [Travel Warnings and Public Announcements](#), including the [Worldwide Caution Public Announcement](#), can be found.

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

Up-to-date information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada, or for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll-line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The Department of State urges American citizens to take responsibility for their own personal security while traveling overseas. For general information about appropriate measures travelers can take to protect themselves in an overseas environment, see the Department of State's pamphlet *A Safe Trip Abroad*.

CRIME: As in many of the major metropolitan areas in the United States, crime is a serious concern in Metro Manila. As a rule of thumb, Americans should exercise good judgment and remain aware of their surroundings. Reports of confidence games, pick pocketing, and credit card fraud are common. Be wary of unknown individuals who attempt to befriend you, especially just after you have arrived in country. A number of recent robberies and assaults involving the "date rape drug" (known locally as Ativan) have occurred; the drug is generally administered to unwitting male and female visitors via food or drink. It is best not to accept food, drink, or rides in private vehicles from strangers, even if they appear legitimate. There have been several kidnappings and violent assaults of foreigners in the Metro Manila area. There have also been reports of gunmen robbing foreign passengers in vehicles traveling to and from the international airport.

Taxis are the recommended form of public transportation. However, the following safeguards are important: do not enter a taxi if it has already accepted another passenger; and, request that the meter be used. If the driver is unwilling to comply with your requests, it is best to wait for another cab. It is also a good idea to make a mental note of the license plate number should there be a problem. When driving in the city, make certain that the doors are locked and the windows rolled up. All other forms of public transportation, such as the light rail system, buses, and "jeepneys" should be avoided for both safety and security reasons.

Visitors should also be vigilant when using credit cards. One common form of credit card fraud involves the illicit use of an electronic device to retrieve and record information, including the PIN, from the card's magnetic strip. The information is then used to make unauthorized purchases. To limit your vulnerability to this scam, never let your card out of your sight.

A continuing problem is the commercial scam or sting that attempts to sell or to seek negotiation of fraudulent U.S. securities. Visitors and residents should be wary when presented with supposed Federal Reserve Notes or U.S. securities for sale or negotiation. For further information, consult the Federal Reserve System's Web site.

In many countries around the world, counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. Transactions involving such products may be illegal under local law. In addition, bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines. More information on this serious problem is available at <http://www.cybercrime.gov/18usc2320.htm>

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME: The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. If you are the victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to local police, please contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance. The Embassy/Consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local au-

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

thorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed.

The Philippines has a victim compensation program to provide financial compensation to victims of violent or personal crime and of unjust imprisonment. Information may be obtained from the Philippine Department of Justice at 011-632-536-0447 or via the Internet at <http://www.doj.gov.ph/>.

See our information on [Victims of Crime](#).

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Adequate medical care is available in major cities in the Philippines, but even the best hospitals may not meet the standards of medical care, sanitation, and facilities provided by hospitals in the United States. Medical care is limited in rural and more remote areas.

Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost several or even tens of thousands of dollars. Most hospitals will require a down payment of estimated fees in cash at the time of admission. In some cases, public and private hospitals have withheld lifesaving medicines and treatments for non-payment of bills. Hospitals also frequently refuse to discharge patients or release important medical documents until the bill has been paid in full. A list of doctors and medical facilities in the Philippines is available on the web page of the U.S. Embassy in Manila at <http://philippines.usembassy.gov>.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or via the CDC's Internet site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>. For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's (WHO) web site at <http://www.who.int/en>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/ith/en>.

MEDICAL INSURANCE: The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. Please see our information on [medical insurance overseas](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in a foreign country, U.S. citizens may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. The information below concerning the Philippines is provided for general reference only, and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.

Travel within the Philippine archipelago is possible by boat, plane, bus, or car. Few tourists rent cars to drive, as the road system is crowded and drivers are undisciplined. Driving off the national highways and paved roads is particularly dangerous, especially at night, and should be avoided. To avoid overcrowded or unsafe transport, exercise caution in planning travel by older, inter-island ferryboats, or other public conveyances.

For specific information concerning Philippine driver's permits, vehicle inspection, road tax and mandatory insurance, please contact the Philippine Embassy in Washington, DC at tel. (202) 467-9300 or one of the Philippine consulates in the United State (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco) or via the Internet at

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

<http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org>. Please see also related information from the Philippine Department of Tourism at <http://www.tourism.gov.ph> and <http://www.dotpcvc.gov.ph>.

Please refer to our [Road Safety](#) page for more information. Visit the website of the country's national tourist office and national authority responsible for road safety at insert site here.

AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the Government of the Philippines' Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of the Philippines' air carrier operations. For more information, travelers may visit the FAA's website at http://www.faa.gov/safety/programs_initiatives/oversight/iasa.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

Marriage in the Philippines: The Philippine Government requires foreigners who wish to marry in the Philippines to obtain from the U.S. Embassy a "Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage" before filing an application for a marriage license. Because there is no national register of marriages in the United States, the U.S. Embassy cannot provide such a certification. As a result, the Philippine Government will accept an "Affidavit in Lieu of a Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage" in its place. Americans may execute this affidavit at the U.S. Embassy in Manila Monday-Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., except for Philippine or American holidays. The American must present his/her U.S. passport. There is a fee of \$30.00 or its peso equivalent for the affidavit. Philippine authorities will not accept any substitute document issued in the United States. Before traveling to the Philippines to be married, U.S. military personnel should contact their personnel office regarding Department of Defense joint service regulations.

Execution of the affidavit by a U.S. consular officer is a notarial act and the consular officer is authorized by U.S. law to refuse to perform the service if the document will be used for a purpose patently unlawful, improper, or inimical to the best interests of the United States (see 22 C.F.R. section 92.9b). Entering into a marriage contract for the principal purpose of facilitating immigration to the United States for an alien is an unlawful act, and the U.S. Code provides penalties for individuals who commit perjury in an affidavit taken by a consular officer. Relationship fraud is a persistent problem in the Philippines, and it is not uncommon for Filipinos to enter into marriages with Americans solely for immigration purposes. Relationships developed via correspondence, particularly those begun on the Internet, are particularly susceptible to manipulation.

The Marriage Application Process: Once an American citizen has obtained from the U.S. Embassy an "Affidavit in Lieu of a Certificate of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage," he/she may file an application for a marriage license at the office of the Philippine Civil Registrar in the town or city where one of the parties is a resident. The U.S. citizen applicant must present: (a) the affidavit; (b) divorce decree(s) or death certificate(s), if applicable (required to verify civil status and legal capacity to contract marriage); (c) his/her U.S. passport; and (d) documentation regarding parental consent or advice, if applicable. (Persons aged 18 to 21 must have written parental consent to marry in the Philippines; those aged 22 to 24 must have received parental advice. Philippine law prohibits marriage for persons under the age of 18.) A judge, a minister, or other person authorized by the Philippine Government can perform the marriage.

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

Marriage to a U.S. citizen confers neither citizenship nor an automatic eligibility for entry to the United States. A foreign spouse requires an immigrant visa to live in the United States. Questions about filing a petition to bring a foreign spouse to the United States may be directed to the nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service office, to the U.S. Department of State's Visa Office (telephone: (202) 663-1225) or, while in the Philippines, to the U.S. Embassy's Immigrant Visa Unit at <http://philippines.usembassy.gov>.

Disaster Preparedness: The Philippines is a volcano-, typhoon- and earthquake-prone country. From May to December, typhoons and flash floods often occur. Flooding can cause road delays and cut off bridges. Typhoons in the vicinity of the Philippines can interrupt air and sea links within the country. Updated information on typhoons is available at the following web sites: <http://metocph.nmci.navy.mil> and <http://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph>. Volcanic activity is frequent, and periodically the Philippine Government announces alerts for specific volcanoes. Updated information on volcanoes in the Philippines is available at the following web sites: <http://www.phivolcs.dost.gov.ph/> and <http://volcanoes.usgs.gov>. Earthquakes can also occur throughout the country. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available via the Internet from the Philippines National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) at <http://ndcc.gov.ph/ndcc/> and from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at <http://www.fema.gov>.

Customs: Philippine customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from the Philippines of items such as firearms and currency. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of the Philippines in Washington, D.C. or one of the Philippine consulates in the United States (Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco) for specific information regarding customs requirements. Counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available in the Philippines; transactions involving such products are illegal and bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines.

Please see our [Customs Information](#).

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While in a foreign country, a U.S. citizen is subject to that country's laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating the Philippine's laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in the Philippines are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime, prosecutable in the United States. Please see our information on [Criminal Penalties](#).

Under the Protect Act of April 2003, it is a crime, prosecutable in the United States, for a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien, to travel to a foreign country to engage in criminal sexual activity or to engage in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign country. It is important to note that under the new legislation, the act of illicit sexual conduct is sufficient to violate the law - the intent to travel for the purpose of engaging in the criminal sexual activity does not need to be proven. For purposes of the PROTECT Act, illicit sexual conduct means: (1) a sexual act with a person under 18 years of age that would be illegal in the United States or (2) any commercial sex act in a foreign country with a person under the age of 18.

The Philippine Bureau of Immigration arrests several Americans each year on immigration charges of "undesirability,"

Consular Information Sheet (continued)

Philippines

sometimes based solely on complaints arising from personal or business disputes in the Philippines. Frequently, these detainees cannot be deported and/or released from custody until substantial fines are paid and any underlying criminal charges are resolved – a process that sometimes takes months, or even years.

Fraud, swindling, “bad debts”, and failure to provide spousal and child support are also serious criminal offenses in the Philippines, as is the illegal recruitment of Philippine citizens for employment overseas. Several Americans are currently serving lengthy prison sentences for illegal recruitment activities. The Philippine Government also has strict laws against the possession of firearms, and several foreigners have been sentenced to life imprisonment for bringing firearms into the country. Americans who are arrested overseas should immediately ask to contact a U.S. Embassy representative.

CHILDREN'S ISSUES: For information see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).

REGISTRATION / EMBASSY LOCATION: Americans living or traveling in the Philippines are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the [State Department's travel registration web site](#) so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security within the Philippines. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. (63) (2) 301-2000. The Consular American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is (63) (2) 522-3242 and the ACS web page is <http://manila.usembassy.gov/>.

* * *

This replaces the Consular Information Sheet dated June 19, 2006, to update sections on Country Description, Safety and Security, Medical Facilities, Criminal Penalties, and Registration/Embassy Location.

Travel Warning

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

Philippines

February 13, 2008

This Travel Warning updates information on the security situation and reminds Americans of the risks of travel in the Philippines. This Travel Warning supersedes the Travel Warning for the Philippines issued April 27, 2007.

U.S. citizens contemplating travel to the Philippines should carefully consider the risks to their safety and security while there, including those due to terrorism. While travelers may encounter such threats anywhere in the Philippines, the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago are of particular concern. Travelers should exercise extreme caution in both central and western Mindanao as well as in the Sulu Archipelago.

Kidnap for ransom gangs operate in the Philippines. In October 2007, one such gang abducted a visiting U.S. citizen whose whereabouts are unknown at this time. Several other foreigners were also kidnapped for ransom in 2007. The New People's Army (NPA), a terrorist organization, operates in many rural areas of the Philippines, including in the northern island of Luzon. While it has not targeted foreigners in several years, the NPA could threaten U.S. citizens engaged in business or property management activities, and it often demands "revolutionary taxes."

Terrorist groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Jema'ah Islamiyah, and groups that have broken away from the more mainstream Moro Islamic Liberation Front or Moro National Liberation Front, have carried out bombings resulting in deaths, injuries and property damage. On January 3, 2008, a bomb exploded at a Cotabato City disco pub, killing one and injuring eight. The central and western areas of Mindanao have also experienced bombings targeting bus terminals and public buildings. While those responsible do not appear to have targeted foreigners, travelers should remain vigilant and avoid congregating in public areas; a recent bombing outside the House of Representatives in Metro Manila resulted in a number of deaths and injuries to bystanders.

U.S. Government employees must seek special permission for travel to Mindanao or the Sulu Archipelago. When traveling in Mindanao, U.S. official travelers attempt to lower their profile, limit their length of stay, and exercise extreme caution. Some foreigners who reside in or visit western and central Mindanao hire their own security.

The Department strongly encourages Americans in the Philippines to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manila through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. 63-2-301-2000. The American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is 63-2-301-2017 and the ACS web page is at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/www3004.html>.

For information on general crime and security issues, U.S. citizens should also consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information for the Philippines and the Worldwide Caution, located at <http://travel.state.gov/>. American citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 from the United States and Canada, or 202-501-4444 from overseas.

Dengue Fever Fact Sheet



National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
National Institutes of Health

Dengue Fever

Overview

Dengue fever is an infectious disease carried by mosquitoes and caused by any of four related dengue viruses. This disease used to be called "break-bone" fever because it sometimes causes severe joint and muscle pain that feels like bones are breaking, hence the name. Health experts have known about dengue fever for more than 200 years.

Dengue fever is found mostly during and shortly after the rainy season in tropical and subtropical areas of

- Africa
- Southeast Asia and China
- India
- Middle East
- Caribbean and Central and South America
- Australia and the South and Central Pacific

An epidemic in Hawaii in 2001 is a reminder that many locations in the United States are susceptible to dengue epidemics because they harbor the particular types of mosquitoes that transmit dengue virus.

Worldwide, 50 to 100 million cases of dengue infection occur each year. This includes 100 to 200 cases in the United States, mostly in people who have recently traveled abroad. Many more cases likely go unreported because some health care providers do not recognize the disease.

During the last part of the 20th century, many tropical regions of the world saw an increase in dengue cases. Epidemics also occurred more frequently and with more severity. In addition to typical dengue, dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome also have increased in many parts of the world. Globally, there are an estimated several hundred thousand cases of DHF per year.

Cause

Dengue fever can be caused by any one of four types of dengue virus: DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3, and DEN-4. You can be infected by at least two if not all four types at different times during your lifetime, but only once by the same type.

Transmission

You can get dengue virus infections from the bite of an infected *Aedes* mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they bite infected humans, and later transmit infection to other people they bite. Two main species of mosquito, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, have been responsible for all cases of dengue transmitted in this country. Dengue is not contagious from person to person.

Symptoms

Symptoms of typical uncomplicated (classic) dengue usually start with fever within 4 to 7 days after you have been bitten by an infected mosquito and include

- High fever, up to 105°F
- Severe headache



Dengue Fever Fact Sheet (continued)

- Retro-orbital (behind the eye) pain
- Severe joint and muscle pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rash

The rash may appear over most of your body 3 to 4 days after the fever begins, and then subsides after 1 to 2 days. You may get a second rash a few days later.

Symptoms of dengue hemorrhagic fever include all of the symptoms of classic dengue plus

- Marked damage to blood and lymph vessels
- Bleeding from the nose, gums, or under the skin, causing purplish bruises

This form of dengue disease can cause death.

Symptoms of dengue shock syndrome--the most severe form of dengue disease--include all of the symptoms of classic dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever, plus

- Fluids leaking outside of blood vessels
- Massive bleeding
- Shock (very low blood pressure)

This form of the disease usually occurs in children (sometimes adults) experiencing their second dengue infection. It is sometimes fatal, especially in children and young adults.

Diagnosis

Your health care provider can diagnose dengue fever by doing two blood tests, 2 to 3 weeks apart. The tests can show whether a sample of your blood contains antibodies to the virus. In epidemics, a health care provider often can diagnose dengue by typical signs and symptoms.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for classic dengue fever, and most people recover within 2 weeks. To help with recovery, health care experts recommend

- Getting plenty of bed rest
- Drinking lots of fluids
- Taking medicine to reduce fever

CDC advises people with dengue fever not to take aspirin. Acetaminophen or other over-the-counter pain-reducing medicines are safe for most people.

For severe dengue symptoms, including shock and coma, early and aggressive emergency treatment with fluid and electrolyte replacement can be lifesaving.

Prevention

The best way to prevent dengue virus infection is to take special precautions to [avoid being bitten by mosquitoes](#). Several dengue vaccines are being developed, but none is likely to be licensed by the [Food and Drug Administration](#) in the next few years.

When outdoors in an area where dengue fever has been found

- Use a mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus
- Dress in protective clothing—long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes

Because *Aedes* mosquitoes usually bite during the day, be sure to take precautions, especially during early morning hours before

Dengue Fever Fact Sheet (continued)

daybreak and in the late afternoon before dark.

Other precautions include

- Keeping unscreened windows and doors closed
- Keeping window and door screens repaired
- Getting rid of areas where mosquitoes breed, such as standing water in flower pots, containers, birdbaths, discarded tires, etc.

Complications

Most people who develop dengue fever recover completely within 2 weeks. Some, especially adults, may be tired and/or depressed for several weeks to months after being infected with the virus.

The more clinically severe dengue hemorrhagic fever and dengue shock syndromes can result in vascular (blood vessel) and liver damage, and can be life-threatening.

Research

Scientists supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) are trying various approaches to develop vaccines against dengue. Researchers in NIAID laboratories in Bethesda, Maryland, are using weakened and harmless versions of dengue viruses as potential vaccine candidates against dengue and related viruses. Other NIAID-funded investigators are trying to develop dengue virus vaccines using recombinant proteins (with or without adjuvants), viral vectors, and DNA.

Several projects are currently ongoing to identify the host and viral factors that determine the virulence and transmissibility of different dengue virus strains.

Other researchers supported by NIAID are investigating ways to treat infected individuals and to prevent dengue viruses from reproducing inside mosquitoes.

Although dengue virus has emerged as a growing global threat, scientists know little about how the virus infects cells and causes disease. New research is beginning to shed light on how the virus interacts with humans; for example, how dengue virus damages cells and how the human immune system responds to dengue virus infection.

Related Links

Last Updated: November 23, 2007

Government Links

[National Library of Medicine](#)

[MedlinePlus](#)

8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20894
1-888-FIND-NLM (1-888-346-3656) or 301-594-5983

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Dengue Branch](#)

2 Calle Cañada
San Juan, PR 00920-3860
1-888-246-2675 or 787-706-2399

Non-government Links

[World Health Organization](#)

Avenue Appia 20
CH-1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland
41-22-791-2111



Avian Flu Fact Sheet

- [Frequently Asked Questions](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_2747.html) - http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_2747.html
- [Remain in Country During a Pandemic](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_3096.html) - http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_3096.html

FACT SHEET: AVIAN INFLUENZA A (H5N1) and PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

This fact sheet alerts Americans to the Department of State's preparedness efforts with respect to a possible influenza pandemic. The Department of State emphasizes that, in the event of a pandemic, its ability to assist Americans traveling and residing abroad may be severely limited by restrictions on local and international movement imposed for public health reasons, either by foreign governments and/or the United States. Furthermore, American citizens should take note that the Department of State cannot provide Americans traveling or living abroad with medications or supplies even in the event of a pandemic.

Background - H5N1 Avian Influenza A

Countries continue to report cases of avian influenza A(H5N1), commonly referred to as "bird flu" in their domestic and wild bird populations. In addition, countries are reporting H5N1 in other wild and domestic animal populations. A small number of confirmed cases of H5N1 among humans have been reported, some of which have resulted in death. More information is available on the World Health Organization (WHO) website, http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/country/en/. Please refer to this website for the most up to date information on the countries affected by H5N1 and the number of deaths.

The vast majority of the reported human cases have resulted from direct contact with H5N1-infected poultry. Although there is evidence to suggest very limited, human-to-human transmission in family groups involving close exposure to a critically ill member, there is no evidence that the virus can be easily or sustainably transmitted from human-to-human. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(DHHS/CDC), the WHO, and the Department of State are nonetheless concerned about the potential for the virus to adapt or mutate into a strain that can be easily transmitted in a sustained manner among humans, a characteristic that could result in a human influenza pandemic, and are working closely with other partners to prepare for the possibility of pandemic influenza. Information on the U.S. Government's overall response and efforts is available at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>.

Travel and Avian Influenza A

The Department of State, the DHHS/CDC and the WHO have not issued any health precautions, travel alerts or warnings for H5N1 infected areas. However, the DHHS/CDC advises travelers to H5N1 affected countries to avoid poultry farms, contact with animals in live food markets, and any surfaces that appear to be contaminated with feces or fluids from poultry or other animals, and to eat only thoroughly cooked poultry products. American citizens traveling to or living in H5N1 affected countries should consider the potential risks and keep informed of the latest medical guidance and information in order to make appropriate plans. Specific DHHS/CDC travel information relating to H5N1, including preventive measures, is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm> and <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. WHO guidance related to avian influenza is available at http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/.

Additional general country information can be obtained from the Department of State's Country Specific Information at <http://travel.state.gov> and embassy and consulate websites at http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/embassies/embassies_1214.html. You may also call the Department of State's toll-free number, 1-888-407 4747, or if calling from overseas, 202-501-4444.

Avian Flu Fact Sheet (continued)

Prevention, Response and Treatment - Take Charge of Your Plans

A vaccine for humans that is effective in preventing infection with the avian influenza A (H5N1) virus is not yet available. Based upon limited data, the DHHS/CDC has suggested that the anti-viral medication Oseltamivir (brand name- Tamiflu) may be effective in treating avian influenza A. U.S. embassies and consulates do not have supplies of this drug for use by private American citizens abroad. The Department of State has pre-positioned supplies of the drug Tamiflu at its embassies and consulates worldwide, for eligible U.S. Government employees and their families serving abroad. Americans should also be aware of the potential health risk posed by counterfeit drugs, including those represented as Tamiflu, by scam artists who sell products on the internet or in countries with lax regulations governing the production and distribution of pharmaceuticals. For more information on counterfeit drugs please visit the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) questions and answers for counterfeit drugs at <http://www.fda.gov/oc/initiatives/counterfeit/qa.html>

In addition, the Department of State has asked its embassies and consulates to consider preparedness measures that take into consideration the fact that travel into or out of a country may not be possible, safe, or medically advisable during a pandemic. Guidance on how private citizens can prepare to shelter in place, including stocking food, water, and medical supplies, is available at the www.pandemicflu.gov website. Embassy stocks cannot be made available to private American citizens abroad and we encourage people living in an area with outbreaks of H5N1 to prepare appropriately.

It is also likely that governments will respond to a pandemic by imposing public health measures that restrict domestic and international movement, further limiting the U.S. government's ability to assist Americans in these countries. These measures can be implemented very quickly. Areas of known H5N1 outbreaks in poultry have been quarantined by governments within 24 hours, restricting (if not preventing) movement into and out of the affected area.

Americans who are planning travel to a country that has reported the virus or who are concerned about avian influenza are advised to monitor the DHHS/CDC and the WHO websites for the latest information.

CDC Contact Information

Public Inquiries:
English (888) 246-2675
Spanish (888) 246-2857
TTY (866) 874-2646
Mon-Fri 8am-11pm EST
Sat-Sun 10am-8pm EST

Address:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30333
USA (404) 639-3311

Traveler's Website

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel>

WHO Liaison Office in Washington, DC

Contact Information:
Telephone: (202) 974-3787
Facsimile: (202) 974-3789

Address:
WHO Liaison Office
1889 F Street, N.W., Suite 369
Washington, D.C. 20006 USA

July 2006

U.S. Embassy Manila Warden Message January 31, 2008

THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TRANSMITTING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION THROUGH THE EMBASSY WARDEN SYSTEM AS A PUBLIC SERVICE TO AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE PHILIPPINES. PLEASE DISSEMINATE THIS MESSAGE TO ALL U.S. CITIZENS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION OR NEIGHBORHOOD. THANK YOU.

U.S. PASSPORT FEE CHANGES

Beginning February 1, 2008, the Department of State will institute a new fee schedule for passport (book style) services. Fees are being adjusted to cover the cost of providing efficient and secure passport services.

The new passport fees are as follows: The passport fee for first-time adult applicants (age 16 and older) will be \$100. For adult applicants eligible to renew a passport using Form DS-82, the fee will be \$75. For children under age 16 the fee will be \$85.

Minors under the age of 16 are eligible to receive a 5-year passport. Adult applicants (age 16 and older) are eligible to receive a 10-year passport.



THE NEW U.S. PASSPORT CARD

U.S. citizens may begin applying in advance for the new U.S. Passport Card beginning February 1, 2008, in anticipation of **land border travel** document requirements. We expect cards will be available and mailed to applicants in spring 2008.

The passport card will facilitate entry and expedite document processing at U.S. land and sea ports-of-entry when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. The Department of State is issuing this passport card in response to the needs of border resident communities for a less expensive and more portable alternative to the traditional passport.

The passport card is by definition a passport and will be considered proof of U.S. citizenship. **The card may not, however, be used to travel by air.** The passport card will otherwise carry the rights and privileges of the U.S. passport book and will be adjudicated to the exact same standards.

The card will have the same period of validity as the passport book: ten years for an adult (age 16 and older), and five years for children 15 years and younger. If you already have a passport book, you may apply for the card as a passport renewal and pay only \$20. The fee for a first-time adult applicant will be \$45. The fee for a minor applicant under the age of 16 will be \$35.



U.S. Embassy Manila Warden Message February 01, 2008

THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TRANSMITTING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION THROUGH THE EMBASSY WARDEN SYSTEM AS A PUBLIC SERVICE TO AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THE PHILIPPINES. PLEASE DISSEMINATE THIS MESSAGE TO ALL U.S. CITIZENS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION OR NEIGHBORHOOD. THANK YOU.

Increases to U.S. Passport Fees and New Parental Signature Requirements for U.S. Minors

On February 1, 2008, the U.S. Government will increase its fees for certain U.S. citizen passport services. For adult applicants renewing a passport, the total fee will increase to \$75. For first-time applicants age 16 and over, the total fee will increase to \$100. The fee for minors under 16 years of age will be \$85.

Effective February 1, 2008, passport applicants who are U.S. citizen minors under the age of 16 must appear personally with their parents to establish identity, proof of citizenship and proof of relationship. For parental application permission, both parents must appear together and sign, or one parent may appear to sign and submit the other parent's notarized statement, or one parent may appear, sign, and submit primary evidence of sole authority. Minors age 16 and 17 may apply in person with their own identification, but for security reasons, parental consent may be required. If your child does not have identification of their own, a parent will be required to accompany the child and present identification.

Please refer to the Department of State's website at www.travel.state.gov for complete information on all new requirements, including downloadable revised forms that must be used as of February 1, and the U.S. Embassy website at manila.usembassy.gov, for complete U.S. passport application instructions.

Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the U.S. Embassy's website manila.usembassy.gov and the U.S. Department of State's travel website at www.travel.state.gov, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts can be found. The U.S. Embassy also encourages U.S. citizens to review to "A Safe Trip Abroad," found at http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html, which includes valuable security information for those both living and traveling abroad. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444.

Citizens living and residing in the Philippines are advised to register their presence in the country through the U.S. Department of State's automated online registration system, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. U.S. citizens may also contact the Consular Section at the U.S. Embassy via e-mail or by calling (02) 301-2000. This complete message is available on the Embassy's website at manila.usembassy.gov. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. (02) 301-2000. The Consular American Citizen Services (ACS) section's fax number is (02) 301-2017.