



ACS *newsletter*

April 2016

U.S. Embassy, Manila
 1201 Roxas Boulevard,
 Ermita, Manila
 Philippines 1000

INVITATION TO U.S. EMBASSY FORUM ON APRIL 28th

You are invited to attend the AMCHAM Foundation-sponsored U.S. Embassy Public Service Forum in Manila. Embassy staff will provide an overview of **U.S. Citizen Services, including Social Security Administration, Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, Citizenship, Immigration Services, Transportation Security** and other agencies serving Americans and U.S. companies resident in the Philippines. Current information on immigrant and non-immigrant visa processes will also be provided during the forum.

Additionally, Embassy staff will be available to assist U.S. citizens to **register to vote** in the November 2016 U.S. elections. Please be prepared to include your voting residence which is your last U.S. address or your legal U.S. residence address as well as your Social Security Number or your State Driver's License or I.D. when completing your voting registration materials. Voting ballots will be collected by U.S. Embassy staff and forwarded to your local election official.

Event Details: This is a no cost event.

Date: April 28, 2016 **Time:** 4:00-6:00 pm

Location: Asian Institute of Management
 SVG Hall, AIM Conference Center
 Benevidez Cor, Trasierra Streets
 Legaspi Village, Makati City, Manila



AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

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Emergencies

For emergencies after office hours, please call (63) (2) 301-2000 and ask for the Duty Officer.

Make sure your voice is heard..... VOTE!!



EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES TO VOTE IN THE PHILIPPINES!

Register to Vote in Manila on April 28th

U.S. Embassy staff will offer voter registration services in Manila on April 28 at the U.S. Embassy Forum to make voting registration easier and more convenient for U.S. citizens in the Philippines. The event will be held at the Asian Institute of Management SVG Hall on Benevidez Cor and Trasierra Streets in Legaspi Village, Makati, Manila. Our staff can assist you to register to vote on site between 4:00 and 6:00 pm. Please be prepared to include your voting residence address which is your last U.S. address or your legal U.S. residence address as well as your Social Security number or your State Driver's License or I.D. when completing your voting materials. Your voting registration materials will be collected by U.S. Embassy staff and mailed to the appropriate election official at no cost to the voter.

If you have already completed your voting materials including the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) or your Ballot, you may bring them to the U.S. Embassy Forum in a completed, U.S. postage-paid envelope addressed to your local election officials. U.S. Embassy staff will collect them and send them to the United States via diplomatic pouch at no additional cost.

Remember: voting is a responsibility and privilege for all American citizens.



THE U.S. EMBASSY WILL SEND YOUR VOTE HOME

Unable to attend the U.S. Embassy Forum on April 28th? You can easily register to vote from the convenience of your home computer by completing the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) at FVAP.gov. Some states will allow you to submit the FPCA online. The FPCA is your tool to register to vote and request your ballot—we recommend that you submit a new one every January.

If you choose to mail in your Federal Post Card Application or other voting materials including your voted ballot by mail or your Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB), you may send these documents addressed to your local election official via international mail or professional courier at your own expense.

You may also drop off any of these items at the U.S. Embassy in Manila or the U.S. Consular Agency in Cebu City. Make sure your materials are in a completed, U.S. postage-paid envelope addressed to your local election official and we will send it on to the United States via Diplomatic Pouch at no additional expense. You may find a postage paid envelope under "Downloadable Election Materials" on the FVAP homepage.

Drop off times at the **U.S. Embassy Manila** are between 7:30 am to 4:30 pm on business days. Proceed to the Consular gate at 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila. In **Cebu**, you may submit your voting materials from 8:30 am to 10:30 am at the **U.S. Consular Agency** which is located on the ground floor of the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel, Lahug in Cebu City. From 10:30 am to 4:00 pm, you may leave your voting materials with the Consular Agency security guard.

DON'T MISS THE PRIMARIES: KEY DATES FOR THIS QUARTER

If you want to register to vote in the following States, visit FVAP.gov now to complete a registration application and request your absentee ballots.

May

Indiana: May 3 (P,S)
 Nebraska: May 10 (P,S)
 West Virginia: May 10 (P,S)
 Idaho: May 17 (S)
 Kentucky: May 17 (PD, S)
 Oregon: May 17 (P,S)
 Georgia: May 24 (S)
 North Carolina: May 24 (R)
 Texas: May 24 (R)
 Washington: May 24 (P)

District of Columbia: June 14 (P,S)

June (cont'd)

Maine: June 14 (S)
 Nevada: June 14 (S)
 North Dakota: June 14 (S)
 South Carolina: June 14 (S)
 Virginia: June 14 (S)
 Colorado: June 28 (S)
 New York: June 28 (F)
 Oklahoma: June 28 (S)
 South Carolina: June 28 (R)
 Utah: June 28 (S)

June

Puerto Rico: June 5 (T)
 California: June 7 (P)
 Iowa: June 7 (S)
 Montana: June 7 (P,S)
 New Jersey: June 7 (P,S)
 New Mexico: June 7 (P,S)
 South Dakota: June 7 (P,S)

July

Georgia: July 26 (R)



Legend: Presidential preference primaries (P), State primaries (S), Presidential Preference Primary (PD), and Territory Primary (T).

VOTE OVERSEAS 2016: EASY STEPS

1. Complete and Submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).

To start, go to the [Federal Voting Assistance Program \(FVAP\) website](http://Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website) at FVAP.gov to complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). The FPCA is your tool to register to vote and to request your ballot.

2. Complete and Submit Your Ballot.

States are required to send out ballots 45 days before a regular election for federal office and states generally send out ballots at least 30 days before primary elections.

HAVEN'T RECEIVED YOUR BALLOT?

Don't be a passive voter and wait for a ballot that may not reach you in time. If you followed all the right steps but still haven't received your ballot 45 days before a regular election for a federal office and 30 days before primary elections, you should complete and submit a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

You can complete the FWAB using an [online wizard](#). Write in the candidates of your choice, and send it to your [local election officials](#). You can also contact the Voting Assistance Officer at your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for Assistance with your FWAB. In the Philippines contact the Voting Assistance Officer at VoteManila@state.gov.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cebu Consular Agency accepting Consular Reports of Birth Abroad

The U.S. Consular Agency in Cebu has resumed accepting Consular Reports Of Birth Abroad (CRBA) by appointment only, starting April 8, 2016. Once you have completed all of the required forms and gathered the necessary documents listed in your CRBA CHECKLIST, please email AmConCebCRBA@gmail.com to request an appointment. Please indicate the names, contact details of both parents and applicant(s), and their availability Monday through Friday, at 10:30 a.m. Note that a maximum of 3 applicants per family will be accepted and each must have an appointment. If any required documents are missing, you may have to return to the consular agency another day with the missing documents. Please double check that you have all required documents on your checklist to avoid multiple trips to the U.S. Consular Agency. You will be advised of the date and time of your appointment. Please bring your appointment confirmation, all original documents with photocopies, and the signed CRBA CHECKLIST.

Security Reminders about the Upcoming May 9 Elections

The U.S. Embassy reminds U.S. citizens in the Philippines that May 9 is a national and local election day in the Philippines. Philippine authorities have taken steps to reduce the possibility of election-related disturbances before, during, and after May 9. The Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines have established checkpoints in areas near polling places. Additionally, on January 10, Philippine authorities implemented a ban on bearing, carrying, and transporting firearms in public areas during the election period, from January 10 through June 8. The penalty for anyone caught in violation of the ban is one to six years in jail, with foreigners subject to possible deportation after completion of any prison sentence. For more information please visit the Comelec website.

We remind U.S. citizens to remain vigilant and aware of their surroundings, assess their personal security, avoid public gatherings in connection with the May 9 elections, and avoid demonstrations. As a reminder, even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. Avoid areas where demonstrations are taking place and exercise caution when in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. The Embassy also wishes to remind U.S. citizens to pay attention to the local news media and Philippine government announcements regarding possible election-related disturbances and any additional security measures imposed during the election period.

fee in person or through a representative at the U.S. Embassy cashier in Manila or at the U.S. Consular Agency in Cebu after being notified by email with instructions on payment. For specific information about passport renewal please visit our website at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/service/passports/renewal.html>.

Expanded Payment Options for Adult U.S. Passport Renewals

Effective **April 4, 2016**, the U.S. Embassy is expanding the number of banks available in our mail-in payment program to include the Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI), the Banco De Oro (BDO) and the Security Bank (SBC). U.S. Citizens renewing their adult passports by mail may choose to include their U.S. dollar demand draft payment with the application.

Please note that U.S. citizens renewing their adult passports still have the option to pay the application fee in person or through a representative at the U.S. Embassy cashier in Manila or at the U.S. Consular Agency in Cebu after being notified by email with instructions on payment. For specific information about passport renewal please visit our website at <http://manila.usembassy.gov/service/passports/renewal.html>.

Blood Donation (RH Negative)

If you have an emergency and are in need of Rh negative blood, the blood banks at the Makati Medical Center and St. Luke's Medical Center (both in Metro Manila) maintain lists of possible donors of Rh Negative blood. In addition, these organizations also may be of assistance:

1) **American Association of the Philippines (AAP)**, tel: (02) 892-5198 during business hours or 0977 251 9357 after hours. **Procedure:** The patient or a family member provides to AAP a hospital form signed by the physician indicating the need for blood donation. AAP responds within 24 hours with an Info Sheet to be filled out by the patient or a relative. Upon receipt of the Info Sheet, AAP initiates a phone tree, email blast, and social media blast to request donations from potential donors.

2) **American Women's Club of the Philippines (AWCP)**, tel: (02) 817-7587 or AWCPBlood-Donors@gmail.com. **Procedure:** Your request should include: a) patient name and contact number(s), as well as those of family members; b) blood type; c) organization/hospital name and contact number(s); and d) blood bank direct phone line (if available).

3) **Philippine Red Cross**, tel: 0918 918 6531 or Rhnegative@redcross.org.ph. The Philippine Red Cross maintains a blood bank and supplies blood as needed nationwide.

BEYOND MANILA: SERVICES FOR U.S. CITIZENS



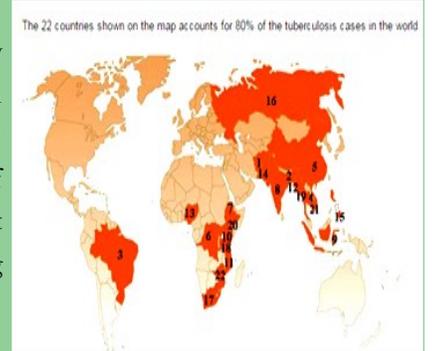
OUTREACH TO LEGAZPI AND CEBU CITY

This quarter, Consular representatives from American Citizen Services (ACS) unit will travel to several locations in our district to provide routine services to U.S. Citizens. Representatives from other agencies such as the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) and the Department of Homeland Security U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS-USCIS) will also accompany to some locations. See links below for additional details and scheduling. [When you click on the City, it will have a hyperlink to the Mascot message]

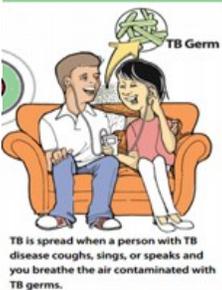
Location	Date	Representation
<u>Legazpi City</u>	April 26	ACS
<u>Cebu City</u>	May 4, 5, 2016	ACS, SSA, USCIS

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS (PTB): THE BURDEN IS REAL

Some people would probably think that in this high-technology era, Pulmonary Tuberculosis is an obsolete disease, or at least a disease that we can easily shrug off. In reality, TB is still a serious health concern all over the world. As a matter of fact, it is ranked alongside HIV as a leading cause of death worldwide. The Philippines is one of the 22 high TB burden countries worldwide, and in the top 5 with multi-drug resistant cases (2015 Global TB Report). TB, a major treatable killer, ranks 5th in the leading causes of death in the Philippines. TB can happen anywhere and to anyone!



Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection that most often affects the lungs but can also affect other body organs. Pulmonary (lung) tuberculosis has two types: TB disease (a person has active signs and symptoms which can range from mild to severe cough for about 3 weeks, fever, night sweats, weight loss, chest pain and may spread it to others), and latent TB infection (you have the TB bacteria in your body but do not feel sick. You are also NOT infectious). CDC data show up to 3 million people in the U.S. have latent infection. Without treatment, they are at risk for developing the disease.



The germ is spread when a person who has lung TB expels it in the air through coughing, sneezing, laughing, or talking, and people nearby can breathe it in. It is not hereditary but is often transmitted by one household member to the others. Left untreated, a single active case can infect 10 to 15 others in a year. The danger of TB is real, but it is also highly treatable and curable when treatment is taken properly.

TB symptoms can sometimes be confused with other lung disease like pneumonia or even lung cancer. Accurate diagnosis by your doctor is necessary for proper management. A simple TB skin test can detect presence of the bacteria in the body. A dormant (latent) TB infection may still need treatment depending on the individual assessment. An active infection, however, needs more aggressive therapeutic management, which may range from 2 months to 2 years. The treatment follows procedures and protocols aligned with the World Health Organization goal to end global TB epidemic by 2035. Because of the efficiency of anti-TB medicines, patients are often considered non-infectious after two weeks of treatment but should continue taking the medicines during the prescribed duration to avoid development of multi-drug resistant TB, or worse, extensively drug-resistant TB, which are more difficult to cure and more costly to manage.

If you have been exposed to tuberculosis bacteria, you may have latent TB infection in your body. About 10% of those with latent TB will develop active TB disease in their lifetime, with the majority developing it within the first two to five years after infection. For people with risk factors like a weak immune system, diabetes, gastrointestinal surgeries, tobacco use, and alcoholism, the risks are even higher. In countries like the Philippines, where TB is very common and where stigma associated with the disease makes people shy away from getting treatment, people should know that there is no need to be afraid because it is curable. Get tested. Be proactive with your and your family's health. Talk to your doctor about TB and the Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS) program.

Sources: CDC.gov, [W.H.O. Int](http://W.H.O.Int), [Global TB Report](http://GlobalTBReport), PhilCAT, [DOH Phillipines](http://DOHPhillippines)