

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES NEWSLETTER

The U.S. Embassy is transmitting the following monthly newsletter via its warden system as a public service to U.S. citizens in Mongolia. Please feel free to disseminate this message to U.S. citizens in your organizations or to other Americans you know.



Become a fan of **U.S. Embassy Ulaanbaatar, Consular Section** on Facebook.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| American Citizens Day | 1 |
| Living Abroad Tips | 2 |
| Ask the Consul | 2 |
| Supreme Court's Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act | 3 |
| STEP Registration Reminder | 3 |
| Travel Warnings and Alerts | 3 |
| Embassy Contact Information | 3 |

American Citizens Day at the Embassy! October 1 - Remember to Mark Your Calendars

We have moved! On August 23, 2013, Embassy Ulaanbaatar's Consular Section moved into its newly renovated and spacious section. The new space features six interviewing windows, a privacy booth, a state-of-the-art sound system, and a new queuing machine. Now settled, the Consular Section is pleased to announce that



on **October 1**, we will be hosting an "American Citizens Day" open house at the U.S. Embassy. The open house will run from **4:00pm to 7:00pm** and is open to all American Citizens living here in Mongolia. Activities will include a tour of the newly renovated section, a kids' corner, an overview of the American Citizens Services (ACS) the section provides, as well as a short briefing on nonimmigrant and immigrant visas. Light refreshments will be served.

We look forward to welcoming all American Citizens to the Embassy. If you can attend, **please RSVP to UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov**. Please provide your full name and U.S. Passport Number in your correspondence. Additional details will be sent via email as part of our Embassy warden system. We will see you on October 1!

Don't Forget to Visit our Website!

Have you visited the Embassy's website recently and checked out the "U.S. Citizen Services" tab? Don't forget that in addition to information on routine ACS services such as passport renewals, the issuance of Certified Reports of Birth Abroad, or notary services, we have information on medical facilities in Mongolia, tax information, translation services, and English-speaking lawyers. For this information and much more, please visit <http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/service.html>!



Living Abroad Tips

Whether you are planning to move abroad or are already residing outside of the U.S., you should review the Department of State's information about safe travel and consular services available to you. The following is information about services you are more likely to need if you are residing abroad.

Marriage Abroad

The process can be time-consuming and expensive, and, therefore, persons planning to marry in Mongolia should find out the requirements before beginning travel. Visit our website for more information: http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/getting_married.html.

Birth Abroad of a U.S. Citizen

Most children born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents acquire U.S. citizenship at birth. As soon as possible after the birth, the U.S. citizen parent should contact the U.S. Embassy here in Ulaanbaatar by emailing us at UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov. If the consul deter-

mines that the child has acquired U.S. citizenship, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad is issued (Form FS-240).

Death Abroad

When a U.S. citizen dies abroad, both the Bureau of Consular Affairs in Washington, DC and the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar assist the deceased's family and friends during this difficult time. The Bureau of Consular Affairs will locate and inform the next-of-kin of the U.S. citizen's death and provides information on how to make arrangements for local burial or return of the remains to the United States.

Absentee Voting in U.S. Elections

Voting is now easier than before. Now all U.S. citizens can receive their blank ballots electronically. Depending on the state in which you are eligible to vote, you may get your ballot by email, fax, or internet to download. Visit <http://www.fvap.gov/> for more details.

Ask the Consul

I was issued a 10-year, multiple entry B1/B2 visa. How long can I stay in the U.S.?

That's a great question! Many people are confused about this issue.

One of the peculiarities of a U.S. nonimmigrant visa is that the validity of the visa has absolutely nothing to do with the length of time a visa holder is allowed to stay in the United States. A U.S. nonimmigrant visa also does not guarantee an applicant entry into the United States.

Under the American system, a U.S. nonimmigrant visa gives the visa holder permission to **request entry** to the United States. Whether permission is granted and for how long is the decision of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officer at port of entry. The officer's decision will be based on the traveler's purpose of travel. The vast majority of B1/B2 visa holders will be given permission to stay in the U.S. for up to 6 months, but depending on each individual's circum-

stances, the allowed time period can be shorter or longer. So, in other words, a 10-year visa does not allow you to stay in the U.S. for 10 years. Rather, it means that within the 10-year validity of the visa, you are allowed to travel to the United States and request permission to enter at the border. Each time you travel, the officer at the border will determine how long you are allowed to stay.

There are several important things to remember. First, the DHS officer at the border will evaluate the traveler's situation each time before granting permission to enter the United States. If the traveler is found to have misrepresented their purpose of travel to the U.S. in the past, or if the traveler previously violated the B1/B2 visa rules, then not only will permission to enter not be granted, in addition, the visa may also be cancelled. Second, it is important to remember that the B1/B2 visa is a **nonimmigrant** visa. Frequent lengthy stays in the United States may call into question the temporary nature of the traveler's activities.

Supreme Court's Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act

Same-Sex Marriages Now Valid for Immigration Purposes

Now that the Supreme Court has found section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional, President Obama has directed the Attorney General to work with other members of his Cabinet to review all relevant federal statutes to ensure this decision, including its implications for Federal benefits and obligations, is implemented swiftly and smoothly. We recognize the significance of this decision for affected families, and we are working to implement policy and procedural changes as soon as possible.

Effective immediately, U.S. embassies and consulates, including the U.S. Embassy in Mongolia, can accept visa applications filed on behalf of same-sex spouses and partners. Specifically, a same-sex marriage is now valid for immigration purposes, as long as the marriage is recognized in the place of celebration. Same-sex spouses and their children are equally eligible for non-immigrant (NIV) derivative visas, and same-sex partners of U.S. citizens may apply for fiancé non-immigrant (K-1) visas.

The Department of State is working with the Department of Justice to review all relevant statutes and regulations that affect visa processing and immigration benefits. For more information on submitting a visa application, you can visit www.travel.state.gov. Further, if you have any questions regarding this change in policy and what it may mean for you and/or your partner, please email us at UlaanbaatarIV@state.gov.

STEP Registration Reminder!

U.S. citizens residing or traveling in Mongolia are reminded to enroll with the U.S. Embassy by entering your travel itinerary and contact information into the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

Don't forget to enter your email address, local address, if known, as well as your expected departure date from Mongolia. Entering your expected departure date will guarantee that you do not continue to receive ACS-related emails once no longer in Mongolia.



Travel Warnings and Alerts

[Algeria](#) (8/23/2013)
[Afghanistan](#) (8/23/2013)
[Egypt](#) (8/15/2013)
[Haiti](#) (8/13/2013)
[El Salvador](#) (8/09/2013)
[Worldwide Travel Alert](#) (08/02/2013)

For additional information about these travel warnings and alerts, please visit this website: <http://www.travel.state.gov/>.

Embassy Contact Information

American Citizen Services
 Embassy of the United States
 11th Micro District
 Big Ring Road
 Ulaanbaatar 13, Mongolia
 Tel: 976-7007-6001
 Fax: 976-7007-6014
After-hours or emergency number: 9911-4168
 E-mail: UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov
 - or -
 American Embassy Ulaanbaatar
 4410 Ulaanbaatar Place