



# Embassy of the United States of America

Maputo · Mozambique



## American Citizens eNewsletter

February 2012

U.S. Embassy  
Av. Kenneth Kaunda,193  
Maputo, Mozambique

Tel: +258 21 49 2797  
Fax: +258 21 49 0448  
ConsularMaputo@state.gov  
maputo.usembassy.gov

In the event of an emergency involving an American citizen, please call +258 21 49 0723.

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### EMBASSY CLOSURES AND CONTACT INFO

The Consular Section will be closed **Friday February 3rd** for Mozambican Heroes Day.

Consular Section: tel: 21 492 797, fax: 21 490 448, email: [consularmaputo@state.gov](mailto:consularmaputo@state.gov).



In the event of an emergency involving a U.S. citizen, please contact the Consular Section immediately at **21 49 2797 x3439 or 21 49 0723** during non business hours.

For American Citizen Services, please make an appointment using our online system located at: <http://maputo.usembassy.gov/service.html>

Encourage your fellow citizens to register with the Embassy at <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

### CONSULAR TRIP TO NAMPULA

**To all Nampula residents needing passport or notary services, please e-mail us at [consularmaputo@state.gov](mailto:consularmaputo@state.gov) with your name and type of service you need. The chances of a consular visit increase when more services are needed in a particular area.**

### OVERSEAS VOTE FOUNDATION

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) helps overseas and military voters participate in federal elections. They do this by providing public access to innovative voter registration tools and services.

If you are an overseas or military voter, OVF's goal is to make it easy for you to get your ballot and vote. If you are an elections administrator, OVF can assist you to better serve overseas and military voters by providing you with state-of-the-art online systems that meet their challenging voting needs.

Overseas American citizens, State Department employees, and active duty uniformed service members and their accompanying families within and outside of the United States vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and can all register to vote from abroad using OVF's services.

Check out OVF's YouTube video for a short clip and explanation of how they can simplify overseas voting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3EHJQj68&tracker=True>

### ABSENTEE VOTING—Q AND A

#### Do all voters really have to complete a new FPCA this year?

Both our office and FVAP strongly recommend that overseas citizens send in a new FPCA in January of each year, and every time they change their email or mailing address. States no longer have the obligation to send out ballots for consecutive general elections on the basis of a single FPCA request, although some may choose to do so. You should consult the on-line 2012-2013 Voting Assistance Guide (VAG) at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov) for state-by-state information.

#### Will states send out ballots for the November 2012 elections based on an FPCA submitted in 2011?

It depends on the state. Some states are so strict that voters must **mail** the FPCA after January 1 to receive ballots for elections during that calendar year. Others, like New Jersey, won't send ballots for all elections during the year unless the voter specifically requests them on the FPCA. Others will honor the FPCA submitted in 2011 and send out ballots for this year's elections. To be safe, advise voters to send in a new FPCA in January of every year.

#### Can the Embassy send FPCAs and voted ballots or FWABs via Embassy mail pouch to the U.S. on behalf of any/all overseas voters?

Yes, Federal law requires that Embassies and Consulates allow overseas voters to use the diplomatic mail pouch for all U.S.-bound election-related materials. You may not use the Embassy address in order to receive your ballots however.

#### Are U.S. citizens eligible to vote if they've never lived in the United States?

It depends. 21 states and the District of Columbia specifically address this issue, and allow U.S. citizens of voting age who have never resided in the U.S. to use their parents' residence as their voting residence for registration and voting purpose — even if the residence no longer exists. The other states don't specifically mention this option, but local election officials in those states **may** weigh a number of factors in deciding whether to accept a registration. Perhaps a U.S. citizen who has never lived in the U.S. has visited grandma every summer for a month or so, opened a bank account there, worked at the Dairy Queen, got a drivers license, and perhaps paid some taxes. It's up to local election officials, so you should write directly to local election officials to plead your case for voter registration. <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>

### AMERICANS ABROAD GET BIGGER SAY IN 2012 ELECTION

Laws now in force in nearly every U.S. state, the widespread use of electronic ballot transmission, and an accelerated military mail system should make it easier this year for Americans abroad not just to receive and cast ballots in elections but also to be sure that they are counted, according to research by overseas groups, a U.S. election-watch organization and the military.

As recently as 2009, 25 states and the District of Columbia failed to provide the 45 days for ballot transmission to overseas voters that federal legislation signed into law that year requires. That, along with confusion about addresses, contributed to sometimes high rates of ballots being requested from abroad but not being returned, often because they were received too late or not at all. Mississippi had a 40 percent non-return rate in 2008; Indiana, over 50 percent.

Now, however, 47 states and the District of Columbia have enacted laws allowing sufficient time for ballot transmission, providing for electronic transmission of un voted ballots, and eliminating requirements that ballots be notarized or witnessed — often a serious impediment overseas. They also expand use of a federal write-in absentee ballot that can be used when a ballot fails to reach a voter.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/27/us/americans-abroad-to-get-bigger-say-in-2012-election.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/27/us/americans-abroad-to-get-bigger-say-in-2012-election.html?_r=1)

### MOZAMBIQUE COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION AT TRAVEL.STATE.GOV

The Mozambican country specific information located at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) has a wealth of valuable information for future travelers and even current residents to Mozambique. In addition, it is where Americans can register trips with their respective Embassies around the world.

If you have any friends, colleagues or family visiting, please direct them to [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) in order to register with us.

For current residents, whether you need to add visa pages to your passport or renew your families passports, [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) has all the forms available for download. There is also all the instructions on how to file for an immigrant visa for your non U.S. citizen spouse plus information on how to adopt in Mozambique.

