



American Citizen Services

U.S. Embassy • Quito, Ecuador

ISSUE XII

OCTOBER 2013

ECUADOR BY THE NUMBERS:

Average annual rainfall in Ecuador: 60in

By city:

- San Gabriel: 37in
- Otovalo: 32in
- La Concordia: 126in
- Quito: 40in
- Izobamba: 56in
- Nuevo Rocafuerte: 116in
- Rumipamba: 21in
- Portoviejo: 18in
- Puyo: 172in
- Milagro: 50in
- Guayaquil: 40in
- Canar: 19in
- Loja Argelia: 35in

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Have a say in our country's future. One of our most treasured values is the right and the privilege to vote – to participate actively in our country's democratic process. This November, U.S. citizens will have the opportunity to participate in several local elections. The U.S. Embassy in Ecuador encourages all U.S. citizens to participate in this year's elections and stands ready to help you vote.

Almost all overseas U.S. citizens can vote.

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia now allow adult children who have never resided in the United States to vote using their parents' state of voting residence. Details are available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>.

Register and request a ballot. To vote, new laws require you to complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) this calendar year. The FPCA allows you to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. If you haven't yet done so, we urge you to do so now. The easiest way to complete it is online at www.FVAP.gov. Depending on your State's rules, you then send it to your local election officials electronically or by mail.

Make your vote count! Follow your State's absentee voting procedures carefully. Send in your FPCA before the registration deadline. When you get your ballot, vote and mail it promptly so it reaches local election officials by your State's absentee ballot receipt deadline.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Please remember that you may no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in U.S. elections should complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what State you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your State). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website at www.FVAP.gov.

Contact Us

Bureau of Consular Affairs: "Secure Borders, Open Doors"

Embassy website: <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov>



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The telephone number for American Citizen Service inquiries is **(011 593-2) 398-5300**.

Public call-in hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. For after-hours emergencies, call **(011 593-2) 398-5200**.

ADDRESS: Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro

EMAIL: ACSQuito@state.gov



Apply for Social Security Benefits Online!

Social Security is improving its timing, application process, and trying to reduce the amount of paper by making a more effective use of technology.

You can now apply online for:

1. Retirement Benefits (you can file 4 months before your retirement age).
 2. Spouse's Benefits
 3. Medicare Only Applications (you can file 3 months before or after turning 65, coverage initiates the following month after application is filed; or you can apply from January 1—March 31 of every year after you have turned 65, coverage will initiate on July 1 of that year).
 4. Disability Benefits
- For retirement benefits or benefits as a spouse, you can apply

online if you:

- Are at least 61 years and 9 months old;
- Are not currently receiving benefits on your own Social Security record;
- Have not already applied for retirement benefits **and**
- Want your benefits to start no more than 4 months in the future.

Note: You application cannot be processed if you apply for benefits more than 4 months in advance.

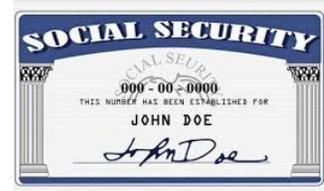
To apply online, just go to:

<http://ssa.gov> (English)

<http://ssa.gov/espanol> (Español)

Benefits of Applying Online:

- You can complete in as little as 15 minutes.

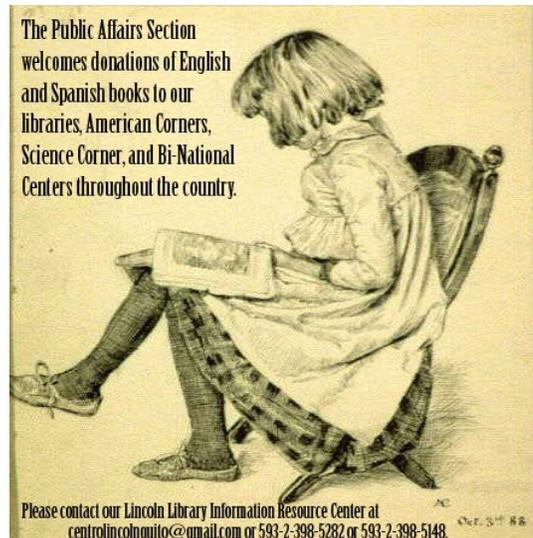


- Apply at a time most convenient for you.
- No need to drive to a local Social Security office or wait for an appointment.
- In most cases, once your application is submitted electronically, you're done! There are usually no paper forms to sign.
- The application is secure. Every precaution has been taken to ensure that your personal information is safe and disclosed only to you.

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ACS Handbook Available Online

The American Citizen Services Handbook for U.S. citizens traveling or living in Ecuador has information on the laws of Ecuador, what to do if you are the victim of crime, how to handle Ecuadorian visa issues and more. You can access it online in the ACS section of the Embassy website. As always, we appreciate your feedback.



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- You'll go through a brief series of screens that will ask you questions about yourself, your family, and your work.
- As you go through the application, you'll see "More Info" links, which provide immediate assistance and answers to questions whenever you need help.
- You don't have to complete the application in one sitting. You can stop and then restart the application without losing any of the information you entered.
- Once you've answered all of the questions, click on the "Sign Now" button. Your application will be sent electronically to Social Security.
- You'll get a receipt for your online application that you can print and keep for your records.
- You can check the status of your application after you've submitted it by using the application number you receive from the Social Security website.
- The website will also let you know if you may be able to receive more money on another person's record, such as your spouse. You will also be notified if other family members may be able to receive benefits on your work record.
- Your application will be processed once submitted and a letter of decision will be sent to you via standard mail.

For more information, please contact fbuquito@state.gov or call 02-398-5000, Monday—Thursday from 8:30am—10:30am

If you are not comfortable applying online, you can still apply for your benefits through the Embassy and we will forward your application to the San Jose Regional Office in Costa Rica

Direct Deposit

You can receive payments through Direct Deposit to any bank in the U.S. If you prefer to use a local Ecuadorian bank, payment can be directed to either Banco de Guayaquil or Produbanco.

- When applying for benefits through the Embassy, please bring a copy of the account slip or a voided check.
- When applying online, if you are going to use Banco de Guayaquil or Produbanco as the financial institution for your Direct Deposit, please call the Embassy (02-398-5000) before submitting the application, as we will need to make a special configuration to the bank account number.



Guguas de Pan & Colada Morada

Celebrate All Souls Day by making own guaguas de pan and colada morada in your own home!

All Soul's Day is November 2. In addition to the many local festivities, you can also commemorate the occasion by making the traditional Ecuadorian dishes for the day — guagua de pan and colada morada—at home. Here is a basic recipe for each:

Guaguas de Pan

Ingredients:

500g flour
30g fresh yeast
250g butter
3 eggs
4 egg yolk
1 ¼ cup of milk
2 tea spoons of salt
3 tea spoons of sugar

Preparation:

Melt the yeast, sugar and salt in warm milk and let the mixture repose for about 15 minutes. Add half of the butter and half of the farina, knead everything with your hands and add the eggs and the egg yolk. Complete the rest of the farina and knead it for 20 minutes until the dough is soft. Put the dough into a bowl and let it rest at a warmplace for about 2.5 hours until its volume is twice as before.

Now take a handful of the dough and form little men figures. Put them on a greased or with baking paper covered plate and brush it with a mixture of egg yolk and milk. After another rest of 15 minutes, you can bake them in a heated oven with 275 degrees Celsius for about 30 minutes until the “Babys“ did reach a nice golden color. Afterwards you can decorate them with sugar and food coloring as you like.

Colada Morada

Ingredients:

2 liters of water
1 pound farina
½ pound blackberries
½ pound strawberries
½ pineapple cut in small pieces
5 oranges
½ pound raisins
1 cup blueberries
4 cloves
4 allspices
2 cinnamon rods
1 pound sugar
2 orange leaves
5 myrtle leaves
2 luisse herb leaves

Preparation:

Sieve the farina and put it aside. Cook the 2 liters of water and add blackberries, oranges, cloves, allspices, cinnamon and sugar. Boil it up and add the orange leaves, luisse herb leaves and the myrtle leaves. Cook it for about 25 minutes and then pass it through a colander.

Now, put the farina in the juice and heat it up another time, in the meantime stir with a wooden spoon. When the mixture is viscid, add the raisins, blueberries, pieces of pineapple and last, the strawberries.