

Message for U.S. Citizens – U.S. Embassy, Quito, Ecuador

The 2012 General Election Cycle has Begun

December 16, 2011

The U.S. Embassy in Quito and the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil advise U.S. citizens living or staying in Ecuador during 2012 to start planning for their participation in the 2012 U.S. elections.

The American Citizen Services staff at the Embassy and Consulate General is ready to assist with sending your completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) – the form you need to complete as soon as possible to participate in the 2012 elections as an overseas absentee voter. Our purpose is to inform and educate you about your voting rights, to ensure you are able to exercise your right to participate in elections for federal offices (President, Vice President, Senator, and Representative), and to assist you with voting in state or local elections, if allowed by your state.

New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You will 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 the 2012 primary and general elections must complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year if they wish to vote from abroad.**

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 overseas voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the [Federal Voting Assistance Program's \(FVAP\) website](#).

Beginning in January 2012, presidential primaries will be held in the states of New Hampshire (January 10), South Carolina (January 21), Florida (January 31), Missouri (February 7), Wisconsin (February 21), Arizona (February 28), and Michigan (February 28). Other states will follow throughout the spring and summer. Voter registration deadlines for primaries are as early as January 3, 2012. (Note: Participation in party presidential caucuses by overseas voters is not protected by federal law and requires in-person attendance in most cases. If the party you are affiliated with selects presidential nominees by caucus in your state contact state party officials for further information.)

You can obtain a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) at [FVAP's website](#). The FPCA is accepted by all local election officials in all U.S. states and territories. It allows you to register to vote and request absentee ballots for all elections for federal offices (presidential and state primaries, run-off, special, and the November general elections) during the course of the year. Depending on your state's voting requirements, you either send in the FPCA electronically or mail it to your local election officials. To mail it, print out the completed FPCA and the (U.S.) postage-paid envelope containing the address of your local election officials. If you bring in your forms or ballots to the Embassy or Consulate General,

we will mail them back home for you without you having to pay for international mail. If it is easier for you to use Ecuador's postal system, be sure to affix sufficient postage and allow sufficient time for international mail delivery.

In Quito, U.S. citizens may drop off their completed ballots without an appointment Monday through Thursday between 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. In Guayaquil, U.S. citizens may drop off their completed ballots Monday through Thursday, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Check out the [FVAP links page](#) for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues. Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues are widely available and easy to obtain via numerous websites such as [Project Smart Voter](#). You can also read national and hometown newspapers on-line, or search the Internet to locate articles and information. For information about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to FVAP's Voting Alerts (vote@fvap.gov). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The U.S. Embassy in Quito also has information available on our [voting information page](#).

If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact the Embassy or Consulate General's voting assistance officer at VoteQuito@state.gov or VoteGuayaquil@state.gov. You may also contact us by telephone: the telephone number for American Citizen Service (ACS) inquiries at the [U.S. Embassy in Quito](#) is (011 593-2) 398-5000. Public call-in hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. and Friday 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. The telephone number for ACS inquiries at the [U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil](#) is (011-593-4) 232-3570 during business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Americans living or traveling in Ecuador are encouraged to enroll with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate in order to obtain updated information on travel and security within Ecuador through the [Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#).

U.S. citizens should consult the [Country Specific Information](#) for Ecuador and the latest Travel Alerts and Warnings and Worldwide Caution at the [Department's website](#). Updated information on travel and security in Ecuador may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States or by calling 1-202-501-4444 outside the United States.

The [U.S. Embassy in Quito](#) is located at Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro.

- The telephone number for American Citizen Service (ACS) inquiries is (011 593-2) 398-5000. Within the same city use the last seven digits. Add the city code for intercity telephone calls.
- Public call-in hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. and Friday 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- For after-hours emergencies, contact the Embassy at (011 593-2) 398-5200.
- Appointments for ACS are available through our [website](#).

The [U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil](#) is located at the corner of Avenida 9 de Octubre and Garcia Moreno (near the Hotel Oro Verde).

- The telephone number for ACS inquiries is (011-593-4) 232-3570 during business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or 232-1152 for after-hours emergencies.

Anyone can follow the activities of the U.S. Embassy in Ecuador through the [Embassy website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).