

Red Seas, White Sands, Blue Skies: An American Citizens Services Newsletter

Message from the American Citizen Services Unit Chief

This time of year is frequently a time of new beginnings for those of us living as expatriates overseas. Many of us are returning to our lives and jobs after summer vacation and others have just arrived to begin a new chapter here in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I myself am one of those who have recently arrived in Riyadh and would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new American citizen services unit chief. I have been a Foreign Service Officer for eleven years. My family and I have previously been posted to Beijing, Toronto, Washington, DC and most recently Dubai. I am looking forward to meeting you and assisting you with your American citizen service needs.

In order to better serve Americans living and working in Riyadh, the American citizen services unit is planning to hold a town hall meeting on Tuesday, October 1st from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at the Embassy. During this meeting we will discuss the services we provide and answer any questions you may have. All American citizens are welcome and we would love to see those of you who are able to come.

For those who are planning to attend, please remember to RSVP before noon on Wednesday, September 25th by e-mail to: RiyadhACS@state.gov

Again, I am excited to be here in Riyadh and hope to be of service to you and your families during your time here.

Donald H. Steele



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How to Reach Us

The US Embassy is located in the Diplomatic Quarter, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Public hours: Sunday through Thursday 1:00pm-3:30pm
Schedule an Appointment:
<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=RID&appcode=1>
Phone: (966)(11)488-3800

US Consulate Jeddah
Public hours: Sunday/ Tuesday/Wednesday/ Thursday 1:00-3:00pm
Schedule an Appointment:
<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=JDD&appcode=1>
Phone: (966)(12)667-0080

US Consulate Dhahran
Public hours: Sunday through Thursday 1:00-3:30 pm
Schedule an Appointment: <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=dhr&appcode=1>
Phone: (966)(13)330-3200

Routine American Citizen Services are conducted by appointment only at the following links:

Riyadh: <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=RID&appcode=1>
 Dhahran: <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=dhr&appcode=1>
 Jeddah: <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=JDD&appcode=1>

Upcoming Holiday Closures:

Sunday, September 1 – U.S. Labor Day
 Monday, September 23 – Saudi National Day
 Sunday, October 13 – Columbus Day
 Monday, October 14-20 — Eid –Al-Adha / Hajj

Diversity Visa (DV) Program: Important Notice – Same-sex spouses of U.S. citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), along with their minor children, are now eligible for the same immigration benefits as opposite-sex spouses. Consular officers at U.S. embassies and consulates will adjudicate their immigrant visa applications upon receipt of an approved I-130 or I-140 petition from USCIS. Diversity Visa applicants may include same-sex spouses in their initial entries or add spouses acquired after their initial registration. Those spouses who will follow-to-join DV 2013 applicants must apply on or before September 30, 2013. Spouses of DV 2014 applicants, even those not included in the initial entry must apply before September 30, 2014. For further information, please see our [FAQ's](#).



MASSACHUSETTS TO HOLD SPECIAL PRIMARY ELECTION FOR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE 5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

August 1, 2013 — Alexandria, Va — The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will hold a Special Primary Election for U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday, October 15, to fill the seat vacated upon the election of former Representative Ed Markey to the U.S. Senate.

You can register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot by mail, email or fax using the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) automated tool at <http://www.fvap.gov/request/request-ma.html>. Do not forget to indicate on the FPCA your party preference as well as how you would like to receive your absentee ballot (by mail, email or fax).

Uniformed Services personnel, their spouses and dependents, and U.S. citizens residing overseas must submit an FPCA to request an absentee ballot. Please note you will not automatically receive a ballot, even if you voted in the November 6, 2012, **General Election**.

Your voted ballot must be received before 8 p.m. EDT on October 15, 2013.

If you are concerned about not receiving your ballot in time to vote, use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB, SF-186). The FWAB automated tool is available at <http://www.fvap.gov/request/request-ma.html>. The FWAB is also available at military installations around the world.

FPCA request deadline.	Before 5 p.m. EDT, October 11
Voted ballot received by election authority for ballots returned by fax or email.	Before 8 p.m. EDT, October 15
Voted ballot received by election authority for ballots returned by mail from within the U.S.	Before 8 p.m. EDT, October 15
Voted ballot received by election authority for ballots returned by mail from outside the U.S.	Before 8 p.m. EDT, October 15

To determine the status of your absentee ballot request once submitted, contact your local election office. You can find contact information for your voting jurisdiction at <http://www.wheredoivotema.com/track/trackmyballot.aspx>.

The special general election will be held Tuesday, December 10, 2013.

Go to www.FVAP.gov to fill out and print your forms today! Additional information on the completion and submission of these forms is also available, as well as Massachusetts voter-specific information. Find a list of municipal contact information at <https://www.fvap.gov/r3/jurisdictions/MA>.

For more information on FVAP or assistance with the absentee voting process, visit FVAP.gov for live chat assistance, call FVAP at 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584 (CONUS)/312-425-1584 (OCONUS), or email vote@fvap.gov.

Remember, you also can contact your unit or installation voting assistance officers for assistance during any step of the process. [@FVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP)

ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION RELEASES 2014 POST-ELECTION SURVEY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT-Public encouraged to review prior to September 16, 2013

August 7, 2013 — Alexandria, Va. — The United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) released the draft of its 2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey for public comment. This proposed survey reflects the consolidation of the 2012 Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) local election official survey into the proposed EAC survey. The 2014 EAC survey is intended to meet the requirements of both the EAC and FVAP to collect election-related statistics from local election officials.

This effort completes a process begun when FVAP, the EAC and the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) decided in 2011 to work toward a single survey instrument. In response to requests from State and local officials, EAC, FVAP and NASED reached a mutual agreement to combine post-election survey collection efforts in order to reduce the overall burden placed election officials. It also demonstrates the first direct action by FVAP in response to program recommendations featured in its 2012 Post-Election Report to Congress at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/annualreports.html>. Members of the public are encouraged to review the proposed 2014 survey through September 16, 2013 at the following link: <http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/2014EAVSWithFVAP-2013-07-02-Final-Website.pdf>.

Instructions for submitting public comments can be found here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-07-17/pdf/2013-17126.pdf>.

Please do not send comments directly to FVAP. For more information on FVAP or assistance with the absentee voting process, visit FVAP.gov for live chat assistance, call FVAP at 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584 (CONUS)/312-425-1584 (OCONUS), or email vote@fvap.gov. Remember, you also can contact your unit or installation voting assistance officers for assistance during any step of the process. [@FVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP)

List of Services

- Apply for benefits
- Get your **Social Security Statement**
- Appeal a decision
- Find out if you qualify for benefits
- Estimate your future benefits
- If you get Social Security benefits you can...
- If you get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits you can...
- Block electronic access to your information

Please see Saudi Arabia's updated Country Specific Information - Jan 2013 : http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1012.html

2013 Hajj Fact Sheet : http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/hajj/hajj_5584.html

Change of the landline area codes in Saudi Arabia

Adding the number (1) after zero to phone area codes in KSA

One more digit, the number (1), will be added to the six geographic zone codes in the Kingdom.

All land line numbers in the Kingdom will be modified by adding the digit (1) after the zero in the current zone codes. The zone codes 01, 02, 03, 04, 06 and 07 will become 011, 012, 013, 014, 016 and 017; for example, Riyadh 011 425 xxx5, Jeddah 012 278 xxx5, etc.

This change will be carried out in phases rather than all at once. On Monday, May 13, 2013, the Riyadh geographic area will be the first stage of the conversion. On Sunday, Aug 18, 2013, the change will be applied to all other geographic areas of the Kingdom.

The change experienced by subscribers will be limited to adding one digit to the six geographic zone codes. Adding this digit will change only the method of dialing to land line numbers outside the local calling area.

It is important to note that this change will not include the method of dialing among fixed lines within the same city, which will remain as it is now. However, when dialing from mobiles to fixed lines, the new digit will have to be added. Also, the digit will have to be added when calling from outside Saudi Arabia into the Kingdom. Among the most important reasons for this change is the need to increase the range of numbers available for public mobile communications services, as well as for fixed services, and to contribute to the ability to introduce new services and to adopt new technologies and applications. In addition, this change will enhance the ability of the National Numbering Plan to accommodate new developments in services and growth in the number of subscriptions and users.

Most Important Features of the Change

1	One more digit, the number (1), will be added to the six geographic zone codes
2	The new digit will be inserted after the zero
3	Zone codes 01, 02, 03, 04, 06 and 07 will become 011, 012, 013, 014, 016 and 017
4	Adding this digit will change only the method of dialing to numbers outside the local calling area
5	This change will not affect the method of dialing among fixed lines within the same city, which will remain as it is now
6	When dialing from mobiles or from outside Saudi Arabia to fixed lines in the Kingdom, the new digit will have to be added

Eid Al-Adha : 11-day break for govt staff (Saudi Arabia) : Government employees will enjoy 11 days of Eid Al-Adha vacation. The Civil Service Affairs Ministry announced on Tuesday that the holidays would begin on Oct. 10 (Thursday, Dul Hijjah 5) and continue until Oct. 20 (Sunday, Dul Hijjah 15), adding that work would resume at government offices on Oct. 21 (Monday). The number of Eid Al-Adha holidays in the private sector varies from company to company. Companies allow their employees intending to perform Hajj to take additional holidays. **The U.S Embassy in Riyadh and Consulates General in Jeddah and Dhahran will be closed from Sunday, Oct 13th through Sunday, Oct 20th.**

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Hajj violators face tougher penalties this year

Immediate deportation to imprisonment for at least a year await violators of Hajj regulations, the authorities said on Sunday at the launch of a campaign to keep the number of pilgrims to a minimum level in the coming Hajj season.

The campaign is meant to avoid congestion in the holy city, where expansion work is still going on, particularly at the mataf (circumambulation) area at the Grand Mosque.

While the number of foreign pilgrims had been reduced by slashing the quota for each country, an influx of unauthorized pilgrims within the Kingdom could lead to chaos, as happened last year.

The Hajj season is expected to begin during the second week of October. Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, governor of Makkah Region, said the sanctions include three categories of offenders:

- Foreign violators caught performing Hajj without permit would be deported immediately and banned from entering the Kingdom for ten years.
- Owners of vehicles used to smuggle illegal pilgrims to the holy cities would be detained and fined, and their vehicles impounded; and
- Fake Hajj campaign organizers would be referred to the Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution for prosecution and offenders found guilty by the courts would be sentenced to jail terms of not less than one year without any amnesty.

Prince Khaled appealed to those who plan to insist on performing Hajj, even without permit, to refrain from doing so and give way to pilgrims from abroad.

Utmost consideration is required to make it easier for those pilgrims to perform their religious duty as some of them might be performing it for the last time in their lives, he said. "When you receive guests at your own home, you provide them the best hospitable gesture, the best part of your house, the best food in your house," he added. Hajj Minister Bandar Hajjar pointed out that the government does not get paid any sum from pilgrims. He said the amount paid by pilgrims goes to national institutions for services they provide. He said the Hajj Ministry was considering at the moment rating Hajj and Umrah institutions to put in place convenient pricing for such services.

For Health Regulations for Umrah and Hajj pilgrims, please visit the Saudi Ministry of Health website: <http://www.moh.gov.sa/en/Hajj/Pages/HealthRegulations.aspx> and see CDC advice at: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/HajjAndUmrah/>.

For specific Hajj information, please visit the Saudi Ministry of Hajj's website: <http://www.hajjinformation.com/>

New KSA law on domestic abuse

In a landmark decision, the Cabinet on Monday passed a law making it a crime to commit domestic abuse. The law also provides treatment and shelter to victims of violence.

For the first time, public and private sector workers have been encouraged to report abuse cases to law enforcement authorities or the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The legislation now holds law enforcement agencies accountable for investigating and prosecuting domestic cases. Previously, police treated violence against women and children as a private domestic matter with few legal consequences.

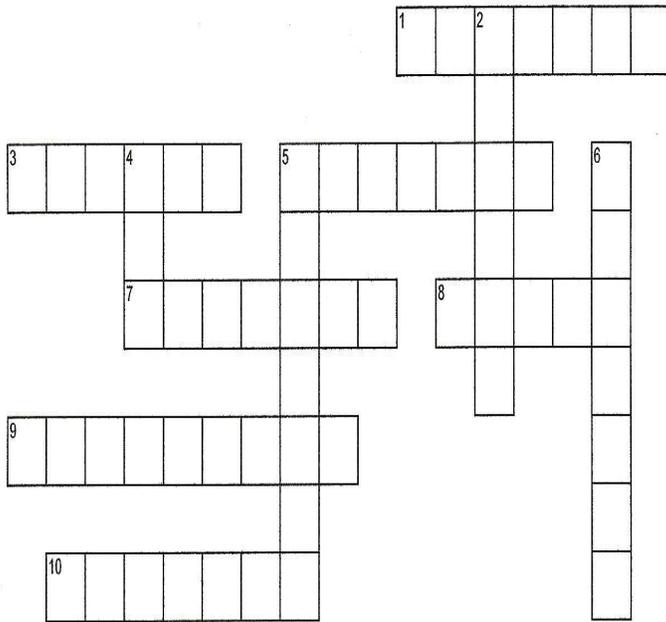
Abuse victims also will have access to psychological treatment, health care and shelter. "All civilian or military employees and all workers in the private sector who learn of a case of abuse — by virtue of their work — shall report the case to their employers when they know it," the Cabinet said in a statement. "The employers shall report the case to the Ministry of Social Affairs or police when they know it."



Labor Day is an American federal holiday observed on the first Monday in September (September 3 in 2022) that celebrates the economic and social contributions of workers.

Labor Day pays tribute to the contributions and achievements of American workers. It also symbolizes the end of summer for many Americans, and is celebrated with parties, parades and athletic events

Labor Day



Find the Labor Day words by using the clues below.

Across

1. Labor Day weekend provides a great opportunity for families to go _____.
3. Labor _____ helped to organize Labor Day.
5. The Labor Day holiday gives people a long _____ for fun family time.
7. Labor Day is a _____ holiday.
8. _____ Day is a day to recognize the effort of American workers.
9. Many people like to have _____ on Labor Day, to cook hamburgers, steaks, and other delicious meals.
10. Some people enjoy Labor Day by taking a _____ basket and heading somewhere fun.

Down

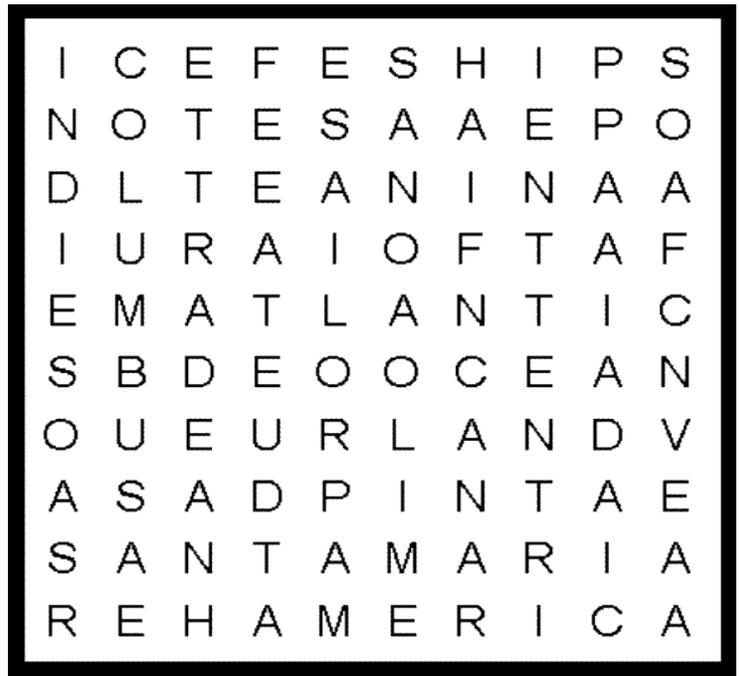
2. Labor Day always occurs on this day of the week.
4. Labor Day provides workers with a well earned day _____ from work.
5. America's _____ are productive and efficient.
6. It is fun to have _____ with the family on Day.

Answers: Across 1. camping 3. unions 5. weekend 7. Federal 8. Labor 9. barbeques 10. picnics Down 2. Monday 4. off 5. workers 6. parties



Columbus Day honors the explorer Christopher Columbus, who reportedly first landed in the New World on October 12, 1492. Christopher Columbus was born in 1451 in Genoa, which is part of modern-day Italy. Throughout the nineteenth century, Italian-Americans held celebrations in cities across the United States to honor his memory. In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed October 12 Columbus Day. President Richard Nixon later declared Columbus Day a national holiday to be observed the second Monday of each October.

Columbus Day Kids Word Search Puzzle



NINA	INDIES	SAILOR	AMERICA
LAND	TRADE	OCEAN	COLUMBUS
SHIP	PINTA	ATLANTIC	SANTA MARIA

Are you or is someone you know a newcomer to Saudi Arabia?

Sign up!

Help newcomers to the Kingdom by reminding them to register with the Embassy or nearest Consulate using **STEP** online at: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

This free service offers registered U.S. citizens updates on important regional issues, travel warnings and alerts, and provides a point of contact for citizens and their families in case of emergency.