



Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 12

November, 2008

ACS Appointment System Coming Soon

This newsletter is published by the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit, U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai. If there are any particular topics you are interested in, please contact ACS at: ShanghaiACS@state.gov.

Warm winter greetings from the American Citizen Services Section! We have exciting news to share. In order to serve you better and reduce unnecessary wait time at our office for services, starting next year, U.S. Consulate Shanghai's American Citizen Services (ACS) office will implement an appointment system.

Please keep in mind that ACS is closed for American and local holidays; please see our website for the most up-to-date information.

Visitors may receive several services during the same visit to American Citizen Services.

Please make a separate appointment for each individual service. In order to allow for sufficient time to clear security and enter the waiting room, please arrive at least (10) fifteen minutes before your appointment time.

Scheduled appointments will be automatically canceled for applicants who arrive more than (15) fifteen minutes after their scheduled time. Applicants who arrive late must make a new appointment via the ACS website.

No appointments are necessary to:

- ** Apply for Reports of Death
- *Report a passport lost / stolen when you are in urgent need to travel outside of China. Bring proof of pending travel to ACS
- **Warden Registration may be done online
- **Pick up passport and/or Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) upon notification when they are ready
- **Pick up Social Security checks or ask questions about Social Security benefits
- **Submit additional documents requested for a pending passport application
- **Register to vote
- **Attend Tuesday American Citizens' Visa Hour at 3-4pm
- **Attend Wednesday Education Hour at 3:30-4:30pm

If you have questions, please email inquiries to ShanghaiACS@state.gov.

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We hope to provide even more timely response and assist you in planning ahead and budgeting your time for services offered including birth certificates, passport services, notaries, marriage-ability affidavits, and more. We have seen the success of this system in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, and Beijing, and would like to offer it to citizens coming to the Shanghai Consulate.

Customers will be required to make an appointment via the ACS website for all routine services, including:

- ** Obtaining a U.S. passport for minors and adults - renewal, lost/stolen, first issuance, etc.
- **Adding visa pages to a U.S. passport.
- **Applying for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) and first U.S. passport for children.
- **Returning to submit additional documents for a pending CRBA application.
- **Notarial Services.
- **Marriage-ability Affidavit.

Our ACS business hours will remain the same:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday: 8:00 – 11:30 am , 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Tuesday: 8:00 – 11:30 am ONLY

Special points of interest:

- * Consulate Will Host The Next FSO Test In Feb 09
- * Consumer Alert: Financial -Related Scams Increase
- * Tips To Get PRC Visas In Hong Kong

Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures

Please remember that the days just before and just after a holiday are often extremely busy and you can expect significantly longer waiting times. If you visit

us outside of these times, you should have a shorter wait.

The American Citizen Services Unit will be **CLOSED** all day on the following days:

Dec. 25, 08, Thur.
Christmas Day

Jan. 1, 09, Thur.
New Year's Day

Expats Must Update At Cop Shop

The city's exit-entry administration is reminding local foreigners that most will need to renew their residence registration certificates at police stations this month.

The certificate is used to apply for, change or extend visa and residency permits.

The certificate, which is issued by neighborhood po-

lice stations, was updated with a new version on October 1, and now all foreigners must complete procedures to obtain the current document.

Foreigners holding the old version should renew it at their police station by November 30.

Foreigners who move from one residence to another during

their visa term also need to update their residence information at the Shanghai Exit-Entry Administration in Pudong within 10 days after receiving their certificates at their police station.

Further information is available at (021)2895-1900. English operators are available on weekdays from 9am to 11:30am and 1:30pm to 5pm.

(From Shanghai Daily, Dong Hui)

Security Situation

Security reminder: While there is no specific threat information aimed at Americans at this time, it is prudent for you and your family to review your personal security profile and to be aware of your surroundings at all times.

On July 16, 2008, the U.S. Department of State issued an updated Worldwide Caution Public Announcement. It supersedes the Worldwide Caution dated January 17, 2008. Please view the full text at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html.

The U.S. Department of State has recently issued Travel Warnings for the following countries:

Eritrea	Somalia	11/15/2008
Chad	Kenya	11/14/2008
Yemen		11/10/2008

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, pro-

tracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a draw-down of its staff.

The U.S. Department of State also has issued one new Travel Alert:

[Nicaragua](#) 11/15/2008

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that

might generate a Travel Alert. This and other information regarding travel abroad is available at <http://travel.state.gov>.

The most up-to-date information regarding permitted and prohibited items on flights can be viewed online at <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtml>.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the U.S. State Department website: http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html. Students traveling abroad may wish to visit the site designed for them: <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>. To obtain up-to-date information on security conditions, please call 1-888-407-4747 (toll free in the United States), or +1-202-501-4444 if you are outside the U.S.

Registration With The Police & Chinese Visa Problems

*** Although anecdotal evidence supports the following information, the PSB (Public Security Bureau) has not provided official notification regarding changes listed here. This information is being provided because of numerous inquiries ACS has received regarding enforcement of registration guidelines.

The Embassy has been informed that the PSB recently issued guidelines to hotels and apartment management companies concerning the registration of foreigners in China. The rule states that all foreigners must be registered with the local PSB office within 24 hours of arrival. Both individual violators and hotels and apartment managers could be subject to fines for failing to adhere to the rule.

Hotels and serviced apartments

Guests must be registered upon arrival with the PSB by their hotel or serviced apartment management company. Usually this procedure is automatic, as guest information is directly given to the PSB at check-in, with no additional action being required from the guest. However, the PSB is conducting some checks by physically visiting hotels to request copies of the hotel's in-house guest list to make sure they match the PSB's own records. If the records do not match, the hotel / serviced apartment will be fined up to RMB5,000 per missing entry. Hotel guests under these circumstances would not be fined.

However, this does mean that foreigners wishing to stay at a hotel must provide full passport and visa credentials in order to check in. Some hotels have denied check-in to guests with reservations who are not in possession of a passport and visa.

Foreign personnel living in private apartments

Apartment management companies are supposed to contact foreign tenants to remind them to register with the local PSB. Tenants who do not register risk being fined themselves as well as having their apartment management company fined. Fines can be up to RMB 5,000. This applies to any foreigner living in any apartment or private dwelling - even if it is for just for one night. If staying overnight or visiting friends in China, registration must be carried out upon arrival with the local PSB office responsible for the area.

VISA Problems

The Embassy has also anecdotal evidence that people are having difficulty renewing or changing their visas while in China. Please check that you have a



valid visa as the PSB has been fining and in some cases, detaining people who remain in China with the incorrect visa or a visa that has expired. Under Chinese law, the PSB may ask to see your passport, so keep it handy when traveling. The Embassy recommends that you carry your passport with you, but be careful to keep it out of easy reach from pickpockets or where it can be easily lost or mislaid. You should keep a copy of the passport bio page and your valid visa in a safe place at home. Do keep in mind that should you lose your passport, you need to have it replaced at the Consulate, and you also need to have a new visa placed in your replacement passport by Chinese officials. This process may take several days.

While visa policy and decisions are made by the Chinese government and ACS is not in a position to directly intervene in particular cases, below are several websites that might be helpful to you regarding new visa policies:

- <http://www.chinatravel.net/Forum/ForumTopicInfo.asp?Topic=403>
- http://www.shanghaiexpat.com/community/index.php/2008/04/25/guide_to_getting_your_z_visa_work_aamp_r?blog=5
- <http://en.beijing2008.cn/spectators/beijing/links/n214102410.shtml>

The Department of State Passport Application Wizard

When applying for a passport at the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai, the American Citizen Services unit highly recommends that all applicants visit the online Passport Application Wizard (<https://pptform.state.gov/>). The Wizard will help you determine which form you need (Form DS-11, DS-82, DS-5504 or DS-4085), then help you to complete the form online, estimate your payment, and generate the form for you to print and submit.

Also, if your passport is ever lost or stolen, you can use the Wizard to print out a Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passport (DS-64). And if you are applying for a minor's passport and both parents cannot sign the application together, you can use the Wizard to print out a Statement of Consent (DS-3053).

Consulate Will Host The Next FSO Test in Feb 09

Firm dates of testing are still TBD, but testing will take place sometime during the week of February 7-14,



2009. Stay tuned for more information on dates that testing will take place.

Additional detailed information can be found at <http://www.careers.state.gov/officer/register.html> where you can also register to take the test.

If candidates have any questions regarding scheduling, rescheduling, or canceling a test appointment, they should contact ACT at fsot@act.org, or call 1-319-341-2500, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm CST Monday through Friday.

Tips For A Smooth Consular Visit

Please make sure you have read our hours of operation and have taken note of Chinese and American holidays before planning your visit.

Come early. Our busiest time is 10:30 to 11:30 AM, and 2:30 to 3:30 PM. Lines are long and we recommend that you come early since all customers are served on a first-come first-served basis.

For passport applicants: Complete (but don't sign) passport applications ahead of time - this considerably shortens your visit.

For passport appli-

cants: Pay special attention to passport photographs. We will ask you to get other photos if they don't meet State Department's requirements.

For passport and additional visa page appli-

cants: Please remember to fill in your social security number. This is required by law.

For minor (below age 16) passport applicants: Parents - please remember to bring your child's original birth certificate when applying for a new or replacement passport.

For notary clients: Please make sure you have read your document(s) to be notarized and know the contents. **Do not sign your document**, but make sure that all other blanks are filled in before coming to the Consulate.

For notary clients: If your signature must be notarized and witnessed, you must bring witnesses and their IDs with you.

Please remember: The fewer items you bring to the Consulate (i.e. backpacks, laptops, cellphones, etc.), the more quickly the security check will be for everyone.

Leaving Shanghai Consular District?

If you are departing from Shanghai consular district after a long stay here, and you formally registered your stay with the U.S. consulate, please be sure to "cancel" your registration when you leave.

You can deregister yourself by visiting the travelregistration.state.gov site if you were previously registered through this site.

If you previously submitted your registration at the U.S. consulate, you may deregister

yourself by sending an email request to ShanghaiACS@state.gov.



Melamine In The News



Melamine continues to be in the news as eggs exported from China to Hong Kong were found to contain melamine. However, the World Health Organization's regional food safety officer emphasized that "a normal child would have to eat up to 20 eggs a day at the existing melamine levels to exceed the recommended tolerable intake for melamine."

The eggs currently in question are the "Select" brand produced by China's Dalian Hanwei Enterprise Group. Hanwei has started a nationwide recall of all "problematic" eggs. Walmart has already removed the eggs from their shelves in China.

On November 13, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in Wash-

ington announced a country-wide Import Alert for products exported from China to the U.S. which could contain melamine. The FDA places an 'import alert' on firms or countries whose products have been found to contain unapproved food additives. FDA then detains products under import alert at their point of entry into the U.S. The text of this alert can be found at http://www.fda.gov/ora/fiars/ora_import_ia9930.html. The products in question include a wide range of dairy products, and in addition many dairy-containing products such as snacks, cake mixes, candy, pet food and others.

We know that many people have been concerned about the potential risk of melamine exposure. The practical ramifications of this latest alert for the dietary practices of the American community are limited. The FDA is *not* saying that dangerous levels of melamine have been found in foods previously thought to be melamine-free. It is saying that the exporters must *prove* that these foods are not contaminated, and, until they do, these foods will not be allowed into

the US. Our recommendation continues to be that consumption of locally produced dairy products be minimized or avoided.

Further information about melamine can be found at

<http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/melamine.html>,

http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/melamine_qa.html, (FAQs) and

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/melamine/chinafood.asp> (FAQs).



Consumer Alert: Financial-Related Scams Increase

The following information is provided from the Cyber Threat Analysis Division (CTAD), Office of Computer Security, Diplomatic Security.

There has been a dramatic increase in scams as criminals prey on people who are anxious about bank takeovers and market conditions. If you receive an e-mail which appears to be from your bank, don't click on any links it may contain, no matter how authentic the e-mail seems to be. Phishing e-mails and the fake web pages that they direct you to often look legitimate. Banks seldom request personal or account information via e-mail. If action is really necessary, you should be able to type in the main web address for your bank and log into your account as usual.

Information about known phishing attacks is available online from groups such as the Anti-Phishing Working Group. Their web site may be accessed at: (http://www.antiphishing.org/phishing_archive.html).

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Open 8:00am - 11:30am
and 1:30pm - 3:30pm
Monday to Friday.

*Closed on Tuesday
afternoons, weekends
and holidays.

[http://shanghai.usemba
ssy-china.org.cn/](http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/)

Someone Asked the Consul:

Any tips to get PRC visas in Hong Kong?

We have heard numerous complaints from Americans who have recently received limited (less than multiple entry) Chinese visas. The following is advice that will (hopefully) increase your chances of receiving multiple entries:

--Make it clear on your application that you are applying for a multiple entry visa and why.

--Give as much detail as you can, at least for the first planned visit to China.

-- Apparently most travel agencies (such as CTS) are telling their clients that multiple entry visas are not available. The PRC Commission in Hong Kong has assured us otherwise. Either insist that the travel agency request a multi-entry visa or submit your application directly to the PRC visa office.

--You no longer have to provide hotel vouchers or airline reservation with your application. However, business applicants should be prepared to show why they need to travel into China on multiple occasions, including letter(s) of invitation from Chinese counterparts.

-- If you are a resident of Hong Kong, be sure to include a copy of your Hong Kong ID.

Identity Theft And Tax Records

Identity theft is a serious crime. People whose identities have been stolen can spend months or years - and their hard-earned money - cleaning up the mess thieves have made of their good name and credit record. In the meantime, victims may lose job opportunities, have loans refused, or even get arrested for crimes they didn't commit.

Generally, identity thieves use someone's personal data to steal his or her financial accounts and run up charges on the victim's existing

credit cards, but the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has identified other potential areas where this type of fraud may occur as they relate directly to your tax records.

Please note that the IRS does not initiate taxpayer communications through e-mail. The IRS also does not request detailed personal information through e-mail.

For more information, please see http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_4362.html.

