

U.S. Consulate General Shanghai

Welcome to the December newsletter! Here are this month's topics:

New Topics:

- Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures
- Voting Information for the 2008 Primary Elections
- Tighter Age Requirements For Children's Passports
- Tips For A Smooth Consular Visit
- Time Extension for Taxpayers Abroad
- Links to Overseas American Groups

Continuing Topics of Interest:

- Register With The Local Police Within 24 Hours of Arrival

Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures

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

December 31, Monday New Year's Eve

January 1, Tuesday New Year's Day

January 21, Monday Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Voting Information for the 2008 Primary Elections

New Hampshire and Michigan Primary Election Date

New Hampshire and Michigan have scheduled their Presidential Primary elections. New Hampshire will conduct their Presidential Primary election on January 8, 2008 and Michigan will conduct their Presidential Primary election for January 15, 2008.

Registering to vote and requesting a ballot:

If you have not done so already in calendar year 2007, all members of the U.S. Uniformed Services and their family members and citizens residing outside the U.S. who are either New Hampshire or Michigan residents should request a ballot by completing and submitting a registration and ballot request Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), SF-76, as soon as possible. The online version of the FPCA is available from the FVAP website at

www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefpca.html.

Additional Information:

The FVAP can be contacted via 1-800-438-8683. Citizens may reach the FVAP toll-free from 67 countries using the toll-free numbers listed on the FVAP website, www.fvap.gov. Questions regarding the above may also be referred to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, Department of Defense, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington DC 20301-1155, and email at vote@fvap.ncr.gov.

Other Early Primary Election

The following states will hold Primary elections early in 2008.

New Hampshire* Jan. 8, 08

Michigan* Jan. 15, 08

South Carolina* (R) Jan. 19, 08

Florida Jan. 29, 08

South Carolina* (D) Jan. 29, 08

Alabama Feb. 5, 08

Arizona* Feb. 5, 08

Arkansas Feb. 5, 08

California Feb. 5, 08
Connecticut Feb. 5, 08
Delaware Feb. 5, 08
Georgia Feb. 5, 08
Illinois Feb. 5, 08
Missouri Feb. 5, 08
New Jersey Feb. 5, 08
New Mexico (D) Feb. 5, 08
New York Feb. 5, 08
Oklahoma Feb. 5, 08
Tennessee Feb. 5, 08
Utah Feb. 5, 08
Louisiana Feb. 9, 08
District of Columbia* Feb. 12, 08
Maryland Feb. 12, 08
Virginia Feb. 12, 08
Washington Feb. 19, 08
Wisconsin Feb. 19, 08
Massachusetts Mar. 4, 08
Ohio Mar. 4, 08
Rhode Island Mar. 4, 08
Texas Mar. 4, 08
Vermont Mar. 4, 08
Puerto Rico Mar. 9, 08
Mississippi Mar. 11, 08

State Voter Registration Verification Website

States and territories are making it easier to find out your voter registration status. Twenty-two states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia have web sites where a voter can check their registration status. NOTE: The website addresses are subject to change.

Updates can be checked at <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/stregissites.html>

Arizona: https://servicearizona.com/webapp/evoter/select_language.do

Arkansas: <https://www.voterview.ar-nova.org/>

Colorado: www.sos.state.co.us/Voter/voterHome.do;jsessionid=0000XG2ue4KEtN2QUYQ

Delaware: pollingplace.delaware.gov/

District of Columbia: www.dcboee.org/voterreg/vic_step1.asp

Georgia: www.sos.state.ga.us/cgi-bin/Locator.asp

Indiana: www.indianavoters.com/PublicSite/Public/PublicVoterRegistration.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

(Note: You can also check the status of your provisional vote)

Iowa: www.sos.state.ia.us/elections/VoterReg/RegToVote/search.aspx

Kansas: <https://myvoteinfo.voteks.org/>

Kentucky: cdc.ky.gov/VICWeb/index.jsp

Louisiana: sos.louisiana.gov/polllocator/

Maryland: mdelections.umbc.edu (Note: You can get a sample ballot at this site also.)

Michigan: michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633-49313--,00.html

Nebraska: <https://www.votercheck.necvr.ne.gov/> (Note: You can also check the status of your provisional vote.)

Nevada: www.nvsos.gov/elections/

New Mexico: <https://voterview.state.nm.us/>

North Carolina: www.sboe.state.nc.us/votersearch/seimsvot.htm (Note: You can check the status of your provisional vote at this site also.)

Ohio: www.sos.state.oh.us/sosapps/elections/voterquery.aspx

Pennsylvania: www.dos.state.pa.us/voting/cwp/view.asp?a=1206&Q=446253&sureNav=|

Puerto Rico: www.ceeput.org/serviciosLineas/estatusElectoral/index.htm

(Note: This site is in Spanish and you need your voter registration number to verify your status.)

Rhode Island: www.sec.state.ri.us/vic/

South Carolina: <https://webprod.cio.sc.gov/SCSECVoterWeb/voterInformationSearch.do>

Utah: gva1.utah.gov/elections/polling.aspx

Virginia: <https://www.voterinfo.sbe.virginia.gov/PublicSite/Public/FT2/PublicLookup.aspx?Link=>

Washington: www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/lookup.aspx/

West Virginia: www.wvvotes.com/voters/am-i-registered.php

Tighter Age Requirements For Children's Passports

On November 19, the Department published in the Federal Register new rules updating existing passport regulations to conform to current practices.

These new regulations go into effect on February 1, 2008.

The new rules reflect several improvements in how the Department will process passports for Americans.

To help address the issue of abducted and runaway children, the new regulations extend the two-parent consent and personal appearance requirements to minors under the age of 16, up from age 14.

Tips For A Smooth Consular 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 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 and bring copies in addition to the originals (such as passports, children's birth certificates) ahead of time – this considerably shortens your visit. 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 more visa page applicants: 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. If your signature must be notarized and witnessed, you must bring witnesses and their IDs with you.

Register With The Local Police Within 24 Hours of Arrival

All foreigners (tourists, visitors, and long-term residents), including returning Chinese holding foreign passports, must register their place of residence with the local Public Security Bureau within 24 hours of arrival.

If you are in a hotel, registration is usually done as part of the check-in process. Those staying with family or friends in a private home must also observe this requirement. Failure to do so can result in fines and/or detention. Please consult with your nearest police office for more details.

Time Extension for Taxpayers Abroad

All taxpayers are generally entitled to an automatic 6-month extension of time to file their returns by filing Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time To File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, also available en español, with the Internal Revenue Service.

In addition to this 6-month extension, taxpayers who are out of the country (as defined in the Form 4868 instructions) can request a discretionary 2-month additional extension of time to file their returns (to December 15 for calendar year taxpayers).

To request this extension, you must send the Internal Revenue Service a letter explaining the reasons why you need the additional 2 months. Send the letter by the extended due date (October 15 for calendar year taxpayers) to the following address:

Internal Revenue Service Center
Austin, TX 73301-0215
USA

You will not receive any notification from the Internal Revenue Service unless your request is denied for being untimely. The discretionary 2-month additional extension is not available to taxpayers who have an approved extension of time to file on Form 2350 (for U.S. citizens and resident aliens abroad who expect to qualify for special tax treatment).

Links of Interest to Overseas Citizens

If you have difficulty accessing the official Federal Voting Assistance Program website, you may also try the following links to get voting information.

Association of Americans Resident Overseas (AARO)
<http://aaro.org/>

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas
<http://www.fawco.org/>

Expatriate Exchange
www.expatexchange.com/

American Citizens Abroad (ACA)
<http://www.aca.ch/>

Overseas Vote Foundation
www.overseasvotefoundation.org

Democrats Abroad
Tel (202) 863-8177
Fax (202) 863-8063
www.democratsabroad.org
info@democratsabroad.org

Republicans Abroad
Tel: (202) 608-1423
Fax: (202) 608-1431
www.republicansabroad.org
chairman@republicansabroad.org

The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the United States Federal Government, United States Department of Defense or the Federal Voting Assistance Program of the linked web sites, or the information, products or services contained therein. The Federal Voting Assistance Program does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations.

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