

July 4th Voting Message

Celebrate democracy this 4th of July by taking the necessary steps to vote in the 2016 U.S. elections!

In order to vote in the November 2016 elections, all overseas U.S. citizens need to have completed a [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\) in 2016](#). Whether you are a first-time voter or have already received ballots and voted absentee in past elections, you must complete an FPCA **each year** to participate in elections as an overseas absentee voter.

If you would like the U.S. Consulate to mail your FPCA or ballot for you, please bring them to the American Citizen Services (ACS) office at the Consulate General (15 Furshtatskaya Street) at 4 p.m. on Tuesdays or Thursdays. Consulate mail may take up to a month to be delivered to the United States, so please plan accordingly. You do not need an appointment if you only wish to drop off your FPCA or ballot; however, if you need assistance or have questions about voting, please schedule an appointment on our website at <http://stpetersburg.usconsulate.gov/visit.html> and choose the “notarial and other service” option.

If it's more convenient for you, you can also return your FPCA or ballot to your local election officials via international mail or professional courier service at your own expense.

If you have never voted while overseas before, the process is easy - just follow these steps:

1. **Request Your Ballot:** Complete a new [Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#). *You must complete a new FPCA after January 1, 2016 to ensure you receive your ballot for the 2016 elections.* The completion of the FPCA allows you to request absentee ballots for all **elections for federal offices (President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives)** including primaries and special elections during the calendar year in which it is submitted. The [FPCA](#) is accepted by all local election officials in all U.S. states and territories.

You can complete the FPCA **online** at FVAP.gov. The online voting assistant will ask you questions specific to your state. We encourage you to ask your local election officials to deliver your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your state). Include your email address on your FPCA to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery

option. Return the FPCA per the instructions on the website. FVAP.gov will tell you if your state allows the [FPCA](#) to be returned electronically or if you must submit a paper copy with original signature. If you must return a paper version, please see below for mailing options.

2. **Receive and Complete Your Ballot:** States are required to send out ballots 45 days before a regular election for federal office and states generally send out ballots at least 30 days before primary elections. For most states, you can confirm your [registration and ballot delivery online](#).
3. **Return Your Completed Ballot:** Some states allow you to return your completed ballot electronically and others do not. If your state requires you to return paper voting forms or ballots to local election officials, you can do so free of charge at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Place your ballots in postage paid return envelopes or in envelopes bearing sufficient domestic U.S. postage, and address them to the relevant local election officials.

Researching the Candidates and Issues: Online Resources. 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 on-line. 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](#).

Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website [FVAP.gov](#). If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact the ACS office at the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg by phone at +7 (812) 331-2600 or by email at VoteSTPETERSBURG@state.gov.

Remember, your vote counts!