

Embassy Holidays 2013

The Embassy is closed to the public for all U.S. holidays and for many local holidays.

The UAE government may adjust dates for some local holidays. Therefore, dates may vary from the estimates below.

New Year's Day (U.S.)
Tuesday, Jan 1, 2013

Birthday of Martin Luther King (U.S.)
Sunday, Jan 20, 2013

The Prophet's Birthday (UAE)
Thursday, Jan 24, 2013

Washington's Birthday (U.S.)
Sunday, Feb 17, 2013

Memorial Day (U.S.)
Sunday, May 26, 2013

Prophet's Ascension Day (UAE)
Tuesday, Jun 4, 2013

Independence Day (U.S.)
Thursday, Jul 4, 2013

Eid Al Fitr* (UAE)
Thursday – Saturday Aug 8–10, 2013

Labor Day (U.S.)
Sunday, Sep 1, 2013

Columbus Day (U.S.)
Sunday, Oct 13, 2013

Arafat (Haj) Day (UAE)
Monday, Oct 14, 2013

Eid Al Adha* (UAE)
Tuesday – Thursday, Oct 15-17, 2013

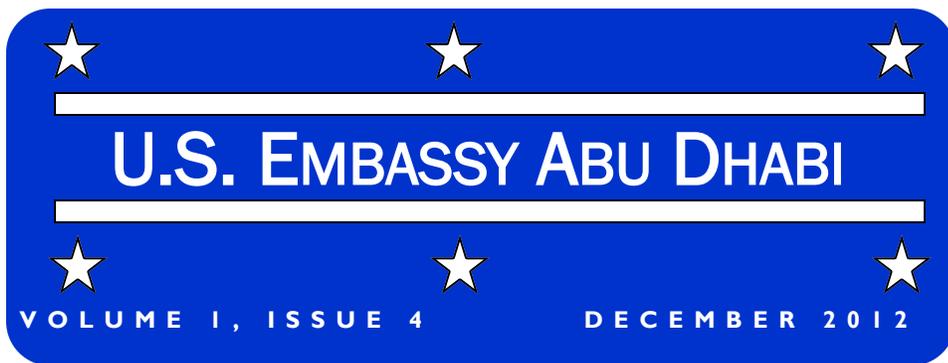
Islamic New Year (UAE)
Monday, Nov 4, 2013

Veterans Day (U.S.)
Monday, Nov 11, 2013

Thanksgiving Day (U.S.)
Thursday, Nov 28, 2013

National Day (UAE)
Monday, Dec 2, 2013

Christmas Day (U.S.)
Wednesday, Dec 25, 2013



Help Your Fellow Citizens: Become an Embassy Warden

Do you want to help your fellow citizens or respond in time of crisis? Then please consider joining our warden network. Wardens are our eyes and ears on the ground. We rely on this volunteer network to disseminate critical information and to assist U.S. citizens in times of need.

You might already know that Embassy Abu Dhabi's consular district is just the Emirate of Abu Dhabi*. It's a pretty big place. Abu Dhabi makes up 86% of the land area of the UAE. We are looking to build our warden network throughout the Emirate, especially in areas outside the capital city of Abu Dhabi.

Do you live off the beaten path? Work in the oil patch? Teach in Al Gharbia? Make furniture in Al Ain? Grow dates in Liwa? Run a hotel on Sir Bani Yas Island? We're looking for you to join us and to help us make the UAE a more welcoming place for your fellow citizens. If you'd like to volunteer then please email us at AbuDhabiACS@state.gov for more information about becoming a geographic warden.

If you live in a more central location you can still make a difference. We are also looking for wardens at organizations that employ U.S. citizens. We have representation in groups as varied as the Crown Prince's Court and ExxonMobil. If your employer has more than 10 U.S. citizens on staff then we encourage someone at your organization to volunteer with us as your organization's warden or alternate. The work is much the same, but the area of responsibility is more specific. If you'd like to volunteer as the point of contact for your organization then please email us at AbuDhabiACS@state.gov for more information.

* *Consulate General Dubai's consular district covers Dubai and the five northern emirates.*

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

POLICE/AMBULANCE/FIRE	999
POISON CONTROL (Sheikh Khalifa Medical Center)	02-610-3500
U.S. EMBASSY ABU DHABI EMERGENCY NUMBER 02 414 2200	
DEPARTMENT OF STATE Overseas Citizen Services	
From within the U.S.	1-888-407-4747
From outside the U.S.	1-202-501-4444

Election 2012 Wrap-up

The 2012 election season is now behind us. Despite the distances involved we had a huge interest in the 2012 presidential election here in the UAE. We held two public events in Abu Dhabi for U.S. citizen voters and we were amazed at the turnout. We accepted nearly one thousand ballots and voter registrations. We sent them back to voter registration offices all over the United States.

We accepted ballots up to (and even after) election day, delivering them back to the United States by diplomatic mail service and via Fedex courier. The Embassy only accepts ballots and registrations. We don't process them, count them, or decide whether you are eligible to vote. That's the job of your local elections board. Sadly, not every ballot we accepted made it on time to be counted.

Some states have much more generous timelines for accepting overseas absentee ballots than others (1). Make sure that when you vote next time you leave enough time to get your ballot back to your local elections office. In some states it's also possible to return your ballot by email or fax.

If you used our voting assistance website <http://www.fvap.gov> then remember to visit back there next year so that you can get your ballots in non-Presidential election years too. **You need to re-register every year at www.fvap.gov in order to get a steady supply of absentee voter ballots.**

(1) see <http://nass.org>



The Most Popular (and Misunderstood) U.S. Citizen Service at Embassy Abu Dhabi

What do you think is the service most requested by U.S. Citizens at Embassy Abu Dhabi? Birth registrations? Passport renewals? Adding visa pages? Federal Benefits? It's actually none of the above. Our most popular service is document notarization and authentication. Many people come to the Embassy to get their documents notarized by a recognized and trusted source that is readily accepted in the United States. Others come to get documents for their employer or the UAE government.

We notarize a wide variety of documents. Some are very simple and take us just a few minutes to prepare. Others can be extremely complex and require additional preparation time. Notarization is a serious business; it cannot be rushed. Powers of attorney and mortgage documents are especially popular, as are sworn statements of personal status made by U.S. citizens for use locally. Business and financial documents make up the bulk of the remaining work.

We can't always offer same-day service for complex documents.

We understand that this can be challenging, especially for time-sensitive documents. Please give yourself extra time to get documents back to the U.S. after they are notarized. Next-day delivery service between the UAE and the USA does not exist.

A short note of caution about authenticating or "stamping" documents: We are usually able to authenticate UAE documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **We cannot authenticate U.S. documents in the UAE.** Many of our customers are surprised by this, as they have been told by their employer or the UAE government to come to the Embassy for this procedure. This includes marriage documents, birth certificates, or university degrees. Many other Embassies do provide this service; State Department regulations preclude us from doing so.

We have information on our website about the authentication process (1). This process is time consuming and must be done in the United States, so make sure to allow sufficient time to get it done.

(1) <http://abudhabi.usembassy.gov/service/document-authentication2.html>



U.S. Citizens: Want to Bring Your Maid to the United States?

Many people want to travel with their domestic helpers when going to the United States. U.S. law provides a way to do this so that your domestic staff can work legally in the United States. At Embassy Abu Dhabi we process visas for domestic workers traveling to the U.S. all the time.

Domestic workers are a vulnerable population that can easily be exploited or trafficked. U.S. law requires that their sponsors provide us with some extra documentation.

- Your domestic employee must have at least one year of work experience as a domestic. It doesn't need to be just with your family. However, it will be harder for your domestic employee to qualify if they don't have a long work history with you or in the UAE.
- We will ask to see a work contract that shows your domestic employee will be paid the higher of the local prevailing wage or the minimum wage in whatever location you are visiting. The U.S. minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. In some places it's higher. We have information on our website (1) about how you can determine the correct wage.
- We also require that the contract comply with U.S. labor laws regarding overtime, work hours, health insurance and room and board. Note that you may not charge your domestic employees for room and board.
- When we interview your domestic employee, we will ask him/her about the contract terms to ensure that s/he understands the terms and the language. We don't issue visas in cases where the contract terms are vague or unenforceable, or when the domestic worker can't read or doesn't understand the terms. Your staff must demonstrate that they are qualified, just like every other alien who wishes to travel to the United States. The fact that you as an employer have a U.S. Passport does not grant an entitlement to visas for your staff.
- Finally, and most confusingly, U.S. law allows for domestic worker visas only for U.S. citizens residing in the U.S. for a limited time. A few weeks or a few months is fine. In some cases even a few years is also approvable. But forever is too long for Uncle Sam - If you plan on moving to the U.S. **permanently** then you can't bring a domestic worker back to the United States with you with a non-immigrant visa. (2)

(1)
<http://abudhabi.usembassy.gov/niv/domestics.html>

(2) It is possible to get an IMMIGRANT visa for your domestic staff member. You will need to petition for a class EB-3 Immigrant Visa for an unskilled worker. However, this process is very slow and expensive.



New Process to Get U.S. Visas

Non-citizens who want to visit the United States generally need a visa in order to travel to the United States and get admitted at a U.S. Port of Entry. Issuing visas to visitors, students, and temporary workers is one of the most important jobs we do at the Embassy. Under our policy of "Secure Borders, Open Doors" we work to facilitate legitimate travel to the United States by people from all over the world.

In order to keep up with the demand and to streamline our visa processing, the Embassy in Abu Dhabi and the Consulate General in Dubai will move to a new processing system. The new process will go live on January 6, 2013.

The coming changes for visa processing will not affect our process for services to U.S. citizens in any way. We thought we'd mention it anyway; everyone seems to be interested in our visa processing operations.

Our goal is to simplify and streamline our operations. With the new process it's possible to make an appointment over the telephone or via the Internet. You can pay via credit card or by cash at any Emirates Post office. We're also eliminating some fees for delivery service.

More information about the new visa service process can be found on our website

<http://photos.state.gov/libraries/uae/231771/PDFs/gss-faqs.pdf>

