

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES NEWSLETTER
U.S. EMBASSY KYIV, UKRAINE
September 30, 2008

Through the American Citizens Services newsletter, the U.S. Embassy provides security and other information of general interest to U.S. citizens in Ukraine who have subscribed by registering with the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv and providing an email address. This newsletter also serves as a test of our ability to reach Americans in Ukraine in the event of a wide-scale emergency. If you believe others would benefit from receiving this newsletter, please forward it to them and encourage them to subscribe. Please see the information on subscription at the bottom of this newsletter.

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UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION LAW - CHANGE FROM 90 TO 180 DAY REGISTRATION

American Citizens are reminded of the amendments to the Ukrainian Immigration Law introduced by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine #917 from July 11, 2007 that change certain entry and registration requirements after the Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organization. The below is an excerpt from the official response from the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs received by the U.S. Embassy that explains recent changes:

“According to the requirements set forth in paragraph 19 of the above Decree, U.S. citizens are registered at the Ukrainian port of entry for the period of 180 days within a year no matter whether or not they have a Ukrainian visa. This regulation came into force on May 16, 2008, the date when Ukraine acceded to the World Trade Organization, and it applies to all American citizens irrespective of the date of their entry to the territory of Ukraine.

According to paragraph 25 of the aforementioned Decree, the registration procedure at the port of entry includes the following: the endorsement of the passport and/or immigration card with the “entry” or “exit” stamp, the data entry of the passport and other information about the foreigner into the relevant registration system, and the completion of the immigration card in accordance with the terms defined by the Administration of the Ukrainian State Border Control Office.

In accordance with paragraph 27 of the mentioned Decree, the extension of stay of foreigners and stateless persons in Ukraine is accomplished by the internal affairs authorities in the order established by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (MIA of Ukraine Resolution # 1456 of December 01,

2003). Relevant documents are processed on the basis of the written application of the foreigner and the inviting side, which should be submitted not later than three working days prior to the current registration expiration date. Applications for extension of stay may be denied if there is no justification for the extension or there are no sufficient funds to cover the expenses for the foreigner's stay in Ukraine, or the inviting side fails to provide sufficient guarantees."

The Embassy's understanding of the current Ukrainian visa, entry and registration procedure is available on the [website](#)

INTERACTING WITH THE UKRAINIAN POLICE

Recently, Ukrainian police have begun Operation "Migrant," a countrywide law enforcement operation targeted at illegal immigrants in Ukraine.

In addition to checking Ukrainian firms that provide services to foreigners, police can and will stop and check the identification documents of individuals who appear to be foreign at random on the street and other public areas.

Under Ukrainian law, Ukrainian police are permitted to stop anyone for any reason and check their identification documents. The Ukrainian police check foreigners' passports to verify their legal presence in Ukraine. The Ukrainian law requires foreign visitors to carry their passports and immigration cards with them. Police are further permitted to detain anyone for up to 72 hours without formal charge. If you are stopped by police for any reason, please identify yourself as an American Citizen and provide the police officer(s) with your passport and immigration card. These are the only two documents that will be recognized by the Ukrainian police. The Embassy also encourages American Citizens to make a copy of your passport and keep it in a safe place.

Although this is a legitimate police operation, there is a concern that Operation "Migrant" will be used as an opportunity for some police officers to harass minorities or harass foreigners for bribes. We encourage American Citizens to call the U.S. Embassy at +38 044 490-4445 during working hours or at +38 044 490-4000 after hours if you experience difficulties while stopped by the police. Keep these numbers in your cellular phone to be able to get in touch with us immediately, if necessary. Your reports of any derogatory or negative police contact will be very helpful to minimize the number of such cases in the future.

U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION - ELECTRONIC DEVICES EXAMINATION

As the nation's frontline border agency, [U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\)](#) encounters more than one million travelers every day at U.S. ports of entry and is responsible for enforcing more than 600 federal laws at the border, including laws relating to narcotics, intellectual property, child pornography and other contraband, and terrorism. Their ability to inspect what is coming into the United States is central to keeping dangerous people and things from entering the country and harming the American people. One of the most important enforcement tools in this regard is the ability to search information contained in electronic devices, including laptops and other digital devices, for violations of U.S. law, including potential threats.

CBP is responsible for ensuring compliance with customs, immigration, and other Federal laws at the border. To that end, CBP Officers, Border Patrol Agents, Air and Marine Agents, Internal Affairs Agents, and any other official of CBP authorized to conduct border searches may examine documents, books, pamphlets, and other printed material, as well as computers, disks, hard drives, and other electronic or digital storage devices. These examinations are part of CBP's long-standing practice and are essential to uncovering vital law enforcement information. For example, examinations of documents and electronic devices are a crucial tool for detecting information concerning terrorism, narcotics smuggling, and other national security matters; alien admissibility; contraband including child

pornography, monetary instruments, and information in violation of copyright or trademark laws; and evidence of embargo violations or other import or export control laws. Notwithstanding this law enforcement mission, in the course of every border search, CBP will protect the rights of individuals against unreasonable search and seizure. Each operational office will maintain appropriate mechanisms for internal audit and review of compliance with the procedures outlined in this policy. More about U.S. CBP policy regarding border search of information can be found at www.cbp.gov/linkhandler/cgov/travel/admissability/search_authority.ctt/search_authority.pdf

BEWARE OF SCAMS WHILE IN UKRAINE

Ukraine's expatriate community continues to be the target of street, property and other crimes, largely for economic gain. Short-term visitors - primarily tourists and students - are victimized primarily by street crime and financial crimes, although foreigners resident in Ukraine are also targeted. Financial crimes include ATM, credit card, and Internet fraud. Marriage and dating scams are also common. Street crime consists primarily of pick-pocketing, confidence scams, mugging, and purse snatching and tends to be non-violent, although there have been a number of violent street attacks over the past year. American visitors and residents should take the same precautions against street crime and scams that they would in any large city in the United States or Europe. The following link to the non-governmental informational website may help you familiarize yourself with existing [scams in Ukraine](#). The U.S. Embassy bears no responsibility for the authenticity of the information on this website however finds this information to be of interest for American Citizens in Ukraine.

VOTING INFORMATION:

All American citizens are reminded that 2008 is a presidential election year in the United States.

Voters may use the electronic version of the FPCA to register to vote and/or request absentee ballots . The FPCA may be mailed to local election officials through the international mail (with appropriate postage), or voters can print out the attached postage-paid mailing label, affix it to an envelope, and send the FPCA in that envelope through the Embassy's diplomatic pouch system. Both the electronic FPCA and postage-paid envelope template are available at www.fvap.gov

The Voting Assistance Officer at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy, Kyiv, Ukraine is always available to answer questions about absentee voting. To contact the Voting Assistance Officer, call 8-044-490-4445 or send an [e-mail](#). Look for notices from the Embassy/Consulate throughout the year relating to the 2008 elections.

COVERAGE OF THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) has joined with the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) to make the 2008 election debates more valuable to Americans abroad. DebateWatch is the CPD's nonpartisan, international program that brings U.S. citizens together to watch and discuss this fall's presidential and vice presidential debates. All across the world, citizens will meet in schools, libraries, theaters, hotels, civic auditoriums, homes, and elsewhere to watch the debates on television or the Internet, or listen to them on the radio. At the end of each debate and before commentary begins, the facilitator will turn off the broadcast and lead participants in a discussion about the debate, the candidates, and the upcoming election. After finishing their discussion, participants may log on to the CPD's website, www.debates.org , to fill out a voluntary survey and provide feedback to the CPD. If you would like to learn more about DebateWatch or register to organize one of these meetings, please see www.debates.org or email debatewatch@debates.org.

Presidential debates are a permanent part of every Presidential general election, Debates provide a means for viewers and listeners to become informed about the candidates' positions on the issues. The CPD's primary purpose is to sponsor and produce debates for the United States presidential and vice

presidential candidates and to undertake research and educational activities relating to the debates. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization sponsored all the presidential debates since 1988.

For the 2008 general election, CPD teamed up with Myspace to create a new website, www.MyDebates.org. The website which will be operational in early September will try and enhance the educational value of the debates while engaging new audiences. The CPD believes, "the Internet can be used to personalize the debates in a way that allows for in-depth examination by individual citizens and joint discussion with others." The new website will include tools for citizens to make scorecards of important issues and help track the issues throughout the debates. Voters can submit questions for possible inclusion in the town meeting debate via www.MyDebates.org. This new venture plans to offer unprecedented access and flexibility in following these debates through forums that discuss numerous topics.

More information about the CPD and [MyDebates.org](http://www.debates.org) can be found at www.debates.org.

The schedules for this fall's debates are as follows: (Information current as of 5 Aug 08)

First presidential debate:	Friday, September 26
Vice-presidential debate:	Thursday, October 2
Second presidential debate:	Tuesday, October 7
Third presidential debate:	Wednesday, October 15

All debates will begin at 9 pm E.T., and will be carried by international media outlets. The debates will have a single moderator and last for 90 minutes.

FREE DHL SERVICE FOR RETURNING VOTING MATERIALS

Absentee Voting Week is October 12-18, 2008. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (and Consular Affairs) encourages all American citizen voters to return their voted ballots immediately, or to use the back-up Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

Special Service for American Citizens in Ukraine: Free DHL service for returning voting materials: To help you vote via absentee ballot and meet the deadline of your state, the American Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with DHL are again offering their support to U.S. Citizen Voters by providing two shipments for voting materials.

Ballot requests and voted absentee ballots delivered to the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit at the Embassy's Consular section before 5:00 PM on October 10th and 5:00 PM on October 24th will be shipped to the U.S. by DHL free of charge the following day. Please make sure the envelopes containing your ballot have appropriate postage since they will be put into the U.S. postal system after reaching the United States. If you do not have a return envelope from your Local Election Official or you are sending in the Online Version of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (OFWAB) www.fvap.gov/resources/media/fwab.pdf, you can print a postage-paid envelope at www.fvap.gov/resources/media/returnenvelope.pdf.

Questions should be directed to ACS. Please do not contact DHL or the American Chamber of Commerce regarding this service.

The FWAB can only be used by voters who already registered to vote and requested an absentee ballot.

Please start using the FWAB in early October after your state's primary when you vote for the general election. If you subsequently receive your state ballots, you should vote those ballots as well and send them in. Your local election officials will replace the FWAB with the voted state ballot if it is received on time.

Check the online Voting Assistance Guide for the most current requirement on notarization of voted ballot. Only a few states require notarization, but many states have witness requirements. The US Embassy will provide voting-related notarizations free of charge on all working days.

Voters in Ukraine have a number of options for mailing Federal Postcard Applications, voted state ballots, and Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots to their local election officials in the United States. Mailing addresses for local election officials and state mailing deadlines can be found in the Voting Assistance Guide, available [on-line](#).

1. First Class Mail: You may mail your Federal Postcard Application or voted ballot to the United States through the (country) mail system, with appropriate international postage.
2. Diplomatic Pouch: Diplomatic pouch to the East Coast takes approximately 14 days. Processing of mail at the diplomatic pouch facility in the Washington, D.C. area and onward delivery by the U.S. Postal Service to local election officials across the U.S. can take another one to four days. The Consular Section will place a date stamp and seal on your ballot as evidence of the date and location from which the ballot was mailed. However, this is not a postmark. Voters should make every effort to submit their ballots to the U.S. Embassy no later than October 15 for diplomatic pouch mail.
3. Express Courier: Last-minute voters can use express courier services such as FedEx, UPS and DHL to send their voted ballots to all states and territories except Alabama. Express courier companies cannot deliver to post office boxes, so you will need to know the street address of your local voting official in the United States. Mail sent by express courier companies is not postmarked. Contact information for some local express courier companies follows:

[Fed Ex](#): 8044-495-2020

[UPS](#): 8044-280-0000

[DHL](#): 8044-490-2600

STATE BALLOT RETURN DEADLINES

Below is a list of General Election Deadlines for Overseas Citizens and Military stationed in the US and abroad. States appearing twice on the list are indicated with an asterisk. Please also be aware of states with postmark deadlines.

November 3:

Mississippi*, Overseas Citizens and Stateside Military, 5 p.m. North Carolina, 5 p.m.

November 4:

Alabama, 12pm

American Samoa, 1:30pm

Arizona, 7pm

Colorado, 7pm

Connecticut, COP

Delaware, 8pm

Florida*, Stateside Military, 7pm
Guam, 8pm
Hawaii, COP
Idaho, 8pm
Indiana, COP
Kentucky, COP
Louisiana
Maine, 8pm
Massachusetts*, Stateside Military, 8pm
Michigan, 8pm
Minnesota, COP
Mississippi*, Overseas Military, 7pm
Missouri, 7pm
Montana, 8pm
Nebraska, COP
Nevada, 7pm
New Hampshire, 5pm
New Jersey, COP
New Mexico, COP
Ohio*, Stateside Military, COP
Oklahoma, 7pm
Puerto Rico, 3pm
Rhode Island, 9pm
South Carolina, COP
South Dakota, COP
Tennessee, COP
Texas*, Stateside Military, COP
Virginia, 7pm
West Virginia
Wisconsin*, Overseas Citizens, COP
Wyoming, COP
November 7:
Georgia, postmarked by Nov. 4
North Dakota

November 10:

Iowa, 12pm, postmarked by Nov. 3

Texas*, Overseas Citizens and Stateside Military, in delivery by Nov. 4

November 11:

New York*, Overseas Citizens, postmarked by Nov. 3

Pennsylvania, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 14:

Alaska*, Stateside Military

Arkansas, 5pm

District of Columbia

Florida*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military, 7pm Ohio*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military Virgin Islands Wisconsin*, Military, 5pm, postmarked by Nov. 4

Massachusetts*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military, postmarked Nov. 4

November 17:

New York*, Military, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 18:

Illinois, postmarked by Nov. 3

Utah, 12pm, postmarked by Nov. 3

November 19:

Alaska*, Overseas Citizens and Overseas Military

November 25:

Washington, oath sign/dated by Nov. 4

U.S. VOTING INFORMATION CENTER:

(703) 588-1343

DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE: 1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

Visit the [website](#) for international toll-free phone and fax numbers.

[E-Mail](#)

VOTING RELATED LINKS OF INTEREST TO OVERSEAS CITIZENS

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

Federation of American Women's Club Overseas (FAWCO): www.fawco.org/

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

Overseas Vote Foundation: www.overseasvotefoundation.org/overseas/home.htm

Democrats Abroad: www.democratsabroad.org/

Republicans Abroad: www.republicansabroad.com/

The American Citizen Services does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. Such links are provided consistent with the stated purpose of this paragraph of the newsletter.

REQUEST FOR CELLULAR TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR TEXT- MESSAGING

The American Citizens Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv has implemented a text messaging network, whereby registered American citizens in Ukraine can receive short text messages (SMS). The SMS is sent to cellular telephones, informing the user that a new warden message has been issued (i.e., posted on the Embassy website and e-mailed to individual registrants) and providing important information in case of an emergency. Since some of our registrants do not have constant access to the Internet, this text-messaging capability enhances our ability to contact Americans in the event of an emergency.

As with all personal information provided by American citizens, we consider privacy and information technology security to be a top priority. We will ensure that cellular phone numbers are protected properly as required by law.

If you would like to participate, please make sure that your cellular telephone supports the text messaging option and provide us with your phone number in the following format: (2-digit country code)(3-digit provider code)(7-digit number) without blank spaces, brackets or any other symbols. For example, a UMC cellular phone number in Ukraine will look like the following: 380501234567. Please send the phone number, along with your name, by [e-mail](#). We encourage your participation as an emergency preparedness measure.

INTERNET-BASED REGISTRATION SYSTEM (IBRS)

The Embassy strongly encourages all American citizens residing or traveling abroad to register with us.

U.S. citizens around the world who travel or reside abroad can access the State Department's secure online registration website either through a link on travel.state.gov or directly at travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs. We invite you to register yourself and your family and get acquainted with travel registration. Even if you believe you are already registered with this Embassy, please take a minute to check your record and update any information that may have changed.

Long-term visitors registered with the U.S. Embassy are encouraged to update their registration form whenever their contact details, including e-mail addresses change.

If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about the State Department's registration website, please send an [e-mail](#). If you have specific questions about your registration with this Embassy, please [contact us](#).

CURRENT TRAVEL WARNINGS:

Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid a certain country. The countries listed below are currently on that list. In addition to this list, the State Department issues Consular Information Sheets for every country of the world with information on such matters as the health conditions, crime, unusual currency or entry requirements, any areas of instability, and the location of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate in the subject country. The date next to the country name indicates when the country was added to the list. If the country is not excluded from the list, the warning for the country is still up-to-date.

[Israel, the West Bank and Gaza](#) 09/26/2008

[Yemen](#) 09/17/2008

[Bolivia](#) 09/15/2008
[Iran](#) 09/15/2008
[Georgia](#) 09/10/2008
[Lebanon](#) 09/10/2008
[Afghanistan](#) 09/10/2008
[Algeria](#) 08/22/2008
[Kenya](#) 08/22/2008
[Colombia](#) 08/07/2008
[Congo, Democratic Republic of the](#) 07/23/2008
[Saudi Arabia](#) 07/09/2008
[Uzbekistan](#) 07/03/2008
[Chad](#) 06/23/2008
[Sri Lanka](#) 06/13/2008
[Iraq](#) 06/13/2008
[Eritrea](#) 06/11/2008
[Cote d'Ivoire](#) 06/09/2008
[Somalia](#) 05/20/2008
[Nepal](#) 05/07/2008
[Haiti](#) 04/30/2008
[Burundi](#) 04/22/2008
[Syria](#) 04/15/2008
[Central African Republic](#) 03/25/2008
[Sudan](#) 03/14/2008
[Philippines](#) 02/13/2008
[Nigeria](#) 10/30/2007
[Pakistan](#) 09/21/2007
[Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf](#) 09/23/2008
[Comoros](#) 08/12/2008
[China](#) 07/03/2008
[Burma \(Myanmar\)](#) 06/03/2008
[Hurricane Season](#) 05/30/2008
[China](#) 04/30/2008
[Mexico](#) 04/14/2008

For more details on specific countries in the list, please, follow the link of the Department of State,

[Consular Affairs website.](#)

OTHER USEFUL INTERNET ADDRESSES AVAILABLE FOR U.S. CITIZENS

U.S. Federal Government: www.firstgov.gov

U.S. Department of State Consular Affairs: travel.state.gov

Overseas Security Advisory Council: www.osac.gov/

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov

U.S. Federal Aviation Administration: www.faa.gov

U.S. Internal Revenue Service: www.irs.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov

World Health Organization www.who.org

Social Security Administration: www.ssa.gov

SSA Newsletter: www.ssa.gov/enews/

Federal Voting Assistance: www.fvap.gov

2008 US Elections: usinfo.state.gov/politics/elections/

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: www.cbp.gov (for information including importation of household pets, animal and plant health inspection, etc)

U.S. Department of Agriculture: www.usda.gov (for information on food products, food safety and inspection service)

U.S. Postal Inspection Service: www.usps.com/websites/depart/inspect/

Internet Fraud Complaint Center: www.ifccfbi.gov

Embassy of Ukraine in Washington, D.C.: www.ukremb.com

Consulate General of Ukraine in New York: www.brama.com/ua-consulate

Consulate General of Ukraine in Chicago: www.ukrchicago.com

Consulate General of Ukraine in San Francisco: www.ukrainesf.com

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER CLOSURES

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Holiday Day	Date	Country
Columbus Day	Monday October 13	U.S.
Veterans Day	Tuesday November 11	U.S.
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday November 27	U.S.
Christmas Day	Thursday December 25	U>S.

* - When a Ukrainian holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday, it is usually observed on Monday.

** - When a U.S. holiday falls on Saturday, it is usually observed on Friday, when on Sunday -- it is

usually observed on Monday.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine may make additional changes in the holiday schedule during the year.

SUBSCRIPTION TO AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES NEWSLETTER

To subscribe to our monthly newsletter and other updates, please register with the Embassy. You can do this online through the new Internet-Based Registration System (IBRS) directly at travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs or through a link on TRAVEL.STATE.GOV. Please see above for more information on IBRS.

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public hours: 9:00 am – 12:00 noon, Monday – Friday; notary services – Fridays only.

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Comments or suggestions on this newsletter are welcome.

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