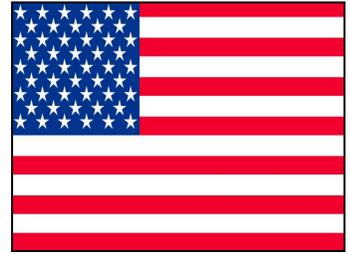




U.S. Embassy, Lusaka



CONSULAR COMMUNICATOR

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We realize that it can be a little difficult getting excited about the upcoming U.S. elections when you're approximately 8,000 miles away from the United States. Zambia's often erratic internet service and the absence of major U.S. news networks also does not make it easy to keep abreast of the major campaign issues and debate highlights. On the other hand, our considerable distance screens us from late-night robocalls and an inundation of campaign ads that can be tiring. So, as the multi-billion electioneering industry ratchets up in the U.S., our quiet corner in Zambia may be a pretty good place to observe the elections and cast your vote.

It's never been easier to cast your absentee ballot in a U.S. election and we encourage you to register and vote. All election materials are available at www.FVAP.GOV and at the U.S. Embassy consular section. Most states even allow you to receive your ballots by email. While the broad aspects of the absentee ballot process are probably quite clear, below are some answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about voter registration, eligibility and even taxation that we hope you find helpful.

Do all voters really have to complete a new FPCA (Federal Post Card Application) this year? Both our office and FVAP strongly recommend that you send in

a new FPCA in January of each year, and every time you change your email or mailing address. States no longer have the obligation to send out ballots for consecutive general elections on the basis of a single FPCA request, although some may choose to do so.

Why is there a question on the Federal Post Card Application about living abroad temporarily or permanently? The answer that the voter provides helps his/her state decide whether to send out a full ballot or a ballot for federal offices only. (Note: There is a potential tax liability issue if a voter checks "intent to return," but isn't paying state/local taxes.)

Can the U.S. Embassy send FPCAs and voted ballots via pouch to the U.S. on behalf of any/all overseas voters? Yes, Federal law requires that Embassies allow overseas voters to use the pouch mail for all U.S.-bound election-related materials.

Can private citizens use the Embassy address to receive their ballots? No.

Can voting expose a U.S. citizen to tax liability? U.S. citizens abroad have an obligation to file tax returns. The U.S. Embassy cannot give tax advice to private citizens. Questions regarding tax liability should be directed to the IRS or to private counsel.

If a person is potentially eligible to vote in two different states, is there a requirement to choose the LAST residence? No. A voter's state of voting residence is typically the place where he/she last resided

but it isn't always the case. A person normally registers to vote in one locality based on current or previous residence there. If he/she decides to register to vote in another state, or in another city or county within that state, he/she would have to meet the eligibility requirements for registering in that locale. If a voter changes his/her state of voting residence, local election officials in the new locale normally alert officials in the former state to cancel the old registration. This is an action that may have state/local tax implications. A voter can maintain properties in two different states, and have lived in two different states, but cannot randomly pick one state or the other in which to vote.

Does it matter what size envelope a voter uses to send in a FPCA, FWAB, or voted state ballot? No, any standard envelope size is acceptable as long as the documents are contained securely, the address is clearly printed on the envelope, and there is proper postage affixed or postage-paid indicia.

NOTE: Voters who use the FVAP website template to generate the mailing address for their local election official must print the address directly onto an envelope. The U.S. Postal Service warns against taping or pasting a piece of paper containing a mailing address onto the envelope. These come loose and jam postal processing equipment, or come off completely and the letter can't be delivered.

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The Consular Section staff at U.S. Embassy Lusaka encourages you to register to vote and is ready to assist with completing your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact the Voting Assistance Officer by email at:

ACSLusaka@state.gov

HELP US HELP YOU IN AN EMERGENCY!

You may have heard us encouraging you to enroll in [Smart Traveler](http://www.travel.state.gov/step) (www.travel.state.gov/step). Smart Traveler is the U.S. Department of State's worldwide program that allows us to provide you timely information on the places where you are traveling and living—and to be able to reach you in an emergency. If there is a crisis in Zambia or a personal crisis back home, we can only reach you quickly if you are enrolled and keep your contact info current. If you registered with us before and your contact info remains the same, no need to re-enroll. If you are traveling to other countries, or your contact information changes, do update your information at the Web site noted above.

As part of Smart Traveler, we can send you an emergency SMS text messages on your mobile. You can provide your mobile number when you subscribe. Not all text messages to through in Zambia, usually due to provider constraints. We send emergency messages by email and SMS and post to the Embassy website.

If you have already registered with the Embassy and have not provided a cell phone number, please send your mobile phone number to us at ACSLusaka@state.gov.

**Your Privacy Is Paramount**

All of the personal information you provide to us is protected under the Privacy Act of 1974. This law prohibits us from sharing the information with anyone *without your written authorization*. Certain exceptions exist, such as when we need to share information on a limited basis in order to protect your safety and welfare in extreme circumstances.

Health: Yellow Fever Vaccination Record

The U.S. Embassy alerted all registered U.S. Citizens resident in Zambia that South African Airways (SAA) now requires all passengers to present their World Health Organization (WHO) card (commonly called a "yellow card") showing a valid yellow fever vaccination shot record before boarding flights from Zambia to South Africa. SAA recently implemented this policy because South Africa is now enforcing its proof of vaccination requirement for travelers arriving from all WHO-designated yellow fever countries. Also, South Africa now requires the original (not a photocopy), current vaccination cards of travelers from Zambia. **Note that South Africa may require that vaccines be given 10 days in advance of your trip — and may even apply the regulation to those on medical evacuation. South African authorities can and do refuse entry into South Africa to travelers who do not meet this requirement.**

WWW.TRAVEL.STATE.GOV

Consult the State Department's travel information site for information on services for U.S. citizens resident abroad and tips to stay safe. Check out the feature on road safety overseas:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1179.html. Stay Smart, Stay Safe, Stay Informed!

Good News for High School Students: SATs and PSATs are offered at the American International School on a space-available basis. For more information contact: Julie Ann Baldry by email: jbaldry@aislusaka.org.

go from here.

**STUDENTS ABROAD****Attention Traveling Students:**

Did you know that the State Department has a travel website especially for American youth traveling abroad? Whether you or the young adult in your family plans to travel to another country for holiday, study, mission work or other reasons, your first visit should be to www.studentsabroad.state.gov. The "To Go" tab on the site offers free printable travel tools, including "Go Guides" with advice about staying healthy, what to do if you are a victim of crime, tips for women travelers and other topics, "Checklists" to prepare and pack for your trip, a "Wallet Card" with key resources, and "911"-equivalent numbers to get local help for emergencies.



2012 Primary Elections Calendar by Month

Primary Election Dates are subject to change pursuant to State legislative changes. Check back to see if dates have changed.

<http://www.fvap.gov/vao/calendar.html>

March

- Georgia- March 6 (P)
- Massachusetts- March 6 (P)
- Ohio- March 6 (P, S)
- Oklahoma- March 6 (P)
- Tennessee- March 6 (P)
- Vermont- March 6 (P)
- Virginia- March 6 (P)
- Alabama- March 13 (P, S)
- Mississippi- March 13 (P, S)
- Puerto Rico- March 18 (P, S)
- Illinois- March 20 (P, S)
- Louisiana- March 24 (P)

April

- District of Columbia- April 3 (P, S)
- Maryland- April 3 (P, S)
- Mississippi- April 3 (R)
- Texas- April 3 (P, S)
- Wisconsin- April 3 (R)
- Alabama- April 24 (R)
- Connecticut- April 24 (P)
- Delaware- April 24 (P)
- New York- April 24 (P)
- Pennsylvania - April 24 (P, S)
- Rhode Island - April 24 (P)

May

- Indiana - May 8 (P, S)
- North Carolina - May 8 (P, S)
- West Virginia - May 8 (P, S)
- Idaho - May 15 (P, S)
- Nebraska - May 15 (P, S)
- Oregon - May 15 (P, S)
- Arkansas - May 22(P, S)
- Kentucky - May 22 (P, S)

2012 Election Cycle Voting News

If you want to vote in this year's elections, you must send in a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to your local election officials **every year** - even if you've previously voted overseas - and every time you change your name, physical address, or email address.

Use the FPCA to request an absentee ballot, and to register to vote if you're not currently registered. The easiest way to fill out this form is to use the online tool available at www.FVAP.gov that walks you through the process based on your state's specific voting rules.

Voters from the states listed below should visit the www.FVAP.gov web portal to register and request their absentee ballot for the February, March, and April 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries (P) and State Primaries (S) listed on the Left :

Go to FVAP.gov and get started! It only takes a few minutes!

Be sure you include an email address, phone number, and/or fax number on your absentee ballot application in case your local election official needs to contact you. Remember, many states allow you to submit your form electronically, and deliver your ballot electronically or provide online ballot access. Go to www.FVAP.gov or your state's election website to see how you can return your form.

To find out the status of your registration/absentee ballot request, contact your [local election office](#), or visit your state website.

The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is a backup ballot. If 30 days before the election (or longer based on your geographic location) you think you will not receive your state ballot in time to vote and return it (especially in February primary states), vote the FWAB at www.FVAP.gov.

Check your state's election website for specific information on candidates, elections, contact information, and links to your local election offices. Find your state's website at [FVAP's web portal](#).





OVERSEAS TAXPAYERS CAN USE IRS FREE FILE TO PREPARE AND E-FILE TAX RETURNS

- If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien, the rules for filing income, estate, and gift tax returns and paying estimated tax are generally the same whether you are in the United States or abroad. Your worldwide income is subject to U.S. income tax, regardless of where you reside.
- If you reside overseas, or are in the military on duty outside the U.S., you are allowed an automatic 2-month extension to file your return until June 15. However, any tax due must be paid by the original return due date (April 15) to avoid interest charges.
- If you are unable to file your return by the due date, you can request an additional extension to October 15 by filing [Form 4868](#) before the return due date. However, any payments made after June 15 would be subject to both interest charges and failure to pay penalties.
- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) advises that U.S. Citizens and resident aliens living outside the United States can use IRS Free File to prepare and file their federal tax returns electronically. IRS Free File is brand-name software that is offered exclusively at [IRS.gov](#), through a partnership with the tax software industry. There are five companies that accept foreign addresses. Taxpayers should review the list of tax forms supported by the company to ensure it meets their needs, especially Form 1116 (Foreign Tax Credit), and/or Form 2555 (Foreign Earned Income)
- To be eligible for Free-File, taxpayers' adjusted gross income in 2011 must be \$58,000 or less. Some overseas taxpayers may exclude \$91,500 of their 2011 foreign earnings, which would make more people eligible for IRS Free File.
- Free File software generally asks questions and taxpayers supply the answers. The software completes the proper tax forms, does the math, and allows for free electronic filing through IRS e-file. By filing electronically, taxpayers due refunds and who have U.S. bank accounts can opt for direct deposit and get their refunds in as few as 10 days.
- To get started with IRS Free File, go to www.irs.gov/freefile and select "Pick a Free File Company."
- Taxpayers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) over \$58,000 can e-file their returns by purchasing online software. Check the software provider's information to ensure that it can accommodate a foreign address .
- If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien (Green Card Holder) and you live in a foreign country, but do not wish to e-file, mail your U.S. tax return to:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service Center
Austin, TX 73301-0215

Estimated tax payments should be mailed with form 1040-ES to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 1300 Charlotte,
NC 28201-1300





Congratulations Chipolopolo, Congratulations Zambia!



The consular section and the entire U.S. Embassy community joined the nation of Zambia in celebrating the African Cup of Nations victory by the Chipolopolo Boys.

We borrow from the words of the Deputy Chief of Mission Steve Schwartz that “bringing the African Cup of Nations to Zambia, 19 years after the tragic plane crash, is an inspiring and well-deserved triumph. Zambia has yet another reason to be extremely proud of its accomplishments.”

Go Zambia! ACS Assistant Bea Mfula, Vice Consul Rob Romanowski, Consul Kate McGeary, NIV Assistant Alice Musonda and IV Assistant Agrippa Namatama sporting the colors of the Zambian flag



CONSULAR LEADERSHIP DAY 2012

FOLLOW COURAGEOUSLY: We take ownership of our work and hold ourselves accountable for improving performance and making our organization stronger. We dissent respectfully and help the boss become more effective in the interest of the team and the mission.



Every year, consular personnel around the world step back from their daily routine to focus on broader leadership development and management goals. This year the consular team visited children at the Village of Hope in Chisamba, and taught some bright students about leadership, government and the role of the U.S. Embassy. Afterwards, the team conducted leadership exercises with groups of 7th and 8th graders to highlight this year’s theme, “Follow Courageously.”

The Village of Hope is a self-sustaining orphanage that provides care for more than 42 children in cooperation with Zambian Social Welfare. The Village was established and is run by U.S. citizens, Louis Schwartz and his wife Kathleen whose goals are to raise Zambian children for continued success in Zambia. The Village of Hope provides orphaned children with quality care, Christian discipleship training, vocational training, and employment settings in which to grow and thrive and also educates more than 125 children from nearby rural communities.



The U.S. Embassy celebrated Black History month by acknowledging prominent female pioneers in black history and culture, leading discussions and hosting a soul food sampling. This year’s theme, “Black Women in American Culture and History”, honors African American women and the roles they played in the shaping of our nation.

Our longest serving warden, Juanita Kashoki, who has lived in Zambia for 45 years, volunteered her time to speak about how black women have made a significant contribution to American culture and history.



Photo Upper Right: Mrs. Kashoki leads a discussion on black women in American culture and history with Embassy staff, including Ambassador Mark Storella and Deputy Chief of Mission Stephen M. Schwartz.

Photo Right: Ambassador Mark Storella delivers remarks



The consular section recently conducted a voting drive at the Embassy to encourage and assist official Americans to register to vote. If you would like more information on voting, email the Embassy Voting Assistance Officer Rob Romanowski at ACSLusaka@state.gov.

