



ACS Newsletter

VIETNAM

JANUARY 2016

The monthly newsletter of the American Citizen Services Units of the U.S. Embassy Hanoi and the U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

Upcoming U.S. Citizens Services Visits	1
Holiday Closures	1
Addition of Visa Pages	2
U.S. Citizens Services	2
Dengue Fever	3-4
Travel Alerts and Warnings	5
Contact Us and Subscribe/Unsubscribe Info	5

Upcoming U.S. Citizens Services Visits

Officials from the American Citizen Services (ACS) unit in Ho Chi Minh City will offer consular services in January at the following locations:

Da Lat

Date: Friday, 15 January 2016

Place: Da Lat Palace Hotel, 12 Tran Phu, Da Lat City

Time: from 09:00am to 12:00pm

No appointments are necessary. Consulate officials will offer notarial services, deliver federal benefits checks, and U.S. citizens will be able to apply for U.S. passports.

Federal benefits annuitants may sign in during the visit. At this time, officials will not be interviewing for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad.

Visa and immigration services will not be provided. Only the services listed will be available during the visits.

For additional information concerning applying for U.S. passports and notary services please see our Website at: <http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/service.html>

The ACS unit also has a planned services trip s to Nha Trang, Can Tho and Da Nang in the next few months. Please check our website for more information as it becomes available.

This newsletter is also available on the U.S. Consulate's website at: <http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/service/monthly-newsletters.html>

Please pass this newsletter on to any other U.S. citizens in Vietnam and encourage them to enroll in STEP (<https://step.state.gov/step/>) to receive the newsletters in the future.

January Holiday Closures

The Embassy and Consulate will be closed on the following days:

Monday, January 18th—Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday+

A complete list of all of our holiday closings for 2016 is available on-line at <http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>

*Vietnamese Holiday

+American Holiday

Important Notice Regarding the Addition of Visa Pages

As of **January 1, 2016**, visa pages can no longer be added to U.S. passports because such inserts pose vulnerabilities to both the security of the ePassport and the internal controls of the issuance process. Instead, **52-page passport books** are now issued at no extra cost to U.S. citizens applying from outside the United States. Please **renew your passport early** to make sure you have enough blank pages for visa stamps from other countries. Keep in mind that some countries require two blank pages for entry and exit.

You can visit <http://travel.state.gov> for more information on entry, exit, and foreign visa requirements.

Services for U.S. Citizens



The Consulate General in **Ho Chi Minh City** uses a service-by-appointment system. Please visit our Website at <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=HCM&appcode=1> to make an appointment to apply for a U.S. passport, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, as well as for notary services, authentications, and additional visa pages.

Those with genuine emergencies, such as the death, arrest, or life threatening illness of a U.S. citizen, can appear on a walk-in basis from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday (except Vietnamese and American public holidays) or call us any time at (84-8) 3520-4200.

Every day we have a number of no-shows for routine services. If you make an appointment and find you cannot keep it, please log back into the appointment system and cancel the appointment so that the appointment slot will be available to another client.

If you are *picking up passports or Federal Benefits checks/correspondence* you do not need to make an appointment and can walk in for assistance between the hours of 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, excluding Vietnamese and American holidays. If you are submitting additional information related to a *Consular Report of Birth Abroad* case you can walk in for assistance between the hours of 1:15 – 2:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, excluding Vietnamese and American holidays.

Hours for **Hanoi** are 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. All services in Hanoi are by appointment only. You may book an appointment by going to the website: http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/acs_appointmentsystem.html. For emergencies you can call the Embassy any time at (84-4) 3850-5000.

ALL APPOINTMENTS ARE FREE (no cost) FOR U.S. CITIZEN SERVICES, including passports, notary services, & Consular Reports of Birth Abroad. The website also has detailed instructions about service costs and required documents/procedures for each service. WE ARE DEDICATED TO FIGHTING FRAUD. If you wish to report fraudulent activity related to any of the Consular services we provide, please contact our Consular Fraud Prevention Unit at HCMCFPU@state.gov for Ho Chi Minh City or HanoiFPU@state.gov for Hanoi.

Dengue Fever

Dengue is the fastest emerging infection transmitted by mosquitos. The highest incidence is currently being seen by countries of the Asia Pacific Region. More than 70% of the populations at risk reside in Asia Pacific countries. There has been an increased frequency of outbreaks and expansion to new geographical areas that were previously unaffected. Dengue Fever continues to be a health threat throughout Vietnam, with an upsurge in cases reported this year.

WHAT IS DENGUE FEVER?

Dengue fever is a viral illness transmitted to humans by the bite of mosquitoes infected with the Dengue virus. *Dengue is known to be caused by any of four closely related viruses. This means that an individual can be infected with Dengue more than once.* After feeding on a person whose blood contains the virus, the female mosquito can transmit Dengue immediately; however, the virus can remain virulent in the mosquito for 8 to 10 days.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DENGUE?

Symptoms of Dengue usually appear within 5 to 8 days after being bitten. Dengue fever is characterized by flu-like illness with sudden onset of high fever which lasts from 2 to 7 days, chills, severe headache, bone and muscle aches and sometimes eye pain, a rash which can occur up to 4 days after onset of fever, bleeding gums, nose bleeds, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, cough and abdominal pain. Generally, younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR DENGUE?

There is no specific medication for the treatment of Dengue. Illness with Dengue is treated symptomatically and care for an individual with suspected Dengue is mostly supportive. If you develop any of the symptoms listed above, you should see a medical provider. Persons with probable Dengue should take pain relievers with acetaminophen and **avoid** those pain relievers containing ibuprofen, Naproxen, aspirin or aspirin containing products. They should also get plenty of rest and drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE THE RISK OF ACQUIRING DENGUE?

Please review your home environment and make sure that you are taking the recommended measures to keep mosquitos out. Remember, these mosquitoes can breed inside, so follow the recommendations below for both inside and outside your home. bite during the daytime in shady areas, and on cloudy, overcast days. They may be particularly active during early morning hours before daybreak and in the late afternoon before dark.

Dengue Fever

General Precautions

Avoid environments that are known to harbor the Aedes mosquitoes that carry the viruses causing Dengue Fever. Some Aedes mosquitoes prefer to breed, rest, and feed on humans in gardens, where it is cool and shady and where they find small collections of fresh water to lay their eggs, such as at the bases of large leaves. Mosquitoes that carry the dengue viruses like to bite during the daytime in shady areas, and on cloudy, overcast days. They may be particularly active during early morning hours before daybreak and in the late afternoon before dark.

Air-conditioning and screens: When possible, stay in well screened or air-conditioned areas. Check your location for places mosquitoes can get in, such as between bricks that is not sealed correctly, a torn screen, or a door that does not close properly.

Water: Mosquitoes that carry dengue breed in containers of still, fresh water. Therefore, if you have any standing water in or around your house or apartment it is best to remove this water, or change it daily. Examples are jars without lids, small ponds, vases, plates for potted plants, pet water dishes, and any discarded containers on your property or adjacent properties, such as old tires, tin cans, glass or ceramic jars. If you are being bitten by mosquitoes in your garden, you may wish to consider trimming or removing large, leafy plants, and opening up the garden to more sunshine and less shade. Check your neighbor's yards, too. They may be unaware that they have Aedes breeding places.

Mosquito netting around beds, cribs, and strollers may provide some additional protection from the mosquitoes.

Proper use of mosquito repellents containing 20% to 30% DEET as an active ingredient on exposed skin and clothing decreases the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes. The most effective insect repellent is DEET. Check labels of repellent for DEET. Adults should use a concentration of 30% or less and for children, use a 10% concentration. Use DEET sparingly on children under 6 years and not at all on children under 2 months old. Avoid using concentration of DEET above 30% because the usefulness of DEET plateaus at a concentration of 30%. The major difference in the efficacy of products relates to their duration of action. Products with concentrations around 10% are effective for periods of approximately two hours. As the concentration of DEET increases, the duration of activity increases. For example, a concentration of about 24% DEET has been shown to provide an average of 5 hours of protection. So, the wise approach would be to select the lowest concentration effective for the amount of time spent outdoors.

Persons should get the flu vaccine every year since Dengue initially presents like the flu. If you receive the flu vaccine, then it is less likely that you have the flu and dengue would have to be considered.

For further information, please review:

www.cdc.gov/dengue

<http://www.who.int/topics/dengue/en/>

<http://vietnam.usembassy.gov/denguefever.html>

U.S. Embassy Hanoi Air Quality Monitor

The U.S. Embassy has installed an air quality monitor to measure PM 2.5 particulates as an indication of the air quality at the Embassy's Chancery building at 7 Lang Ha street in Ba Dinh District, Hanoi. You can read more information and check the current reading [here](#).

For more details on air quality index, please follow the link to the Environmental Protection Agency's [Air Now](#) website. Hanoi AQI can be observed either by clicking on the Hanoi location on the map, or by selecting Hanoi in the "Select a City" option on the upper right part of the page. The page provides AQI over the last 24 hour period as well as pollutant concentration and a downloadable historical document.

Please note that citywide analysis cannot be done with data from a single monitor. This data provides an accurate measure of the air quality in the section of Hanoi close to the U.S. Embassy. The Vietnamese Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment also provides air quality data for Hanoi. You can view this information at <http://www.cem.gov.vn/>.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a formula to convert PM 2.5 readings into an air quality index (AQI) value that can help inform health-related decisions. Meanings of AQI numerical values can be seen in the chart below. For more information on AQI and how it is calculated, please click [here](#).



New Smart Traveler App Available in Google Store / iTunes

Description of app: *Smart Traveler*, the official State Department app for U.S. travelers, invites you to see the world with easy access to frequently updated official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more.

With Smart Traveler, you can create personal itineraries, add notes, and organize your trips.

Smart Traveler also provides access to the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). Free STEP enrollment enables the State Department to better assist you in emergencies such as natural disasters, unrest in foreign countries, or lost/stolen passport overseas. During your travels, STEP can help your family and friends reach you in an emergency.

Smart Traveler also provides quick access to the Department's Consular Affairs Facebook and Twitter pages.

Travel Alerts and Warnings

The U.S. Department of State regularly issues travel alerts or travel warnings for various countries and regions. Travel warnings and alerts issued in the last month or so include Iraq, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Kenya, Lebanon, Burundi, Ukraine, Seychelles, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Cameroon and Tunisia.

For information regarding all travel alerts and warnings, please go to this site: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

A Worldwide Travel Alert was released on November 23, 2015

regarding the possible risks for travel due to increased terrorist threats. See the whole alert [here](#).

U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness.

For the current advisory please visit <http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html>

Additionally, a travel alert was recently issued regarding the tropical cyclone season in the South Pacific, which began on 1 November 2015 and ends on 30 April 2016. To read the entire travel alert, please click [here](#).



How to Subscribe/Unsubscribe to this Newsletter

The U.S. Embassy in Hanoi and U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City are sending this monthly newsletter via the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) as a public service to U.S. citizens in Vietnam.

If you are departing Vietnam after a long stay, please be sure to update your status in STEP: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

Updating your status if you move away from Vietnam will remove you from the mailing list for this newsletter and other Embassy and Consulate Messages for U.S. citizens in Vietnam.

If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about the travel registration website, please send an e-mail to CASTEP@state.gov

Please note: Inclusion of Non-U.S. Government links or information does not imply endorsement of contents.

Contact Us

Hanoi

American Citizen Services
U.S. Embassy in Hanoi
170 Ngoc Khanh, Ba Dinh District
Hanoi, Vietnam

Email: acshanoi@state.gov
Telephone: (84-4) 3850-5000
Fax: (84-4) 3850-5010

Ho Chi Minh City

American Citizen Services
U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City
4 Le Duan, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

For routine inquiries, submit your question via: http://hochiminh.usconsulate.gov/contact_acs.html
Telephone: (84-8) 3520-4200 (for urgent assistance involving an arrest, death or life threatening illness)
Fax: (84-8) 3520-4244