

# AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES U.S. EMBASSY NEW DELHI NEWSLETTER

Spring- April to June 2016

## American Citizen Services (ACS)

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### Useful Links

[U.S. Embassy Website](#)

[Registration and Travel  
Information](#)

[Applying for a Passport](#)

[Consular Reports of Birth Abroad](#)

[Obtaining an Immigrant Visa for a Relative  
or Spouse](#)

[Non-Immigrant Visas Green Cards.](#)

[Employment  
Authorization and Immigration Services  
and Benefits:](#)

[Medical and Legal Assistance](#)

[Emergency Services for U.S. Citizens](#)

[Selective Service System Social Security](#)

[Administration](#)

[Internal Revenue Service](#)

## *Briefly Noted*



**April 15 is Tax Day!**

**If you OWE any taxes, you are required to pay by April 15<sup>th</sup>**  
[www.efile.com/tax-day-deadlines/](http://www.efile.com/tax-day-deadlines/)

After April 15, 2016, you can prepare and **e-file** 2015 tax returns on **efile.com** until October 17, 2016. After October 17<sup>th</sup>, the IRS will **no longer accept** 2015 returns electronically, and you will need to **paper file** your 2015 tax returns. **Please see more tax information on page 5.**

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**Surge in expiring passports may cause backlog in passport renewals**

Over 49 million passports for U.S. citizens will expire within the next three years. This could cause a backlog when citizens go to renew them according to a State Department official from the Office of Passport Services. The number of expiring passports dates back to 2007 when the federal Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) law was signed and put into effect. The WHTI requires all travelers entering the United States to show a valid passport or other accepted forms of identification.

**Plan early, and save yourself a trip –adults can renew by mail (Ds-82 form) -**  
<https://pptform.state.gov/>



**An international student's health insurance may not be accepted overseas.**

**Students should research the medical facilities accessible in their destination countries.**

Most people in the U.S. know to call 911 during a medical emergency, but they may not know what to dial during a health crisis abroad. Students getting ready to earn a degree overseas should know the emergency contact numbers in their host country and learn about other health resources, according to travel medicine and study abroad experts. "Preparation, planning and knowledge in advance of departure is so important," as echoed by a CEO of travel risk management company. International students will face different types of health threats, such as infectious diseases or hazardous road conditions, depending on their destination. Here are some ways students can prepare for medical emergencies abroad – read more...

[Prepare for Medical Emergencies as an International Student](#)



**FVAP.gov**  
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



# Voting Residence

Overseas Citizens

FACT SHEET



**Wherever U.S. citizens go, FVAP ensures their voice is heard.**

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) works to ensure Service members, their eligible family members and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so - from anywhere in the world.

## »»» What is a voting residence and why is it important?

You need a voting residence to vote via absentee ballot — even if you are only voting for Federal offices. **Your local election official needs your exact voting residence address to determine which offices and candidates you are eligible to vote for, and to send you the appropriate ballot for your voting precinct.**

Your voting residence is your address in the State in which you were last domiciled, immediately prior to leaving the United States.

This residence may remain valid even if:

- You no longer own property or have other ties to that State.
- Your intent to return to that State is uncertain.
- Your previous address is no longer a recognized residential address.

Voting in an election for Federal offices often may not be used as the sole basis of determining residency for the purpose of imposing State and local taxes. When claiming a new legal residence or domicile, legal counsel should be consulted because there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.

If you cannot remember the address where you last physically resided, then FVAP recommends checking old tax records, passports or family correspondence. Sometimes local election officials can help identify your address if you were previously registered. To claim a new legal residence or domicile, consult legal counsel as there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.



## ★ Voting residence and the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

It is important to remember that your voting residence address listed on the FPCA must be an address in the United States. Placing an overseas address in block 7 of the form may automatically disqualify you.

## ★ Children born outside the U.S.

Voting rights vary by State for U.S. citizens born overseas who have never established residence in the United States. In some States, U.S. citizens 18 years or older who were born abroad but have never resided in the U.S. are eligible to vote absentee. A listing can be found at [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov).

If neither of your parents is from one of these States, it is possible that you do not currently have voting rights. However, additional States are working on passing legislation to allow citizens born overseas who have never established residency in the U.S. to vote in the State in which their parents are eligible. Visit [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov) for State information.

## ★ Students studying abroad

If you are living overseas for an extended period during an election season and will need to vote absentee, complete an FPCA at [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov) to request your absentee ballot. Your voting residency will continue to be your last legal residence prior to leaving the United States to study abroad.



### CONTACT FVAP

Monday–Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Phone: 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) | DSN: 425-1584 | Email: [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)

Go to [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov) and click on “contact” to find where to send your election materials. Media inquiries: [media@fvap.gov](mailto:media@fvap.gov)

[Facebook.com/DoDFVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP) and [@FVAP](https://twitter.com/FVAP)

## U.S. Citizen Services New Delhi

The American Citizens Services Unit at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is open for routine consular services from **8:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday** excluding holidays. **Wednesday mornings** from **8:45 to 12:00 p.m.** are now **open** for Citizen Report of Birth Abroad cases (**CRBA**). Make your appointment online [here](#). To visit the American Citizen Services Unit, please come to **Gate 6** of the Embassy (generally known as the “Visa Gate”) located on Andre Malraux Marg between Nyaya Marg and Shantipath in the Chanakyapuri neighborhood of New Delhi. Appointments are required for new passports applications, renewal of passports, registration of birth abroad, and notarial services. For general walk in questions you can stop by without an appointment on Thursdays from 3-3:30pm. For **Emergencies** after hours and on weekends call: 011-2419-8000

### Upcoming U.S. Embassy Holidays

April 15 Ram Navami  
May 30 Memorial Day  
July 4 Independence Day (U.S.)  
July 6 Idu’l Fitr

*From the Desk of ACS Chief.....*

Each morning as I get to work, I make a checklist in my trusty green journal to keep me on track throughout the day. More than just a to-do-list, it outlines specific step-by-step actions I need to accomplish that day for a particular task or goal. Why am I telling you about my daily checklist? Because checklists help us remember simple things we know we should do, but sometimes forget. A recent study of hospitals showed that wider use of checklists might prevent a staggering 40% of hospital deaths. So, doctors are required to tick off items on checklists as they carry out routine procedures. Isn’t that amazing? When **lives are on the line**, they do a surprisingly simple thing – **keep a checklist**.

Checklists can help you prepare for your next international trip, keeping you safe and reminding you of the simple things you know you should do. Share your itinerary with your loved ones, scan important documents into your mobile devices or laptops, keep a hard copy of your passport and visa in your luggage, secure your passport and valuables, check [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for travel warnings, and check that you’ve met visa and passport requirements. A complete checklist can be found at <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/checklist.html>, but one very important thing for your list is to make sure you have appropriate insurance coverage.

**Travel insurance** can be a life saver if something goes awry while abroad, and your personal medical insurance probably won’t pay to get you home if you are injured overseas. Earlier this month, our office was involved in a medical evacuation of a U.S. citizen who required a doctor and an oxygen tank to get her back home to United States. The cost to get her home safely was about \$10,000., and while that is relatively cheap for a medical evacuation (medivac), it still was more than she could afford. So, please put “Contact my insurance representative about travel insurance” on your checklist before your overseas trip. Know that medevac costs vary depending on what the patient requires – it could be as high as \$100,000., and you’ll want to make sure you have options if something happens on your travels. Just since last year, ACS-New Delhi has provided assistance to 15 medevac cases – and you betcha, we do maintain a checklist to keep us on track and organized. How is your travel checklist?

Sincerely,  
*Greg Floyd*



## Your U.S. Passport

Each year, hundreds of American citizens are arrested at border crossings with Mexico and Canada. Their crime? Crossing into Mexican or Canadian territory in possession of a firearm or ammunition that’s not registered according to those countries’ laws. The majority of those arrested cross for tourism, business or a family visit, and claim to have not intentionally violated the law. They say they either forgot they had a gun or ammo in their car, or didn’t realize their legally owned firearm can’t cross borders like they can.

These arrests are preventable, and the [U.S. Department of State](http://www.state.gov) wants to help. “This is a major problem for U.S. citizens abroad. Our U.S. consulate in Vancouver, Canada, alone sees more than one arrest of a U.S. citizen per week for weapons violations,” says Geoffrey Martineau, a consular officer with the U.S. Department of State’s Office of American Citizens Services. But it’s not just Mexico and Canada where American citizens run into trouble. “This is an issue all over the world,” says Martineau. “When I was posted to the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, we had at least three cases of Americans being arrested for entry into India with a single bullet in their luggage.”

So how can you keep yourself from an unpleasant experience abroad? The Department of State has some tips:

- Remember, American travelers are subject to the laws of a host country; **your U.S. passport will not protect you** from arrest or prosecution. While the Department of State has no higher priority than the safety and security of U.S. citizens overseas, assistance U.S. embassies can offer in such cases **is limited**. Ask authorities to notify the nearest U.S. Embassy or consulate, or do so yourself.
- Realize that complying with U.S. regulations for air travel with firearms does not mean you have complied with laws of your intended host country. Check on line for import restrictions in the country you intend to visit. Read more on this from the Department of State’s Bureau of Consular Affairs “Country Specific Information” @ [travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/firearms.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/firearms.html)

## Topic 101 - IRS Services – Volunteer Tax Assistance, Outreach Programs, and Identity Theft

The IRS sponsors volunteer assistance programs and offers help to taxpayers in many community locations.

The [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program \(VITA\)](#) offers free tax help by trained volunteers to low to moderate-income taxpayers. VITA sites are locally available in most community locations, and provide free basic income tax return preparation for individuals. To see if you qualify for this service, see [Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers](#). Volunteers prepare [Form 1040A](#) (PDF), [Form 1040EZ](#) (PDF), and [Form 1040](#) (PDF). Trained volunteers can help you determine your eligibility for special credits such as the earned income tax credit (EITC), child tax credit, and credit for the elderly or the disabled. Many VITA sites offer [free electronic filing \(e-file\)](#). Individuals taking advantage of the [e-file](#) program benefit from a shorter processing time and usually receive their refunds in half the time compared to returns filed on paper – even faster if you have your refund deposited directly into your bank account. **Note:** You should only choose direct deposit of your refund into accounts that are in your own name, your spouse's name, or both if it's a joint account.

To find the locations, dates and hours of availability for the volunteer sites near you, use the [VITA locator tool](#), see [Publication 5136](#) (PDF), download the free [IRS2Go](#) app, or call 800-906-9887.

[Tax Counseling for the Elderly \(TCE\)](#) is another grant program designed to offer free tax assistance to individuals aged 60 years or older with low to moderate incomes. TCE sites are located at convenient community locations. TCE counselors offer free income tax return preparation services and can prepare Form 1040, Form 1040A, Form 1040EZ, and simple [Form 1040, Schedule D](#) (PDF). The AARP participates in the TCE program. To locate the nearest VITA/TCE site, use the [VITA locator tool](#), see [Publication 5136](#) (PDF), download the free [IRS2Go](#) app, or call 800-906-9887. Visit [AARP](#) or call 888-AARPNOW (888-227-7669) to find the nearest AARP site.

Before going to your local VITA or TCE site, see [Publication 3676-B](#) (PDF) for services provided and [What to Bring to Your Local VITA or TCE Site](#).

If you believe you have been or are at risk of being the victim of **identity theft**, you should contact the **IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit (IPSU) at 800-908-4490**. Call IPSU if:

- Your tax records are currently affected by identity theft and you have not been able to resolve the matter, or
- You may be at risk of identity theft due to a lost/stolen purse or wallet, questionable credit card activity or credit report, etc.

See [Identity Protection: Prevention, Detection and Victim Assistance](#) for additional information.  
[More Tax Topic Categories](#)

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## Just in case you missed it...

File your U.S. Taxes

**Due date for Form 1040: April 15, 2016**

### Extensions:

- An automatic extension to June 15, 2016, is granted for taxpayers living outside the United States and Puerto Rico. **No form is required; write "Taxpayer Resident Abroad" at the top of your tax return.**
- **Caution:** This extension applies only for filing your tax return, not for payment. If you owe any taxes, you are required to pay by April 15, 2016. Interest and penalties will generally be applied if payment is made after this date.
- To request an additional extension to October 15, 2016, use Form 4868.
- Other extensions may be available on [IRS.gov](#).

You can prepare and e-file your income tax return, in many cases for free. Participating software companies make their products available through the IRS. [E-File options](#) are listed on [IRS.gov](#).

What Forms Will/may I Need? [www.irs.gov](#)

- [1040, U.S Individual Income Tax Return](#)
- [Instructions to Form 1040](#)
- [1116, Foreign Tax Credit](#)
- [2015 Instructions to Form 1116](#) –
- [2350, Application for Extension of Time to File U.S. Income Tax Return \(for U.S. citizens and residents abroad\)](#)
- [2350 in Spanish](#)
- [2555, Foreign Earned Income Exclusion](#)
- [Instructions to Form 2555](#)
- [2555-EZ, Foreign Earned Income Exclusion](#)
- [Instructions to Form 2555-EZ](#)
- [4868, Application for Automatic Extension of Time To File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return](#)
- [4868 in Spanish](#)
- [8802, Application for United States Residency Certificate](#)
- [Instructions to Form 8802](#)
- [8938, Statement of Specified Foreign Financial Assets](#)
- [Instructions to Form 8938](#)
- [14653, Certification by U.S. Person Residing Outside of the United States for Streamlined Foreign Offshore Procedures](#)



**Be Informed and Stay Safe Before you travel Enroll your Trip.**