

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE GUIDE FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS IN INDIA

**American Citizen Services
U.S. Embassy New Delhi**



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General Information

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Millions of Americans travel abroad every year and encounter no difficulties. However, U.S. embassies and consulates assist nearly 200,000 Americans each year who are victims of crime, accident, or illness, or whose family and friends need to contact them in an emergency. When an emergency happens, or if natural disaster, terrorism, or civil unrest strikes during your foreign travel, the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can be your source of assistance and information.

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency. STEP also allows Americans residing abroad to get routine information from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate on Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts and other information for a particular country. Go to the Travel Registration page at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> for more information and to create an account.

Cultural Advice

Despite best intentions, visitors' and locals' behavioral norms, which stem from an underlying set of beliefs, assumptions, and values, can often collide. First and foremost, social norms governing male-female interactions are more conservative in India. For example, it is often considered inappropriate for a man to touch a woman in public, or to talk familiarly to a woman he does not know (i.e. asking to go to a movie). Our concept of casual dating is only practiced by a small minority of Indians. Additionally, women should be careful smoking and drinking in public places, especially if they are alone, because such activities are often associated with promiscuity and may incite harassment. If women are harassed or groped in public, they should protest as loudly as possible. Attracting the attention of others can lead to public embarrassment for the perpetrator. Know that the majority of people on the streets do not condone such behavior. Also, it is atypical for a woman in India to live alone, regardless of her class or status. It is even more unconventional for a single woman to entertain male visitors in her private residence. Such behavior will often be interpreted in sexual terms, even if the male is just a friend.

Here are a few other general tips to keep in mind:

- Clothing is very important in India, especially for women. Western clothes are acceptable, but women should make sure that their clothes are relatively loose and appropriately concealing, and men should also adhere to accepted conventions of decency (it is not normal to walk around with no shirt, even on the hottest day of the year).
- Try not to hand anything (i.e. money) to anyone with your left hand. Moreover, always eat with your right hand instead of your left.
- Do not share food from your plate with another Indian while eating a meal. Once you've started your meal, the food will be considered unfit for consumption by others. Taking a "taste" from another's plate or glass is mostly taboo, and if you intend to share a bottle of water with others, drink by pouring the liquid into your mouth (you will observe all Indians doing this) rather than touching the bottle to your lips.

- Expressions of courtesy (i.e. *thank you* and *please*) for routine interactions is not common in India, and compliments (i.e. praising someone's clothing) may make many Indians embarrassed or nervous.

Public Transportation

Taxi & Rickshaw

At the airport, it is highly recommend that solo women prearrange airport pick-up with their hotel if their flight is scheduled to arrive after dark. Larger airports also have prepaid cab services, which are typically very safe. Solo women should also avoid taking taxis alone at night. A very common form of public transportation is the autorickshaw, a three-wheeled vehicle with room for approximately three passengers and some luggage. Autorickshaws are cheaper than taxis, but take longer to reach their destination. For any means of transportation without a fixed rate, agree on the price before you enter the vehicle, and be sure the cost includes every passenger and baggage. Costs for public transport vary in every city, but rates usually increase at night. Always carry small bills for taxi and rickshaw fares as drivers usually do not have change.

Bus

Buses rates are typically very cheap, and service is frequent in most big cities. Keep in mind that many bus drivers drive aggressively and accidents are always a risk. Avoid night buses unless there is no alternative. In general, buses operated by the state government bus companies are the most reliable option and seats can sometimes be booked up to a month in advance. More expensive private buses are a good option, but some cheaper private buses cram as many people as possible into the vehicle. Luggage is usually stored underneath the bus or on the roof. If bags are placed on the roof, make sure they are securely tied to the baggage rack. Women should try to sit or stand near other women whenever possible. Additionally, most Indian women usually try to avoid grazing against the bodies of men, as this is sometimes taken as an invitation to sexual attention.

Train

Trains are highly recommended for long journeys that include overnight travel. India has an extensive railway system and rates are very cheap. Train services to certain destinations are increased during major festivals, but be aware that train stations can become fatally overcrowded, often resulting in stampedes on platforms. Train trips are often delayed so be flexible with your travel plans. The best way to search for available trains is online through Indian Railways (<http://www.indianrail.gov.in/>). Big stations often have English-speaking staff that can help. No reservations are required for 2nd class, but you can reserve seats in all sleeper, 1AC, 2AC, and 3AC classes up to 60 days in advance at any station with a computerized booking system. Advance bookings are strongly recommended for all overnight journeys. Some American women, both married and unmarried, may want to wear rings on their wedding-ring finger, or put red powder where the hairline meets the middle of the forehead to signify that they are married and hence "protected." This practice often saves women from unwanted attention. Women can also buy train tickets to travel in the ladies' only compartment. If a woman who prefers to travel first-class arrives at the train and discovers that her compartment is full of men, she should find the conductor and politely ask to be moved. This is considered a perfectly

reasonable request. Finally, on sleeper class, women should sleep on the upper bunk, if possible, in order to reduce unwanted attention at night.

Holidays and Festivals

There are three official national public holidays in India: Republic Day (January 26), Independence Day (August 15) and Gandhi Jayanti (October 2). However, every single state has its own official holidays as well as major religious festivals – usually Diwali, Dussehra, and Holi (Hindu), Nanak Jayanti (Sikh), Eid-al-Fitr (Muslim), Mahavir Jayanti (Jain), Buddha Jayanti (Buddhist) and Easter and Christmas (Christian). Most businesses and tourist destinations close on public holidays and it is recommended that you make transport and hotel reservations well in advance if you intend to visit during major festivals.

India celebrates countless holidays and festivals and almost all of them are celebrated in grand fashion. If you stay in India for longer than a month, you will likely encounter some kind of pilgrimage or religious festival. These experiences are often greatly memorable and a wonderful way to experience Indian culture, but keep in mind that every year pilgrims are crushed or trampled to death on temple processions and train platforms. Fireworks are also commonplace during Indian celebrations and some fireworks blast more like bombs than an average firecracker. Always be on high alert and it is highly recommended that you keep children indoors during celebrations like Diwali, where the entire city becomes engulfed in firework blasts for several hours. Particular care is also necessary during the Holi festival. It is nearly impossible to go outside without getting doused with water and colored dye, and occasionally people have been scarred by chemicals in the colored water mix. This is not common by any means, but it is best to stick to the main attractions during Holi rather than wander the side streets of a city. And you may want to consider buying a cheap set of throwaway clothes specifically for this festival because your clothes will be stained like a rainbow.

Customs and Import/Export Restrictions

Before traveling to or from India, you are urged to thoroughly inspect all bags and clothing that might inadvertently contain prohibited items. In the past, U.S. citizens have been arrested or detained when airport security officials discovered loose ammunition in their luggage. If you are found to have loose ammunition or bullets on your person, you could be charged with violation of the Indian Arms Act, incarcerated, and/or deported from India. In addition to firearms and ammunition, Indian customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from India of such items as, antiquities, electronic equipment, currency, ivory, gold objects, and other prohibited materials. Permission from the Government of India is required to bring in restricted items, even if you are transiting through India. More information is available from the Indian Central Board of Excise and Customs at <http://www.cbec.gov.in/cae1-english.htm>.

Some items may not be brought into the U.S., or may only be brought in under certain restrictions. For information on U.S. customs regulations and procedures, see the Customs and Border Protection booklet “Know Before You Go,” available at <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg>. For further information, see http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/prohibited_restricted.xml on the same website. There are special rules for products made from endangered wildlife. Many wildlife and wildlife

products are prohibited either by U.S. or foreign laws from import into the United States, and you risk confiscation and a possible fine if you attempt to bring them into the U.S. when you return. Watch out for the following prohibited items:

- All products made from sea turtles
- All ivory, both Asian and African elephant, and rhinoceros
- Furs from spotted cats
- Furs from marine mammals
- Feathers and feather products from wild birds
- Most crocodile and caiman leather
- Most coral, whether in chunks or in jewelry

You may import an object made of ivory if it is an antique. To be an antique the ivory must be at least 100 years old, and you will need documentation that authenticates the age of the ivory. You may import other antiques containing wildlife parts under the same conditions.

Health & Medicine

Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacies, Prescriptions

Medical tourism is a rapidly growing industry in India. Companies offering vacation packages bundled with medical consultations and financing options provide direct-to-consumer advertising over the internet. Such medical packages often claim to provide high quality care, but the quality of health care in India is highly variable. People seeking health care in India should understand that medical systems operate differently from those in the United States and are not subject to the same rules and regulations. That being said, the link below leads to a list that includes providers in the New Delhi Consular District. The New Delhi Consular District includes Delhi, Chandigarh, and the states of Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. It also includes the Kingdom of Bhutan:

<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/other-citizen-services/medical-information.html>

The Embassy neither endorses these providers nor guarantees their professional competence. However, Americans have used these offices in the past and generally have been satisfied with the care they received. Please be advised that it is best to have a friend or colleague with you in the hospital if you are unable to monitor your own care. The hospitals listed below often provide a couch or bed in the room for the convenience of a companion. We invite you to comment on the providers listed by emailing acsnd@state.gov.

Pharmacies abound in most cities and towns; just look for a red cross (often accompanied by the word “chemist”). However, be sure to know the generic (or medical) name of the drug you are seeking to ensure you buy exactly what you need.

Food to Avoid and Other Medical Preventions

Street food is everywhere in India and most of it is very tasty. Here are some tips to help avoid the infamous “Delhi Belly”:

- Give yourself a few days to adjust, especially if you are not used to spicy food.
- If the locals are avoiding a particular vendor, you should too.
- Avoid eating meat from the street.

- The cleanliness of juice vendors is wildly variable. Have the vendor press the juice in front of you and avoid anything stored in a jug or served in a glass.
- Avoid pre-sliced melon and other fruit – buy unpeeled, unprepared fruits, bring them to your place of residence, wash them with filtered water, and then enjoy.

Good information on vaccinations and other health precautions is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at the following website:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/india.htm>. You can also call the hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747). Some vaccines such as Typhoid, Influenza, and Hepatitis A are recommended for all travelers and other vaccines such as Hepatitis B, Japanese Encephalitis, and Rabies are recommended for high-risk travelers.

The following website from the World Health Organization provides suggested vaccinations for visitors to India, safe food and water precautions, appropriate measures to avoid contraction of mosquito-borne diseases (such as malaria and Japanese B encephalitis), suggestions to avoid altitude sickness, etc: <http://www.who.int/countries/ind/en/>

Monkeys, and other mammals, can transmit rabies and herpes B, among other diseases, to human victims. Avoid feeding monkeys. If bitten, you should immediately soak and scrub the bite for at least 15 minutes and seek urgent medical attention.

To facilitate identification in case of an accident, complete the information page on the inside of your passport providing the name, address and telephone number of someone to be contacted in an emergency. A traveler going abroad with any pre-existing medical problems should carry a letter from the attending physician, describing the medical condition and any prescription medications, including the generic name of prescribed drugs. Any medications being carried overseas should be left in their original containers and be clearly labeled. Travelers should check with the foreign embassy of the country they are visiting to make sure any required medications are not considered to be illegal narcotics.

If you are arriving in India from Sub-Saharan Africa or other yellow-fever areas, Indian health regulations require that you present evidence of vaccination against yellow fever. If you do not have such proof, you could be subjected to immediate deportation or a six-day detention in the yellow-fever quarantine center. If you transit through any part of sub-Saharan Africa, even for one day, you are advised to carry proof of yellow fever immunization.

Vaccinations for Emergent Viruses

For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the World Health Organization (WHO). The following website provides information on disease outbreaks that may arise from time to time: <http://www.who.int/countries/ind/en/>. Outbreaks of mosquito-borne viral diseases such as dengue fever and chikungunya occur in various parts of India each year. You should check this site shortly before traveling to India.

Medical Insurance

If an American citizen becomes seriously ill or injured abroad, payment of hospital and other expenses is the responsibility of the traveler. Before going abroad, learn what medical services

your health insurance will cover overseas. If your health insurance policy provides coverage outside the United States, remember to carry both your insurance policy identity card as proof of such insurance and a claim form. Although many health insurance companies will pay “customary and reasonable” hospital costs abroad, very few will pay for your medical evacuation back to the United States. Medical evacuation can easily cost \$10,000 and up, depending on your location and medical condition. Also, keep in mind that THE SOCIAL SECURITY MEDICARE PROGRAM DOES NOT PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR HOSPITAL OR MEDICAL COSTS OUTSIDE THE U.S.A. Senior citizens may wish to contact the American Association of Retired Persons for information about foreign medical care coverage with Medicare supplement plans. The names of some of the companies offering short-term health and emergency assistance policies are listed in the Frequently Asked Questions at the following webpage: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1470.html#companies

Emergencies

Stolen or Lost Passports, Notary Services, and Obtaining Other U.S. Documents

Appointments are required for most routine American Citizen Services for passports (applying, renewing, or adding pages) and notarial and document services. Appointments are available Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm. The New Delhi Embassy is closed on the last Wednesday of every month and on American and Indian holidays. Applicants should plan to spend at least an hour at the Embassy. Each family member seeking a service related to passports should make an individual appointment. Please arrive fifteen minutes before your appointment to clear security. The Embassy does not permit interested parties such as friends, relatives, attorneys, or business contacts to attend nonimmigrant visa interviews with the applicant. Many items are not allowed in the Embassy during your interview, including mobile phones, other electronic devices, large bags, bottles, and food. Other items may be prohibited based on security staff discretion. Keep in mind there is no storage available for prohibited items, so if you bring prohibited items with you, you will have to dispose of them before entry. Finally, please print and prepare all required documents before coming to your appointment.

Please visit the following links for more information and assistance in scheduling appointments with the Embassy:

1) General info on scheduling, required documents, prohibited items, and holiday closures:

<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/appointment-and-contact-info.html>

2) Schedule an appointment online:

<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=NWD&appcode=1>

3) American Citizens Services fees:

<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/u.s.-citizen-services-fees.html>

Victims of Crime

If you or your U.S. citizen relative or friend has been a victim of crime while in India, please contact the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi (or closest consulate if not in the Delhi Consulate District) at 011-2419-8000. If you are calling from the United States, first dial 011-91-11-

You should file and request a copy of a local police report, called a First Information Report (FIR), as soon as possible. You should request the FIR from the police station closest to the scene of the crime.

By clicking the following link, you will find a highly-detailed, comprehensive guide for U.S. citizens that are victims of crime in India, including details on reporting crimes, arrests, trial, appeals, etc.

http://photos.state.gov/libraries/india/328646/a_z_index/victemguide.pdf

Fraud

If you feel someone in India's tourist industry has defrauded you, then send a complaint to the following emails, newdelhi@tourismindia.com or goitdelhi@nic.in, and explain the circumstances of your case.

Disaster Preparedness

Even when you are in the safety of your home, natural disasters can strike. Earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis are only some of the natural disasters threatening the safety of Americans abroad. When natural disasters occurs abroad the Department of State and U.S. embassies and consulates in the affected country stand ready around the clock to track and assist affected American citizens. Visit the following websites to learn more about how to prepare for natural disasters:

- Are You Ready? Guide – <http://www.ready.gov/are-you-ready-guide>
- Disaster Assistance – <http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>
- CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response – <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/index.asp>
- NASA Natural Disaster References – <http://gcmd.nasa.gov/Resources/pointers/hazards.html>
- FEMA Disaster Preparedness – <http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm>
- FEMA Disaster Information – <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/index.shtm>

Visit the following websites to stay informed and stay safe AFTER a disaster:

- CDC Response, Cleanup, & Safety for Workers <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/workers.asp>
- ReliefWeb – <http://reliefweb.int/>
- International Association of Emergency Managers – <http://www.iaem.com/>
- UNHCR – <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>
- FEMA Bereavement and Loss – <http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/bereave.shtm>

Financial Emergencies: Western Union

If a U.S. citizen's money has been lost or stolen in India, the Embassy can help receive funds from friends or relatives in the U.S. If you need help in transferring funds to an American citizen in India, please contact the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi at 2419-8000. If you are calling from the United States, first dial 011-91-11-. The most efficient way to get money to a U.S. citizen in India is to deposit money in that person's U.S. bank account, and have the person withdraw the money in India using an ATM card. If that option is not possible, we suggest wiring money

through Western Union (www.westernunion.com). You may also contact Western Union in India by phone at 1-800-425-1851 or 080-2222-1851.

If neither the ATM nor Western Union option is possible, you can do a funds transfer through a bank. Please be advised that this service can take up to 14 days for the cash to become available in India. Many American banks are affiliated with Indian banks and will readily transfer funds.

Please ask your American bank for information. American banks with branches in India include American Express, Citibank, and the Bank of America. Please note that American Express does not assist non-cardholders.

Western Union offers a money transfer service to participating SITA travel agents in 15 cities in India. For more information, contact a SITA travel agency if you are in India, or call Western Union at 800-325-6000 if you are in the U.S.

Emergency Funds Transfer to the Embassy

In a genuine emergency, a U.S. citizen can have funds transferred from the U.S. through the Office of Overseas Citizens Services (OCS), Department of State, Washington, DC. Please contact OCS at 888-407-4747 (from overseas: 202-501-4444) for more information. When the Embassy receives notification from the State Department, funds are released in rupees or dollars to the U.S. citizen recipient. This service is for true emergencies only, when time does not allow transfer of funds through normal banking channels. Funds should not exceed the amount needed to resolve the emergency situation and should not be used for commercial transactions. Large sums (over \$1,000) should be avoided.

Missing People

In an emergency the Embassy or its Consulates will attempt to locate Americans who are believed to be in India and are not in communication with family or friends. Inquirers should be aware, however, that the Privacy Act (<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-7123b.html>) prevents divulgence of information unless the subject of the inquiry gives permission. If one does not give such permission, the only alternative after the individual has been located is to inform him or her that relatives or others are concerned and ask the person to communicate directly. The Embassy does not maintain a comprehensive listing of Americans in India, though many Americans voluntarily register with the Embassy. If you are asking the Embassy to attempt to locate an American, chances of success are greatly enhanced if you can provide their full name, date of birth, and any recent contact information in India. The Embassy cannot, however, locate non-Americans, such as Indian friends.

If you need the Embassy to check on the welfare and whereabouts of an U.S. citizen in India, please contact the Embassy at 2419-8000. If you are calling from the United States, first dial 011-91-11- or email acsnd@state.gov.

Children

Occasionally, welfare-whereabouts requests are made on behalf of minor children by a parent following a divorce or separation. The Embassy cannot take sides in such a dispute. It will, however, attempt to locate children and can transmit information to either parent regarding the

child's health and well-being. Please understand that diplomats do not have police powers and cannot visit a child without the cooperation of the adult(s) the child resides with in India.

- Visit this link for information on the Department of State's Office of Children's Services, and for information on child custody issues world-wide.

http://www.travel.state.gov/abduction/about/about_605.html

You can also contact The Office of Children's Issues by phone at (202) 736-7000, or by Fax at (202) 663-2674.

- The Department of State provides general information on international child abduction at the following website: http://www.travel.state.gov/abduction/abduction_580.html
- Information specific to India on international child abduction is also available at this website:

http://www.travel.state.gov/abduction/country/country_4441.html

Finally, visit this website for additional information from the Department of State about welfare and whereabouts inquiries: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_3881.html

Long-Term Visitors, Non-Resident Indians, and Expatriates

Foreigner Regional Registration Office

All foreigners visiting India for more than 180 days are required to register at the local Foreigner Regional Registration Office (FRRO) within 14 days of arrival. Registration is also required within 14 days of arrival for all of the following types of visas, regardless of length of stay: Student Visa (including the study of Yoga, Vedic Culture, Indian dance and music); Research Visa; Employment Visa; Missionary Visa; Medical Visa; or Medical Attendant Visa. Foreigners visiting India on other types of long-term visas including Business and Entry Visas do not require registration, unless the visitor intends to stay longer than 180 days. Registration must take place at an FRRO or at the District Superintendents of Police (FROs). Children under 16 years of age are exempt from registration if they have entered on a PIO card or on any type of VISA. No fee is charged for registration, but there is a late fee if registration takes place after 14 days of arrival. It is highly advised that you visit the following website to fill out the registration form online and schedule an appointment before visiting the local FRRO:

<http://indianvisaonline.gov.in/frro/>.

Upon registration, all visitors are required to submit the following:

- Four recent passport size photographs
- Photocopy of photo page and valid Indian Visa page of the passport
- Proof of residential address in India
- For Student Visas, a bonafide certificate from School/College
- For Employment Visas, a request letter, undertaking, or contract agreement from employer
- For Business Visas, business related papers on the authenticity of the business, copy of permission from Reserve Bank of India, and approval of Government of India in case of joint venture/collaboration
- For Journalist Visas, accreditation certificate from Press Information Bureau and approval of Ministry of External Affairs
- For Research Visas, a bonafide certificate & letter from the nodal agency/Ministry sponsoring the Research

At the time of final departure from India, you must turn in your registration to the Immigration Officer at the port of departure. Visit the FRRO website to find more information on registering: http://www.immigrationindia.nic.in/reg_req2.htm

Absentee Voting

Visit the following website, which guides you through the entire process of absentee voting, including registering to vote, obtaining an absentee ballot, and submitting your ballot. <http://www.fvap.gov/>

New regulations for overseas voting went into effect in 2010. If you want to be able to vote while you are outside the United States, you should send a completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to your local election officials every year. It's easy to do – just visit the website listed above to start the process. We strongly recommend you get in the habit of submitting a new FPCA every January to ensure you receive ballots for all the elections in which you are eligible to vote during the calendar year. In addition to the November general elections held every other year; you may be eligible to vote in federal or state primary elections, special elections, emergency elections, and runoff elections.

Visiting Bordering Countries

Multiple Entry Tourist Visas for India

Indian visa regulations change frequently, often with little advance notice, and changes may be poorly advertised and inconsistently enforced. Travelers are urged to check the Indian Government's Ministry of Home Affairs website (<http://www.mha.nic.in/>) to review the most current information. Please note that there should be a gap of at least 2 months between two separate visits to India on a Tourist visa. For Tourist visa holders who wish to visit India within 2 months of their last visit, an application for a Permit to Re-enter India is necessary. However, no permit is needed if the visa holder is traveling to multiple countries on the same itinerary and the trip follows the itinerary exactly. The visa holder must carry a copy of the itinerary to show the Immigration Officer.

Bangladesh

A passport valid for six months longer than your planned length of stay in Bangladesh and at least one blank visa page, visa, and onward or return ticket are required to enter Bangladesh. The United States is on a list of countries eligible for visitor (tourist) visas on arrival at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka, Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh has not widely publicized their policies for visas on arrival. You may encounter delays in airport visa issuance or be refused entry to countries en route to Bangladesh if you do not have a visa prior to arrival in Bangladesh. Therefore, we highly recommend that you obtain a visa prior to arrival. Bangladeshi-Americans and their immediate family members are eligible for a "No Visa Required for Travel to Bangladesh" seal, which can be issued by the nearest Bangladeshi Embassy or Consulate. This endorsement allows travelers multiple entries into Bangladesh with no restriction on duration of stay, for the validity of the bearer's passport.

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1011.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to Bangladesh, please visit the following website:

<http://www.bdembassyusa.org/index.php?page=visa>

Bhutan

You will need a passport and visa to enter and exit Bhutan. All visas are approved from Thimphu and are only issued to tourists booked with a local licensed tour operator, directly or through a foreign travel agent. Applications for tourist visas are submitted by the tour operator (See the Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators website for further information: <http://www.abto.org.bt/>). All visitors, including those on official U.S. government business, must obtain visa clearance from Thimphu before coming to Bhutan. Visa clearance takes at least 10 days to process and air tickets to Bhutan cannot be purchased without visa clearance. At your point of entry into Bhutan, immigration authorities will stamp a visa into your passport upon payment of US\$20. You will also need to provide two passport photos.

Burma (Myanmar)

The Government of Burma strictly controls travel to, from, and within Burma. Since October 1, 2006, Burmese authorities have often prohibited entry or exit at most land border crossings, unless the traveler is part of a package-tour group that has received prior permission from the Burmese authorities. You must have a valid passport with at least six months remaining validity and visa to enter Burma. You should apply for your Burmese visa at a Burmese embassy or consulate abroad before you arrive in Burma. On September 1, 2010, the Government of Burma suspended its "Visa on Arrival" program, which had been in effect since May 2010. In Burma, you will be required to show your passport with a valid visa at all airports, train stations, and hotels. Security checkpoints are common outside of tourist areas. Burmese authorities rarely issue visas to persons with occupations they deem "sensitive," including journalists. Many journalists and writers traveling to Burma on tourist visas have been denied entry. Journalists -- and tourists mistaken for journalists -- have been harassed. Some journalists have had film and notes confiscated upon leaving the country.

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1077.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to Burma (Myanmar), please visit the following website:

http://www.mewashingtondc.com/visas_passports.htm

China

To enter China, you need a visa as well as six months' validity remaining on your passport. If you do not have a valid passport and the appropriate Chinese visa, you will not be allowed to enter China and will be fined and subject to immediate deportation. U.S. citizens traveling to China may apply for up to a one-year multiple-entry visa. Check your U.S. passport before applying for a visa to make sure that it has one year or more validity remaining; otherwise, you may be issued a visa for less than the time you request. A multiple-entry visa is essential if you plan to re-enter China, especially if you plan to visit either Hong Kong or Macau and return to

China. China does not recognize dual nationality. If you are a dual national, you should strongly consider which passport you will use to enter and exit China. The ability of the U.S. Embassy or Consulates General in China to provide you with consular protection is not afforded under the U.S.–China Consular Convention if you do not use your U.S. passport to enter China.

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1089.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to China, please visit the following website:

<http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/ywzn/lsyw/vpna/rap/t900567.htm>

Nepal

A passport and visa are required. Travelers may obtain visas prior to travel or purchase fifteen-day multiple-entry visas (\$25), one-month multiple-entry visas (\$40), or three-month multiple-entry visas (\$100) upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu and at the following land border points of entry: Kakarvitta, Jhapa District (Eastern Nepal); Birgunj, Parsa District (Central Nepal); Kodari, Sindhupalchowk District (Northern Border); Belahia, Bhairahawa (Rupandehi District, Western Nepal); Jamunaha, Nepalgunj (Banke District, Mid-Western Nepal); Mohana, Dhangadhi (Kailali District, Far Western Nepal); and Gadda Chauki, Mahendranagar (Kanchanpur District, Far Western Nepal).

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_980.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to Nepal, please visit the following website:

<http://www.nepalembassyusa.org/visa.php>

Pakistan

U.S. citizens require a valid passport and valid Pakistani visa to enter and exit Pakistan for any purpose. Visitors must obtain visas at a Pakistani Embassy or Consulate in the country of their usual residence prior to entering the country, as there are no provisions for visas upon arrival. Those arriving without a valid passport and a valid visa are subject to fine, arrest, incarceration and/or deportation. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Pakistan are unable to assist when U.S. citizens arrive without proper documentation.

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_992.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to Pakistan, please visit the following website:

<http://www.embassyofpakistanusa.org/consa6.php>

Sri Lanka

U.S. citizens visiting Sri Lanka after January 1, 2012 must have either an Electronic Travel Authorization or a visa to enter Sri Lanka. U.S. citizens will require an approval notice from Sri Lanka's new Electronic Travel Authorization System, passport, onward/return ticket, and proof of sufficient funds. The Electronic Travel Authorization System is for tourists, short term business travelers, and transit passengers and is available online. The online application, fees and other relevant information are available at the following website: <http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa/>.

Sri Lankan regulations define transit passengers as foreigners who expect to enter Sri Lanka and remain for a period not exceeding 10 days while waiting for onward travel. Passengers who do not cross Sri Lankan immigration lines, but who merely transfer between flights inside the airport, are defined as transfer passengers and do not require an Electronic Travel Authorization approval or a visa. Individuals traveling to Sri Lanka for purposes other than tourism (e.g., business, religious work, volunteering, or working) must obtain an entry visa from the nearest Sri Lankan Embassy or Consulate before their arrival in Sri Lanka.

For more information on Entry/Exit requirements for U.S. citizens, please visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1025.html#entry_requirements

To apply for a visa to Sri Lanka, please visit the following website:

<http://slembassyusa.org/consular/visitors-to-sri-lanka/>

Driving in India

It is highly recommended that you do not drive in India. However, if you must, please read this section carefully:

Drive defensively!!! This cannot be overstated. Pedestrians, animals, bicycles, ox carts, and tractors all use the roads. Cars will not stop for pedestrians, and busses and trucks will not stop for smaller cars. Indian traffic conditions are chaotic, drivers are often aggressive, and the roads are in poor condition. You must be extremely attentive and prepared for anything. Other drivers will often swerve in front of you; turn off of side roads at full speed and join the traffic flow without even looking; stop on a whim in the middle of the road; or drive exceedingly fast down the middle of a narrow road, forcing other drivers off onto the shoulder. Pot holes and speed bumps are common. Traffic barriers and road dividers appear suddenly and inexplicably. Road repair crews leave piles of sand, gravel, or tar on the road. Expect anything, at any time.

Finding the rhythm of the traffic is the key to avoiding accidents. Concentrate most on what is in front of you. There seems to be an unwritten rule of the road that people behind you will adjust to what you are doing. At the same time, most of the drivers in front of you will assume you are watching out for them. They may pull out suddenly, swerve abruptly, or just stop quickly, and it is expected that you will react immediately. In addition, do not assume lanes have any significance or that traffic lights will be followed. Finally, avoid driving at night. Road conditions become almost unbearable at night. You will often face on-coming traffic with astonishingly bright headlights; many vehicles run with only one light and some with no lights at all. Vehicles without any headlights are quite common in city driving. Visibility of slow moving vehicles, stopped vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and many other road hazards becomes very poor at night. Visit this link for more general information on road safety from the Department of

State:

http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1179.html

International Driving Permit

An International Driving Permit (IDP) issued in the United States by the American Automobile Association (AAA) or the American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA) is required of all visitors who drive in India. IDPs are not issued by the U.S. Embassy or by its consulates; they must be obtained prior to arriving in India. Note that IDPs are not intended to replace valid U.S. state licenses and should only be used as a supplement to a valid license. In other words, you must also have a valid U.S. state license in addition to an IDP to drive in India. You can obtain a valid IDP only from an automobile association authorized by the U.S. Department of State to issue IDPs. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on Road Traffic (1949) authorizes the U.S. Department of State to empower certain organizations to issue IDPs to those who hold valid U.S. drivers licenses. The Department has designated the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA) as the only authorized distributors of IDPs. There are, however, many scams on the Internet charging significant fees for licenses and/or making false statements. International Driving Permits should cost only \$10-20, though they are sold online for as much as \$300.

Visit this link to learn more about getting an IDP from AAA:

<http://www.aaa.com/vacation/idpf.html>

Visit this link to learn more about getting an IDP from AATA:

http://www.thenac.com/idp_faqs.htm

Taxes

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. Visit the following IRS webpage to learn everything you need to know about filing taxes abroad:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=97324,00.html>

Federal Benefits Abroad

Please visit the following website for assistance in obtaining federal benefits abroad, including social security, veteran's benefits, etc. Please note that Medicare benefits are not available outside the United States.

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/living_1234.html

Purchasing Property

For most Americans, it is impossible to buy "immovable" property in India. The FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) of 1999 governs the acquisition and transfer of property. It states that people who do not reside in India and are not of Indian origin cannot own property in India. The rights to buy property in India are reserved for certain groups that qualify, but for a foreign national it is illegal to own property unless they satisfy the residency requirement of 183 days in a financial year. Tourist visas last for 180 days, so it is also impossible to buy a property on a tourist visa. The groups of people who are allowed to buy in India without being residents of the

country are known as NRIs and PIOs. NRIs are Non-Resident Indians, or those people who hold an Indian passport and nationality, but are not resident in the country. This includes those people who have emigrated from India to live in another country, but still wish to have an investment interest in their home country. This allowance for the ownership of property for non-residents was extended to allow other people not resident in India, but of Indian descent up to four generations removed, to buy property in India. The PIO, or Person of Indian Origin, status has served to open up the property investment market to a huge number more foreign investors, which has been fuelling the current boom in property in India. It is not possible for people who do not fall into the above categories to become property owners either jointly with another person who does qualify, or through the operations of an Indian-registered company. These routes have been specifically blocked in law, so the only way for many foreign nationals to buy in India is to become a resident.

To learn more about who qualifies to purchase property in India, visit the following webpage from the Reserve Bank of India: <http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FAQView.aspx?Id=33>

Also, check out the following articles to learn more about purchasing property as an NRI:
Times of India – http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-07-22/other-news/29802773_1_commercial-property-house-property-residential-property
The Economic Times - http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-20/news/31079778_1_nris-preferred-investment-purchase

Resources for Raising American Children Abroad

The following webpage from International Children's Education contains a list of great resources for helping children and parents adjust to living abroad:

http://www.iched.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id=iched&item_id=tck_resources.

Expat Women is a site devoted entirely to helping women deal with expat issues, and includes an entire section of hands-on, practical advice specifically geared toward mothers:

<http://www.expawomen.com/expat-women-mothers.php>. They also have a page with specific information on living as an expat in India:

<http://www.expawomen.com/expat-women-countries/expat-women-living-in-india.php>

Life-Changing Events

Birth Abroad

If you have a child while living overseas, start by applying for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA). You can find the instructions and application at the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/living_5497.html

Adoption

If you are considering adopting a child in India, please visit the website of the Central Adoption Resource Authority: <http://www.adoptionindia.nic.in/>

Legal Representation

For basic information on judicial assistance abroad, visit the following website:

http://travel.state.gov/law/judicial/judicial_702.html

For more specific information on judicial assistance in India, visit the following website:
http://travel.state.gov/law/judicial/judicial_2811.html

At the following webpage, you will find a list of attorneys in the New Delhi Embassy district:
<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/other-citizen-services/judicial-assistance.html>

Marriage; Divorce

For general information on marriage abroad, please visit the following website:
http://travel.state.gov/law/family_issues/marriage/marriage_589.html

If you plan to marry while in India, start by visiting the following website:
<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/other-citizen-services/marriage.html>

For general information on divorce overseas, visit the following website:
http://www.travel.state.gov/law/family_issues/divorce/divorce_592.html

Death

For general info on the death or injury of an American citizen abroad, visit the following website:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/death/death_3878.html

For more specific information on death of a U.S. citizen in India, visit the following website:
<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/acsemergency/death-of-an-american-citizen.html>

Educational & Cultural Resources

American Center

Through the U.S. Embassy's mission to promote mutual understanding between the people in India and the United States, the American Center supports the youth of India with exciting educational and cultural programs and exchanges. Located at 24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg in Connaught Place in New Delhi, the American Center offers an exciting array of cultural programs including weekly movies, poetry readings, job skills trainings, speeches by American and Indian politicians and entertainers, plays, art exhibitions, and comedy shows. Find out what is happening this month at the American Center by visiting the following website:
<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/amcenterbulletin.html>

The American Center also promotes the magazine SPAN, which seeks to link India and the United States by offering articles from writers in both countries on culture, business, technology, education, health, social development, arts, and achievements in U.S.-India relations. Beautiful photography and also articles from the best American publications are showcased in every issue of SPAN, which is published in English, Hindi, and Urdu. You can find an online version and subscribe to the e-zine at the following website: <http://span.state.gov>

American Library, Delhi

Located within the American Center the American Library is open Monday to Saturday from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. A team of dedicated Reference Librarians provide accurate and up-to-date

information on American governmental and non-governmental institutions, policies, economy, global issues, society, culture, literature, history, and contemporary life from print and electronic resources. The library has ten internet workstations, which can be used for 30 minutes at a time for educational and research purposes. Additionally, the American Library offers free wireless internet access, but registration at the Reference Desk is required for access. The Library has 40 connections, provided on a first-come-first served basis. All visitors are requested to conform to security regulations and produce a valid photo identification at the entrance. Acceptable photo IDs are: passport, driver's license, voter ID card, Permanent Account Number (PAN Card), government/employer issued ID, or college/university issued ID. The American Center will only accept original IDs and not photocopies. Contact by phone at 91-11-23472115, and 2116 or email libdel@state.gov.

The Library's Online Public Access Catalog provides members with a listing of material available in the Libraries in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and New Delhi. Access the catalog via the following website: <http://amlibindia.state.gov/>

United States-India Educational Foundation

The United States – India Educational Foundation (USIEF) promotes mutual understanding between the nationals of India and the nationals of the U.S. through the educational exchange of outstanding scholars, professionals, and students. Since its inception, USIEF has awarded approximately 17,000 Fulbright, Fulbright-Nehru, and other prestigious grants and scholarships in almost every academic discipline. USIEF's major activities include:

- Administration of Fulbright-Nehru and other Fulbright Fellowships for Indian and American students, faculty, and professionals
- Promotion of dialogue among Fulbrighters and their communities as an outgrowth of educational exchange
- Educational Advising Services for Indian students interested in pursuing higher education in the U.S., and for U.S. students interested in studying abroad in India
- Serve as a clearinghouse for linkages between higher education institutions in the US and India through its office of US-India Higher Education Cooperation (USIHEC)

Find out more about the USIEF by visiting their website: <http://www.usief.org.in/>