

Red Seas, White Sands, Blue Skies: An American Citizens Services Newsletter

Greetings from the Consul General and Counselor for Consular Affairs for Saudi Arabia:

It is an honor and a great pleasure to serve as the new Counselor for Consular Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I am fortunate to join an extraordinary consular team working throughout the U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia, at the Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulates General Dhahran and Jeddah, and am committed to maintaining their high standards for providing customer service. I look forward to meeting you and serving you over the next two years to fulfill the consular goals of the U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia: to efficiently and effectively protect U.S. citizens, ensure U.S. security through safe borders, and facilitate the entry of legitimate travelers in order to promote educational and cultural exchange and economic growth.

U.S. consular operations in Saudi Arabia are the largest in the Middle East, with consular services offered in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dhahran. Our American Citizen Services sections assist U.S. citizens present in the Kingdom who need routine passport services as well as a broad array of emergency and special consular services. I take seriously our mandate that U.S. Embassies have no higher responsibility than safeguarding our country's citizens. We are here to assist you and your families whenever, wherever and however we can.

I strongly encourage all of you to register with our free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) to help us communicate with you quickly and ensure that you receive the latest travel updates and information and important security messages. When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information we have about Saudi Arabia. You only need to sign up once, and then you can add and delete trips from your account based on your current travel plans. By connecting with us on the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#), we will be able to assist you better in the case of an emergency, such as if you lose your passport or it is stolen while you are abroad, and registration will offer immediate country specific information, including travel alerts and warnings, fact sheets and emergency messages to provide you with timely and accurate travel information about Saudi Arabia and every country where you may travel.

You are all invited to our Town Hall meeting for U.S. citizens resident and present in the Kingdom. Ambassador Westphal and I welcome you to attend on October 28. It will be an opportunity to meet with our Embassy Team, including senior representatives from our security and American Citizen Services teams, and to let your voice be heard on how the U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia might serve you better. See the invitation included in this edition of the ACS newsletter for complete information.

On behalf of the Consular Officers and staff, as well as the U.S. Embassy, let me say again that we are here for you. I look forward to serving our community, and will look forward to meeting many of you at the Town Hall.

Virginia Ramadan
Consul General



Minister Counselor MSG	1
IRS / SSA /Information	2-3
Town Hall Invitation / Notices / Kids Corner	4-5-6

Upcoming Holiday Closures

Nov 11, 2015 - Veterans Day
Nov 26, 2015 - Thanksgiving Day
Dec 24, 2015 - Christmas Day
List of all of our holiday closings for 2015 :

<http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>

How to Reach Us

The US Embassy is located in the Diplomatic Quarter, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Public hours: Sunday through Thursday, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Schedule an Appointment:
<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=RID&appcode=1>

Phone: (966)(11)488-3800

US Consulate Jeddah
Public hours: Sunday through Thursday, 1:00-3:00pm

Schedule an Appointment:
<https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=JDD&appcode=1>

Phone: (966)(12)667-0080

US Consulate Dhahran
Public hours: Sunday through Thursday, 1:00-3:30 pm

Schedule an Appointment: <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=dhr&appcode=1>

Phone: (966)(13) 330-3200



Happy 80th Anniversary, Social Security! **Celebrating the Past and Building the Future**

Today, the Social Security Administration proudly celebrates its 80th anniversary. On August 14, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act, landmark legislation that continues to provide hope and protection to some of the most vulnerable members of society. Acting Commissioner Carolyn W. Colvin marked Social Security's historic birthday by reaffirming the agency's commitment to the public.

"As Social Security celebrates its 80th anniversary, we remain the underpinning of economic security of this country, and will continue to be a strong foundation for the next 80 years and beyond," Acting Commissioner Colvin said. "Social Security is the most successful domestic program in America's history. Providing outstanding customer service to the public has been a cornerstone of our agency's mission since the beginning and will continue into the future."

Earlier this year, Social Security launched a commemorative 80th anniversary website where people can learn more about the agency's legacy and the importance of the Social Security program. The public has used the website www.socialsecurity.gov/80thanniversary, to submit stories that show how Social Security has benefited them or their families. Social Security employees around the country have also expressed their enthusiasm and support through the agency's "Why I Serve" campaign, which highlights employees telling their own stories illustrating why they enjoy giving back through public service.

Social Security will host a ceremony at the agency's headquarters in Baltimore to commemorate the occasion. U.S. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings (D-MD) will join Acting Commissioner Colvin and Social Security employees at the event. "I am deeply honored to have longtime friend and staunch Social Security supporter Elijah Cummings join us in celebrating our 80th birthday," Acting Commissioner Colvin said. The agency is celebrating "America's Favorites: Baseball, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie & SSA" Night at Major and Minor League baseball games across the country.



Interest Rates Remain the Same for the Fourth Quarter of 2015

IR-2015-106, Sept. 4, 2015 WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service today announced that interest rates will remain the same for the calendar quarter beginning October 1, 2015. The rates will be:

- three (3) percent for overpayments [two (2) percent in the case of a corporation];
- one-half (0.5) percent for the portion of a corporate overpayment exceeding \$10,000
- three (3) percent for underpayments; and
- five (5) percent for large corporate underpayments.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, the rate of interest is determined on a quarterly basis. For taxpayers other than corporations, the overpayment and underpayment rate is the federal short-term rate plus 3 percentage points.

Generally, in the case of a corporation, the underpayment rate is the federal short-term rate plus 3 percentage points and the overpayment rate is the federal short-term rate plus 2 percentage points. The rate for large corporate underpayments is the federal short-term rate plus 5 percentage points. The rate on the portion of a corporate overpayment of tax exceeding \$10,000 for a taxable period is the federal short-term rate plus one-half (0.5) of a percentage point.

The interest rates announced today are computed from the federal short-term rate determined during July 1 2015 to take effect Aug. 1, 2015, based on daily compounding. [Revenue Ruling 2015-17](#) announcing the rates of interest is attached and will appear in Internal Revenue Bulletin 2015-39, dated Sept. 28, 2015.

Overseas Citizen Voter

Overseas citizen voters face a specific set of challenges while voting absentee. Here we will provide you the information and contacts you need to successfully cast an absentee ballot.



Absentee Voting Overview

FVAP encourages the use of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to start the absentee voting process. The FPCA acts as both a registration and absentee ballot request form. FVAP encourages all overseas citizens to submit a new FPCA every year and when they move. You can complete an FPCA using our easy-to-use online assistant, by selecting your State or territory of legal residence on the map to get started. The online assistant will allow you to register to vote and request your ballot for upcoming elections. The assistant will guide you through the questions on the form and produce a printable form for you. Note, you must print the form, sign it, and send it to your State according to your State's rules. It is not an online registration tool.

Voter Registration and Ballots

FVAP encourages the use of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to start the absentee voting process. The FPCA acts as both a registration and absentee ballot request form. As rules vary by State, FVAP encourages overseas citizen voters to submit a new FPCA every year and, most importantly, when they move.

Never Resided in the U.S.?

Click [here](#) to see if you're eligible to vote absentee. FVAP also offers [Additional Information](#) and [Resources](#) for overseas citizens.

Does your passport have a minimum of 6 months validity? The State Department website has a [short video](#) highlighting the six month passport validity requirement that some countries stipulate for entry. Don't wait until the last minute; the processing time for passport applications is 10-15 workdays.

THE PASSPORT APPLICATION BASICS
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO
DON'T PROCRASTINATE **APPLY EARLY!**

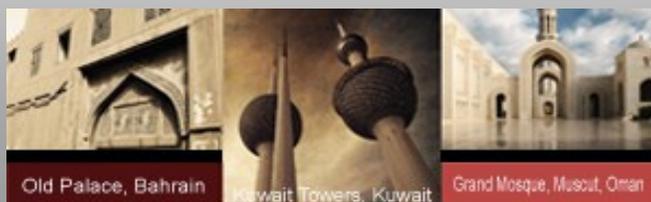
STEP 3: DO YOU NEED A PASSPORT BOOK OR PASSPORT CARD?

PASSPORT	VS	PASSPORT CARD
		
WHERE		
		
Valid for international travel by air, sea, or land.		Valid when entering the United States from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda at land border crossings or sea ports-of-entry. Not valid for international travel by air.
WHEN		
		
Valid 10 years for adults. 5 years for minors under age 16.		Valid 10 years for adults. 5 years for minors under age 16.
HOW MUCH		
		
First Time Applicant \$135 for adults \$105 for minors under age 16 Renewal \$110 for adults		First Time Applicant \$55 for adults \$40 for minors under age 16 Renewal \$30 for adults

Gulf Region Travel Information for U.S. Citizens

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen are all exciting countries with many interesting adventures to experience. We hope that by following the tips in this guide, your trip will also be a safe one.

Please copy and paste the address in your Internet browser to view the brochure: [http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/passports/Arabian%20Gulf%20ACS%20Brochure%20\(2\).pdf#](http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/passports/Arabian%20Gulf%20ACS%20Brochure%20(2).pdf#)



"Get in STEP" to receive the ACS Newsletter - Spread the Word!

Please remind your American friends to enroll in the U.S. State Department's free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program <https://step.state.gov/step/> in order for them to be included on the ACS Newsletter mailing list. It is a great way to keep abreast of any public announcements on safety and security issues in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere.

In addition, the Newsletter is a helpful resource for the latest voting news, IRS changes, and other activities concerning Americans living in Saudi Arabia. Another benefit is that if you move to another country, updating your enrollment in STEP ensures you continue to get timely information for your new country of residence!

STEP is also an important tool that consular officers around the world use during crises to distribute up to date information on emergency situations so that travelers like you can make informed decisions regarding their safety.

Leaving Saudi Arabia? If you no longer live in or travel to Saudi Arabia, or you need to update your registration status so that you no longer receive travel updates and our ACS Newsletter, please go to the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).

Updating your status in [STEP](#) will remove you from the mailing list for this newsletter and other Embassy Messages for U.S. citizens traveling to or living in Saudi Arabia. If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about our travel registration website, please send an e-mail to CASTEP@state.gov.

Please see the updated Travel Warning for Saudi Arabia dated Sep 21, 2015 :

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/saudi-arabia-travel-warning.html>

Please see Saudi Arabia's updated Country Specific Information Nov 2014 :

<http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country/saudi-arabia.html>

The State Department's Role in a Crisis

The actions we take depend on the nature of the crisis. In some instances, we may only need to provide information on conditions in the country, such as warning about areas of unrest, how and where to seek help, and other useful advice.

In more serious situations, we may recommend that U.S. citizens leave the foreign country, and, if commercial transportation is not available, provide departure assistance, as our resources permit.

Learn more: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies/crisis-support.html>

TRAVEL.STATE.GOV



Welcome to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization

International travelers who are seeking to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) are now subject to enhanced security requirements and will be required to pay an administrative fee. All eligible travelers who wish to travel to the U.S. under the Visa Waiver Program must apply for authorization and then pay the fee using the following process:

Please refer to the [Help](#) link at the top of each Web page if you have questions.

Before you begin this application, make sure that you have a valid passport and credit card available. This application will only accept the following credit cards: MasterCard, VISA, American Express, and Discover (JCB, Diners Club).

<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/application.html?execution=e1s1>

Important Announcement For U.S. Passport Holders

As part of its continuing efforts to improve the security of U.S. passports, the Department of State will cease issuing supplemental visa pages on December 31, 2015. Beginning in 2016, all approved passport applicants will automatically be issued 52-page passport books. The change will allow the Department of State to address the security concerns related to supplemental visa pages, while still responding to the needs of frequent travelers. The new policy of issuing 52-page passport books both domestically and overseas will be instituted with no additional costs to passport applicants. U.S. passport holders who are running out of pages should renew their passports without delay. It can take two weeks or longer for a passport to be delivered. You can continue using a valid passport while you wait for the delivery of its replacement.

For additional information, see the Department of State's explanation in the Federal Register

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/04/29/2015-09719/proposed-elimination-of-visa-page-insert-service-for-us-passport-book-holders>

To apply for a new or renewal passport in Saudi Arabia, please visit the passport appointments pages for the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, and the U.S. Consulates General in Dhahran and Jeddah.

[U.S. Embassy Riyadh](#)

[U.S. Consulate General Dhahran](#)

[U.S. Consulate General Jeddah](#)

Global Entry

Global Entry is a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival in the United States. Members enter the United States through automatic kiosks at [select airports](#).

At airports, program members proceed to Global Entry kiosks, present their machine-readable passport or U.S. permanent resident card, place their fingerprints on the scanner for fingerprint verification and complete a customs declaration. The kiosk issues the traveler a transaction receipt and directs the traveler to baggage claim and the exit.



Travelers must be pre-approved for the Global Entry program. All applicants undergo a rigorous background check and in-person interview before enrollment.

<http://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>



DV-2017 Program: Online Registration

DV 2017 Program: Online registration for the DV 2017 Program begins on Thursday, October 1, 2015 at 12:00 noon, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (GMT-4), and concludes on Tuesday, November 3, 2015 at 12:00 noon, Eastern Standard Time (EST) (GMT-4).

DV-2017 Program Instructions

Select the English version of the [DV-2017 Program Instructions](#) in PDF format for your convenience and required use. The English language version of the DV-2017 Program Instructions is the only official version. Unofficial translations in additional languages will be added as they become available. Translations (All translations are in .pdf format)

Please view our [video](#) for an introduction to the Diversity Visa program, and step-by-step guidance to help you submit an entry.

Electronic Submission of Immigration Documents:

American citizens petitioning for immediate family members for an IR1, IR2, IR5, CR1 or CR2 immigrant visa now have the option to submit their Affidavits of Support, financial evidence, and civil documents electronically. We anticipate that submitting these documents electronically will make the process quicker and more user-friendly.

The new option can be found in Step 6 on the "Collect and Submit Forms and Documents to the NVC" tab in "The Immigrant Visa Process" website found [here](#).



The Embassy of the United States of America
cordially invites you to a
Town Hall meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2015
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

United States Embassy Consular Section

Speakers

*The Ambassador of the United States of America
to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Joseph W. Westphal*

*Mr. Michael Olson
Senior Regional Security Officer*

*Ms. Virginia Ramadan
Consul General, U.S. Embassy Riyadh*

*Mr. Donald Steele
American Citizen Services Chief, U.S. Embassy Riyadh*

Light refreshments will be served

Schedule of Events

5:30 – 6:15 pm Doors Open and Reception
6:15 pm – 8:00 pm Official Remarks, Q&A

If you plan on attending, you must RSVP prior to
noon on Thursday, October 22nd by e-mail to: RiyadhACS@state.gov

*** For security purposes, please provide your full name, date of birth and U.S. passport number in your RSVP. You will need to bring your passport to the event to gain entry. This event is for adult American passport holders only. If your child is an American citizen, you or your spouse are welcome to come on behalf of the child. Please indicate this in your RSVP and bring a copy of your ID to gain entry***

We look forward to seeing you!

Did You Know?

The preamble to the US Constitution begins with the words “We the People . . .” and this phrase underlines the importance Americans place on their constitutional democracy. The US Constitution enshrines democratic principles like separation of powers, checks and balances, and the rule of law. Interestingly, the US Constitution does not contain the word “democracy.”

However, the US Constitution guarantees a republican form of government which means that representatives are elected by the people. While there are amendments to the U.S. Constitution that prohibit discrimination based on race (15th), sex (19th) and age (26th), no explicit right to vote exists.



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Fun Turkey Facts

The average weight of a turkey purchased at Thanksgiving is 15 pounds.

- The heaviest turkey ever raised was 86 pounds, about the size of a large dog.
- A 15 pound turkey usually has about 70 percent white meat and 30 percent dark meat.
- The five most popular ways to serve leftover turkey is as a sandwich, in stew, chili or soup, casseroles and as a burger.
- Turkey has more protein than chicken or beef.
- Turkeys will have 3,500 feathers at maturity.
- Male turkeys gobble. Hens do not. They make a clucking noise.
- Commercially raised turkeys cannot fly.
- Turkeys have heart attacks. The United States Air Force was doing test runs and breaking the sound barrier. Nearby turkeys dropped dead with heart attacks.
- A large group of turkeys is called a flock.
- Turkeys have poor night vision.
- It takes 75-80 pounds of feed to raise a 30 pound tom turkey.
- A 16-week-old turkey is called a fryer. A five to seven month old turkey is called a young roaster



WORD SEARCH

Q	C	Z	M	L	T	D	V	J	W
F	Y	R	O	B	E	R	T	F	R
D	R	U	B	L	I	W	M	U	I
H	S	A	M	U	E	L	O	L	G
F	A	R	N	S	W	O	R	T	H
C	P	D	X	K	Q	B	S	O	T
Y	O	R	V	I	L	L	E	N	Y
R	Z	Y	D	P	H	I	L	O	Z
U	X	N	I	M	A	J	N	E	B
S	M	C	C	O	R	M	I	C	K

Find the first and last name of each American Inventor in the puzzle. Words may be written up or down, across, diagonally, forward and backwards.

Benjamin Franklin—lightening rod, metal lined stove, bifocal glasses

Philo Farnsworth—“father” of television

Samuel Morse—telegraph and Morse code

Orville and Wilber Wright—powered airplane

Cyrus McCormick—reaper that cuts grain



<http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/amcitmessages.html>

Let's Stay in Touch!

In an effort to improve our ability to communicate with you, the American Citizen Services section is now on Twitter! Follow us online **@KSA_ACS**.

Stay tuned for tweets regarding security messages, appointment information, services to Americans, and events. Tell your fellow U.S citizens!

