

Consular News

May 2008

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Greetings from the Consular Section

Dear U.S. citizens:

It is with mixed feelings that I am writing this issue's column as it will be my last. My family and I will be departing Mauritius shortly, headed for Mumbai. It has been a terrific two years, largely thanks to the wonderful staff at the U.S. Embassy. Of course, you will still be in excellent hands – Angela Henry and Travis Jensen will continue to provide top notch service to registered U.S. citizens in Mauritius, Seychelles, and Reunion. In addition, they will be joined by several colleagues over the summer. Retired Consular Officers Ward Morrow and Sally Lindover will bridge the gap until my permanent replacement arrives at the end of August. Jason Hackworth will join the Embassy staff from Tokyo, along with his family. I'm sure the community will welcome him warmly. I should note that it's a big turnover year for the Embassy, so you'll see four new faces, along with their families, over the course of the coming months.

I wish to offer thanks to Travis and Angela for an outstanding tour in Mauritius. We won't be far away and hope to visit. If any of you find yourselves in Mumbai, please drop by the U.S. Consulate to say hello (and don't forget to register)!

Best regards,

Wendy Ryde

Consular Section Chief

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Or

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Temporary Closure of U.S. Consular Agency

The U.S. Consular Agency in Victoria, Seychelles, will be temporarily closed from June 9 - July 7, 2008. For immediate assistance, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Port Louis, Mauritius at (+230) 202-4400.

The U.S. Embassy will be closed on the following dates in recognition of holidays:

Independence Day	7/4/2008
Assumption	8/15/2008
Labor Day	9/1/2008
Ganesh Chaturthi	9/4/2008
Eid Ul Fitr*	10/1/2008
Columbus Day	10/13/2008
Divali	10/28/2008
Arrival of Indentured Servants	11/2/2008
Veterans Day	11/11/2008
Thanksgiving	11/27/2008
Christmas	12/25/2008

**indicates moveable feast*



IRS Economic Stimulus Payments

Starting in late April, the Treasury began sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million U.S. taxpayers. To receive a payment, taxpayers must have a valid Social Security number, \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal tax return. The IRS will take care of the rest. Eligible people will receive up to \$600 (\$1,200 for married couples), and parents will receive an additional \$300 for each eligible child younger than 17. Millions of retirees, disabled veterans and low-wage workers who usually are exempt from filing a tax return must do so this year in order to receive a stimulus payment. Even though April 15 has passed, there is still time for retirees, disabled veterans and others who normally do not file a tax return to submit a 2007 form to receive an economic stimulus payment.

For comprehensive information on the stimulus payment program, visit the IRS Economic Stimulus Payments Information Center website:

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=177937,00.html>

November 4, 2008 – Mark Your Calendars!

November is almost here, bringing with it the presidential election. In addition, many states will be holding general elections at that time. Overseas citizens are eligible to participate in presidential and state primary elections, run-off elections, and special elections that occur throughout the year, as well as the general elections in November 2008, but you **MUST BE REGISTERED** to do so. In many states, **advance registration** is required.

The Consular Section strongly urges you to register to vote and/or request absentee ballots well in advance of the November elections. Early registration ensures that ballots are received on time and that any problem may be resolved prior to the elections.

One way to register is by using the online version of the Federal Post Card Application. Visitors to the FVAP website at www.fvap.gov are now able to save their completed Online Federal Post Card Application (OFPCA) and Online Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (OFWAB) to their computer for future use, using an Adobe Acrobat Reader version of 7.0 or higher.

For more information on absentee voting, please contact the Consular Section.