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AN AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES NEWSLETTER

• September - December 2018 •



Letter from the Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs in Saudi Arabia

Warm greetings from the U.S. Consular Team in Saudi Arabia. I know that many of you returned to the United States at some point in the summer to visit friends and family. I hope you had a wonderful vacation and have returned to the Kingdom with batteries recharged for a busy year ahead.

Summer was a time of transition for the U.S. Mission in Saudi Arabia. In Riyadh, Martina Strong arrived as the new Deputy Chief of Mission, while James Fellows arrived as the new Deputy Consul General and Louise Gualpa-Lliguichuzhca as the new American Citizen Services Chief. In Jeddah, Ryan Gliha has just arrived as the new Consul General. I hope you find this latest edition of the Mission ACS newsletter useful. As always, please pay close attention to information about the security situation and what you can do to protect yourself and your family. The welfare and well-being of the American community in the Kingdom is our top priority. If you haven't signed up for the Mission's new SMS alert system, please give it your consideration.

In closing, I want to extend a special thanks to those Americans who volunteer their time as Citizen Liaison Volunteers (formerly known as wardens), working with the Embassy and the Consulates General in Jeddah and Dhahran to help keep the community safe.

Sean Murphy

U.S. EMBASSY RIYADH

American Citizen Services Public Hours:
Sunday - Thursday, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Email: RiyadhACS@state.gov
Phone: (966)(11)488-3800

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL JEDDAH

American Citizen Services Public Hours:
Sunday - Thursday, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Email: JeddahACS@state.gov
Phone: (966)(12)667-0080

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL DHAHRAN

American Citizen Services Public Hours:
Sunday - Thursday, 1:00pm-3:30 pm
Email: DhahranACS@state.gov
Phone: (966)(13)330-3200

THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

cordially invites you to a

Town Hall Meeting

Wednesday, October 3, 2018

5:30 p.m - 8:00 p.m.

U.S. Embassy Riyadh

RSVP by September 30 , 2018 at RiyadhACS@state.gov

For security purposes, please provide your full name, date of birth and U.S. passport number (or include a scan of your passport biographic page 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. ***

*** Personal electronic devices are not permitted in the Embassy nor are Embassy security personnel able to store them. ***

We look forward to seeing you!

Register 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.

SIGN UP FOR SMS ALERTS

**SMS alerts-
Sign up now!**

If you wish to receive important announcements via text message, please enroll in our SMS Message System at:
<https://tinyurl.com/USKSAAlerts>

SAFETY & SECURITY

UPDATED TRAVEL ADVISORY

The U.S. Department of State updated its Travel Advisory for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on August 2 to provide additional information about the security environment in the Kingdom. The Travel Advisory can be found at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/SaudiArabia.html>

ALERTS AND MESSAGES FOR U.S. CITIZENS

Please see all Messages for U.S citizens here:

<https://sa.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/security-and-travel-information/>



Basic Disaster Supplies Kit



Make sure your emergency kit is stocked with the items on the checklist below. Most of the items are inexpensive and easy to find, and any one of them could save your life. Headed to the store? Download a printable version to take with you. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets, or seniors.

After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Being prepared means having your own food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours. A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.

For more information on building and maintaining a disaster/emergency supply kit, go the following [Ready.gov](#) website for useful suggestions and instructions.

Be Prepared to Leave

- Make sure your passport has plenty of validity. We recommend at least 6 months and two or more blank pages. Don't forget to check your children's passports! You can find information about renewing passports on [our website](#).
- Be sure your iqama is also valid.
- Create an emergency go-bag for each member of your family that includes your passports, birth abroad certificates for children born overseas, cash in the local currency, cell phone with charger, copies of personal documents (school documents, medical records, etc), and extra clothing. If you have pets, be sure to have their vaccination records.
- If you take medication, make sure to have at least seven days' worth at any given time and have a copy of your prescriptions handy.

How to Vote From Anywhere WHEN YOU'RE AN AMERICAN OVERSEAS

STEP
1

REGISTER
AND REQUEST
YOUR ABSENTEE
BALLOT WITH THE
FEDERAL POST
CARD APPLICATION
(FPCA).

STEP
2

FILL OUT AND
SEND IN
YOUR BALLOT
WHEN IT
ARRIVES.

Return Your Completed Ballot: Some states allow you to return your completed ballot electronically and others do not. If your state requires you to return paper voting forms or ballots to local election officials, you can do so free of charge at the U.S. embassy or nearest consulate. Place your ballots in postage paid return envelopes or in envelopes bearing sufficient domestic U.S. postage, and address them to the relevant local election officials.

Voters may submit completed voting forms and ballots during regular public service hours (1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday) at the American Citizen Services units of the Embassy or Consulates General. Voters should allow a minimum of two weeks transit time for delivery to the United States.

[View All Upcoming
Election Dates](#)

[Upcoming Elections:](#)

<https://www.fvap.gov/guide/upcoming-elections>

Voting Absentee is easy using FVAP's online assistants.
Be absent but accounted for!



Hajj Highlights - 2018



Acting Consul General Debra Smoker-Ali greeted U.S. citizen and LPR Hajj pilgrims upon their arrival in Jeddah.

According to the Saudi Arabian Government, 2,371,675 pilgrims performed Hajj this year between August 19 and 23, including 20,060 U.S. citizens and LPRs. The Jeddah consular team implemented a plan to ensure 24/7 duty coverage by consular officers. In addition, ACS in Mission KSA stepped up our outreach prior to Hajj which included a schedule of tweets, YouTube videos, and outreach meetings with the public and other diplomatic missions.

The Jeddah Consular Team noted a remarkable decline in Hajj duty calls in 2018 as compared to 2017. During the Hajj time period, the Jeddah consular team handled several cases of lost passports, lost green-cards, and several hospitalizations.



Applying for a Saudi Driver's License?

A number of American women have reported to the Embassy or the Consulates General that some offices of the General Directorate of Traffic (Muroor) have not accepted their applications for Saudi driver's licenses. The U.S. Mission is in contact with the appropriate Saudi authorities and is not aware of any policy of denying or delaying acceptances of license applications. We are, however, closely monitoring the situation and would be interested in hearing your experiences, both positive and negative.

Volunteers Needed!



The U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulates in Jeddah and Dhahran are always looking for American citizens resident in the Kingdom to serve as Citizen Liaison Volunteers (CLVs). Presently, we are actively seeking CLVs in Mecca and Medina. For additional information, visit our website.

If you are interested in serving as a CLV, please email the Embassy or respective Consulate nearest to you.

Traveling to Saudi Arabia soon?

If your visa is annotated in Arabic or English "By Air Only," you must fly into KSA – you are not allowed to enter KSA at a land border. This also applies for entry on the causeway from Bahrain! Be proactive and check your visa!



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER



In addition to the STEP messages we send via email, we post safety and security information on Twitter, as well as helpful information for U.S. citizens living in Saudi Arabia. To stay up-to-date on the latest ACS news, follow us at:

@KSA_ACS

SOCIAL SECURITY SERVICES



As of October 1, 2017, the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh and the U.S. Consulates in Dhahran and Jeddah can no longer accept telephone calls, emails, or walk-in consultations regarding Social Security issues. For those individuals residing in Saudi Arabia who have need of these services provided by the Social Security Administration (SSA), you must contact the SSA Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) located at Embassy Rome. For more information on their services and how to contact them, please

visit <https://it.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/fbu/> You can also reach them by phone at +39-06-4674-5929 or email FBU.Rome@ssa.gov.

For comprehensive information on SSA's services abroad, please visit SSA's webpage Service Around the World.

<https://www.ssa.gov/>

UPCOMING CLOSURES

SEPTEMBER 23

SAUDI NATIONAL DAY

OCTOBER 7

COLUMBUS DAY

NOVEMBER 11

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 22

THANKSGIVING DAY

DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS DAY

For a full list of Embassy/Consulate closures, see our website:

<https://sa.usembassy.gov/holiday-calendar/>

*Exact dates subject to change

ACS APPOINTMENTS

U.S. passport and notarial services are available by appointment only and are generally offered from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Please see our website for information about these services, as well as how to schedule your appointment online:

<https://sa.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/citizenship-services/>

Was your child born in Saudi Arabia and needs his/her first US. passport? Please see detailed information on our website about applying for a U.S. Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) and how to make an appointment with us:

<https://sa.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/child-family-matters/birth/>