



The Sarajevo Sentinel

A newsletter for the American citizens living, working, and visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina

Produced by the Consular Section of US Embassy Sarajevo

WINTER 2010

US Embassy Sarajevo

Alipašina 43
71000 Sarajevo
(387) 33 445 700
(387) 33 221 837 FAX

In case of after-hours emergency, please call the main Embassy line.

American Citizen Services

Walk-in Hours:

Monday to Friday: 2pm to 3:30pm

Friday: 8am to 10:30am

**We can provide better service if you make an appointment via phone.*

(387) 33 445 700 x2210 or x2337

rws@state.gov

Non-Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only

Call Visa Information Service:

(387) 33 295 375

Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only

(387) 33 445 700 x2453

IVConsularSarajevo@state.gov

The Embassy will be closed:

Jan 18 – Martin Luther King Day

Feb 15 – Washington’s Birthday

March 1 – BiH Independence Day

April 5 – Easter Monday

Don’t forget to register with the Embassy!

We frequently send out important information on country conditions and if you’re not registered, you will not get our emails. You can register in person at the Embassy or online at: <http://www.travel.state.gov>

ASK THE CONSUL



Physical presence and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBAs)

Q: I recently had a baby in Bosnia and Herzegovina and I would like to apply for her Consular Report of Birth Abroad. I’ve read that one of the requirements is “proof of five years of physical presence in the US.” What is physical presence and how can I prove it?

A: When applying for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, if only one parent is a US citizen, documentary proof of physical presence in the US is required. Physical presence means that you were in the US and it includes time spent in the US before naturalization if you are a naturalized citizen. Five years of physical presence (in any status) prior to the birth of the child are required, two years of which must be after the parent was 14 years old. If both parents are US citizens and are married, proof of physical presence is not required.

Ways to prove physical presence include: W2s, pay slips, school records /transcripts, employment records, military service records, hospital/medical records, bank statements showing transactions in the US, leases, mortgages, and vaccination records. Any document that indicates you were in the US can serve as documentary evidence of physical presence.

Summer work opportunities for Bosnian students

Q: A Bosnian friend is a third-year student at the University of Sarajevo. Can she work in the United States over the summer? Are there any opportunities?

A: Yes! There is a great program for Bosnian (and all other foreign) students to travel to the US for a summer filled with work and fun. It’s called the Summer Work and Travel Program. Some examples of job possibilities in the US include: lifeguard, camp counselor, apple picking, concession stands, help on farms, waiter, construction labor, and seafood processor. The US Embassy in Sarajevo encourages all interested and eligible students to apply.

To qualify for Summer Work and Travel Program, a participant must be a foreign post-secondary student in his or her own country currently enrolled in and actively pursuing a degree or a full-time course of study at an accredited academic institution. Final year students are eligible to take part in this program even though they will have graduated at the time of participation as long as they apply to participate in the program prior to graduation. Students can stay up to five months in the US, four months of work and then a month to travel with friends and visit family.

The U.S. Department of State (DoS) administers the Exchange Visitor Program under the provisions of the *Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961*, as

amended. The Department of State designates U.S. organizations to administer exchange programs in several categories. These organizations are known as sponsors. A list of the designated sponsors in the category of Summer Work/Travel can be found on the website <http://eca.state.gov/iexchanges/index.cfm>.

The majority of these sponsors have partners or agents located worldwide to assist potential participants. Students may be able to locate information in their country by searching the web under "exchange programs" or the "J visa."

TAX TIME IS COMING...

The IRS has issued new comprehensive guidance for US Citizens residing abroad which is available here:

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

TAX FORMS

The US Embassy has some of the most common tax forms available, just ask at the window. These forms are also available online at <http://www.irs.gov>. The US Embassy cannot advise you on private tax matters. For assistance, please contact the regional IRS office at US Embassy Paris at: <http://france.usembassy.gov/irs.html>.



AIRLINE CARRY-ON BAGGAGE POLICY CHANGES and ADDITIONAL SECURITY CHECKPOINT MEASURES

At the end of December 2009, all airlines, including Austrian Airlines and Lufthansa/United, have changed their carry-on baggage policies. **All passengers traveling to the U.S. are now only allowed one piece of hand baggage on flights to/from the US.** The previous policy of one carry-on bag plus one additional personal item, such as a purse, laptop, etc., is no longer allowed. If your final destination is to the US, this policy will apply to all of your connecting flights, including flights out of Sarajevo. The standard size and weight restrictions still apply.

Flights to final destinations other than the U.S. are not affected by these changes.

In addition, increased security checkpoint measures are now in place. You should plan accordingly, arrive early, and expect delays. More information on the new security procedures is available at Transportation Security Administration website: http://www.tsa.gov/press/happenings/dec25_guidance.shtm

ASK THE CONSUL

Have a question about what we do? Please email us at rws@state.gov and you may see your question in the next issue of the Sarajevo Sentinel.

Illinois Military and Overseas Voters, Submit your Ballot Request for the February 2, 2010 State Primary!

Illinois will hold its State primary election on Tuesday, February 2, 2010. If you are eligible to vote in this election, and requested and received a ballot for the November 4, 2008 presidential election, you will automatically receive an absentee ballot, and need not take any further action unless your mailing address has changed. Your ballot or FWAB must be received by your local election office by **7 pm February 2, 2010 or by February 16, 2010 if postmarked February 1, 2010.** For more information: <http://www.fvap.gov>



FOR H1N1 UPDATES:

U.S. Department of State: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_4493.html

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

The Ministry of Health of the Federation of BiH: <http://www.fmoh.gov.ba/page.php?id=197>

The Ministry of Health of the Republika Srpska: http://www.zdravlje.gov.rs/show_page.php?id=222