



The Sarajevo Sentinel

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

Produced by the Consular Section of U.S. Embassy Sarajevo

WINTER 2011

U.S. Embassy Sarajevo

1 Robert C. Frasure

71000 Sarajevo

(387) 33 704 000

(387) 33 221 837 FAX

For after-hour emergencies, please call the Embassy switchboard.

For all telephone inquiries, please call us Monday through Friday between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m.

American Citizen Services

Business Hours:

Monday through Friday from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.;

Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m.

**We can provide better service if you make an appointment at*

<http://sarajevo.usembassy.gov/service.html>

ACS e-mail: rws@state.gov

Non-Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only.

Call Visa Information Service:

(387) 33 295 375

Immigrant Visa Hours:

By appointment only.

IVConsularSarajevo@state.gov

The Embassy will be closed:

February 21—Washington's Birthday (AM)

March 1—Independence Day (BIH)

2011 EMBASSY HOLIDAYS

For a complete list of this year's holidays, please follow this link.

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

Dear Fellow Americans,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very healthy and prosperous New Year!

I am delighted to welcome you to this edition of The Sarajevo Sentinel, the Consular Section's quarterly newsletter. My consular colleagues and I hope that this newsletter will provide useful information to you and your families.

As explained on this page, we are looking for reliable people who can carry out important warden responsibilities. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us at rws@state.gov.

Providing service and assistance for more than 1,500 American citizens residing in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) is our top priority. I strongly encourage all Americans in BiH to do the following:

- *Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> so that we know you are here and how to contact you or your family in case of emergency; and,*
- *Visit our website at <http://sarajevo.usembassy.gov> containing current notices and Warden Messages issued by the Embassy and/or the Department of State.*

*Best wishes,
Anne-Marie Casella
Chief, Consular Section*

Call for Embassy Wardens!



The Embassy would like to identify new wardens and confirm the names and contact information of wardens designated over the past several years. We need reliable wardens who can reach U.S. citizens in the event of an emergency, disaster or threat and to distribute other information of interest to the private U.S. community. The warden's role is vital to the U.S. Embassy, especially in times of crisis when the Embassy needs to reach Americans residing in BiH in the shortest possible time, particularly if e-mail is down. Moreover, we need volunteers who are willing to assume responsibility for geographic areas in which they and their fellow Americans are residing.

If you would like to volunteer for this important security role, please send us your contact information (e-mail, home phone, work phone, cell phone). If you are already an Embassy warden, please reconfirm your participation and provide any changes in your contact information. We can be reached at rws@state.gov.

We've Moved!



1 Robert C. Frasure Street, 71000 Sarajevo

The U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo began business operations at the new U.S. Embassy compound on December 6, 2010. The Consular Section can be reached Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. by calling the new Embassy main switchboard telephone number: (033) 704-000. The Embassy's new address is:

**1 Robert C. Frasure Street
71000 Sarajevo**

(Robert C. Frasure Street intersects with Zmaja od Bosne Street, next to the University of Sarajevo campus and across from the Importantne Centar)

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.

Visit of the Regional Federal Benefits Specialist

The Regional Federal Benefits Specialist from the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb will be visiting the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo on February 8, 2011. She will be available to answer questions relating to Social Security and other federal benefits. Please feel free to call (telephone numbers: 033 704-070 or 704-071) with your questions from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on February 8. If you have an issue you would like to discuss in person with the visiting Regional Federal Benefits Specialist, please call the telephone numbers listed above prior to February 8 to schedule an appointment.

Minors Traveling Alone or With Only One Parent

The immigration authorities of BiH, particularly at Sarajevo Airport, strictly enforce a provision of Bosnian law that requires any minor (under 18 years old) to have written permission from both parents to enter and leave the country. If the minor is traveling alone, with only one parent, or with a guardian, he/she is required to have written permission for the trip from the non-traveling parent(s). The Consular Section can notarize a statement of consent. There is a \$50 fee.

Update on the New e-CRBA

The Department of State is currently redesigning the Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) to include a variety of state-of-the-art security features to help prevent fraud and identify theft.

Appointments for CRBA services are suspended until further notice.

If you are traveling within the next four weeks, please request an emergency appointment by emailing rws@state.gov. If your child qualifies, an emergency passport can be issued.

We apologize for the inconvenience. Please check our website for further updates.

VOTING INFORMATION

Check www.fvap.gov for the latest information on voting.

How to Obtain Copies of Your Vital Records: Chicago

The Cook County Clerk's office serves as the official record keeper for births, marriages and deaths that occur in Chicago and suburban Cook County. The Clerk's Bureau of Vital Statistics division provides copies of these documents for eligible individuals upon request. To obtain a certified copy of your records please follow the link at http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/other/provdrs/ccco/svcs/get_vital_records.html.

2011 Income Tax Returns

All U.S. citizens and residents living or traveling outside the United States are generally required to file income tax returns in the same way as those residing in the United States. The deadline to file taxes is April 15, 2011.

The IRS has created a new [comprehensive tax page](#) which is directed to U.S. citizens who reside abroad. This page contains basic tax information that Americans overseas need to know and also includes links to more detailed topics such as the foreign earned income exclusion, foreign tax credit, reporting foreign bank accounts, Fulbright grants, state taxes, and a myriad of others.



Federal Tax Information for U.S. Taxpayers Living Abroad

Publication 4732, Federal Tax Information for U.S. Taxpayers Living Abroad, is available. The IRS developed this brochure as a resource to assist taxpayers in locating useful tax information to help in the preparation of their tax returns and/or in resolving tax account problems.

Publication 4732 is available on the internet at <http://www.irs.gov/>.

Entries Now Being Accepted for Poster and Slogan Contest

For the first time ever, the **Federal Voting Assistance Program** is opening its biennial voting poster and slogan contests to all U.S. citizens worldwide using Challenge.gov to facilitate the process.

The FVAP Slogan Contest challenge asks for slogan ideas that inspire members of the military, their families and U.S. Citizens residing overseas to start or continue to participate in elections while away from home and can be found at FVAP.gov or <http://challenge.gov/DoD/115-absentee-vo-slogan-contest>.

The FVAP Poster Contest seeks artwork illustrating what it means to be an American voter anywhere in the world. The FVAP Poster Contest details are located at FVAP.gov or <http://challenge.gov/DoD/116-absentee-voting-poster-contest>.

The winner for each contest and a guest will receive a trip to our nation's capital to participate in special events and tours. Runners-up will not only feel the satisfaction of knowing that their slogan or artwork is helping to improve voter awareness and participation, but will also receive a certificate of recognition from the Department for their contribution to this important endeavor.

There is no limit to the number of entries an individual may submit for either contest. All entries must be

received by **April 8, 2011**. All submissions must include your full name, branch of service (if military), mailing address, daytime telephone number, fax number and e-mail address (if applicable). Defense Human Resource Activity personnel and their immediate family members are not eligible to participate in these contests.

Challenge.gov is administered by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) in partnership with ChallengePost. The site brings together the best talents and ideas of the American public to make the government's efforts the very best they can be.

Sign up for SMS Security Alerts

In case of an urgent security alert, the Embassy can notify you by SMS text message. If you'd like to receive these messages, please email us your BIH cell phone number to rws@state.gov subject line "Add me to SMS"

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

In order to assist you better, the Consular Section will now take telephone inquiries from the public Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Before phoning us, please check our website where you can find most answers to your consular-related questions. Thank you for your cooperation.