

ACS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES

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GREETINGS FROM THE ACS CHIEF

I hope everyone enjoyed their Thanksgiving re-past. Now we're fully into the Holiday Season as evidenced by the eye-catching light displays throughout Seoul and other cities. As you go about your shopping and traveling, please don't neglect to take basic safety and security precautions. While Korea is one of the safest countries in the world crime-wise, it's still prudent to never flash valuables or money in crowded areas. As noted in item six below, there are a couple of districts in Seoul in particular that have higher incidences of crime.



Please don't forget that we have a Facebook site called "Americans in Korea" (www.facebook.com/americansinkorea) that we hope you'll visit from time to time. We're constantly posting new items on our site and try to keep it interesting. Coming soon will be an American Citizen Services blog where U.S. citizens will be able to ask questions and respond to items we post in it. We'll post responses quickly so the blog is as helpful as we can make it. We realize that many of you communicate largely through social media, and we want to make sure that you can easily connect with us.

In this issue we include information about the expanded hours of the American Center Korea (item eight below). The American Center is like a public library about the United States, and it's run by the Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS). While the PAS focuses its outreach efforts toward Korean, the American Center is certainly open for Americans also. In future newsletters we'll have further information of interest from PAS.

Stay safe and enjoy this Holiday Season!

Robert (Buck) Waldrop
ACS Chief

CONTACT US!

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English: www.asktheconsul.org/
Korean: <http://korean.seoul.usembassy.gov>
E-mail: seoulinfo@state.gov
Facebook: www.facebook.com/americansinkorea

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The Embassy will be closed on the following day:

December 26: (Monday) Christmas

The ACS Unit will be closed for routine services, including passport processing, on December 26. Please plan ahead, and enjoy the holiday!

Please be advised that the days just before and after a holiday are usually busier in the American Citizen Services Unit of the Embassy with all appointments taken. Do not be surprised at a longer wait for consular services on those days.

A complete list of all of our holiday closings for 2011 is available on-line at http://seoul.usembassy.gov/p_holidays.html

CONSULAR SERVICES IN BUSAN DECEMBER 19-20, 2011

The Embassy offers consular services for American citizens in Busan for two days each month. During these visits, U.S. citizens can apply for U.S. passports, additional visa pages in their current passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, and Social Security cards. A consular officer will also offer notarial services and provide information regarding voting, federal benefits, and enrollment with the Embassy. The consular staff is also available to assist with emergencies involving U.S. citizens. Any questions about requirements should be directed by email to seoul_acs@state.gov.

Officials from the Embassy's ACS Unit will next be in Busan on Monday, December 19, and Tuesday, December 20, 2011. A Consular Officer will be available on December 19, from 1:00–4:00 p.m. and on December 20, from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the American Presence Post (APP), Lotte Gold Rose Building (also known as the Job Center Building), #150-3, Yangjung-dong, Busanjin-gu, Room No. 612. Directions to the APP can be found here: <http://busan.usconsulate.gov/contactus.html>.

Please note that an appointment is now required for services in Busan. Call the U.S. Embassy to schedule an appointment at 02-397-4114. Please specify that you would like to make an appointment for consular services at the Busan office and which date you would prefer (it can be any of those listed below). Be sure to call by noon on the Friday prior to the visit. For the December outreach, please make your appointment by Friday, December 16th at noon.

ALL APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

The ACS Unit began requiring appointments for all non-emergency, routine services on June 15, 2011. This is also a worldwide policy for all U.S. embassies and consulates. Routine services include passport and additional pages applications, requests for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, Social Security card and benefit applications, and notarial services.

Requiring appointments for all our non-emergency, routine services means that we'll be able to serve everyone more quickly and efficiently -- it will lessen considerably the long lines and busy waiting room that we often had during non-appointment sessions. Of course, we'll always take care of U.S. citizens with emergencies whether they have an appointment or not. Please note that notarial services are not considered emergency appointments.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: Q: "I want to work/live/visit Korea. How can I get a Korean visa? Can the Embassy help me get the visa?"

A: Please be aware that the U.S. Embassy has no authority over matters related to your admission into, stay in or immigration status while in Korea. You should contact Korean authorities directly for assistance with Korean visas. Contact information for the Korean Embassy in Washington, DC and the Korean consulates throughout the United States can be found on this website: <http://www.koreaembassyusa.org>. If you are in Korea, you may contact the Korean Immigration Service in Seoul by dialing 1345. Additional details in English can be found on their website: <http://www.immigration.go.kr>.

CAUTION IN ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS

Itaewon and Shinchon are well known entertainment districts in Seoul that are also considered a higher-risk area for crime. Please use caution in all entertainment and nightlife districts throughout Korea.

Recently a small number of incidents involving U.S. citizens in these areas have included physical and sexual assaults, theft of purses, wallets, and drugs allegedly slipped into drinks.

VOTING

The U.S. Presidential election will be held on Tuesday Nov. 6, 2012.

Also during this election, 33 U.S. Senate seats will be voted on, as well as all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives which will make up the 113th Congress. The election will also encompass 11 state gubernatorial races as well as many state legislature races, ballot questions and referendums.

U.S. citizens residing overseas have the right to vote in both primaries and elections. In order to receive a ballot for any of the elections, including the presidential election, you MUST be registered to vote. The Federal Voting Assistance Program recommends that all U.S. citizens register to vote in January of every year or at least 90 days before the specific election you want to vote in.

Stay tuned to the ACS Newsletter for the most up to date information about upcoming primaries and elections. The following states will hold Presidential Primaries in January 2012:

South Carolina – January 21, 2012

Florida – January 31, 2012

For more information on how to register to vote in these primaries or any other voting related questions please check www.fvap.gov or contact the U.S. Embassy Seoul American Citizen Services Unit at Vote-Seoul@state.gov.

TRAVEL WARNINGS

The U.S. Department of State has recently issued travel warnings or travel alerts for the following countries and regions. If you are traveling to any of these regions in the near future, please consult travel.state.gov for more information.

Travel Warnings:

[Eritrea](#) 11/04/2011
[Kenya](#) 11/04/2011
[Guinea](#) 11/04/2011
[Korea, Democratic People's Republic of](#) 11/03/2011
[Iran](#) 10/21/2011
[Nigeria](#) 10/13/2011
[Lebanon](#) 10/12/2011
[Mauritania](#) 10/12/2011
[Mali](#) 10/04/2011
[Syria](#) 09/30/2011
[Libya](#) 09/22/2011
[Algeria](#) 09/19/2011
[Iraq](#) 09/13/2011
[Yemen](#) 09/02/2011
[Somalia](#) 08/19/2011
[Chad](#) 08/16/2011
[Haiti](#) 08/08/2011
[Pakistan](#) 08/08/2011
[Niger](#) 08/05/2011
[Saudi Arabia](#) 08/05/2011
[Central African Republic](#) 07/28/2011
[Colombia](#) 07/22/2011
[Congo, Democratic Republic of the](#) 07/19/2011
[Republic of South Sudan](#) 07/12/2011
[Israel, the West Bank and Gaza](#) 06/22/2011
[Sudan](#) 06/22/2011
[Cote d'Ivoire](#) 06/16/2011

[Philippines](#) 06/14/2011
[Burundi](#) 06/01/2011
[Uzbekistan](#) 04/25/2011
[Mexico](#) 04/22/2011
[Afghanistan](#) 03/08/2011
[Nepal](#) 01/12/2011

Travel Alerts:

[Egypt](#) 11/07/2011
[Congo, Democratic Republic of the](#) 11/03/2011
[Thailand](#) 10/27/2011
[India](#) 10/18/2011
[Worldwide](#) 10/11/2011
[Japan](#) 10/07/2011
[Tunisia](#) 10/05/2011
[Worldwide](#) 10/01/2011
[Bhutan](#) 09/23/2011
[India](#) 09/23/2011
[Nepal](#) 09/23/2011
[9-11 Anniversary](#) 09/02/2011
[Bahrain](#) 08/19/2011
[Zambia](#) 08/11/2011
[Pacific Typhoon Season](#) 06/02/2011
[Hurricane Season 2011](#) 06/01/2011

Worldwide Caution January 31, 2011

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_4787.html

For additional information about these travel warnings and alerts, please go to this site:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

EMBASSY CONTACT INFORMATION

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APO AP 96205-5550

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DSN: 721-4114

English: <http://www.asktheconsul.org/>

Korean: <http://korean.seoul.usembassy.gov>

E-mail: seoulinfo@state.gov

Facebook: www.facebook.com/americansinkorea

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