

U.S. EMBASSY MOSCOW



CONSULAR NEWS

Serving U.S. Citizens in the Moscow Consular District

LIVE WEBCCHAT

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The American Citizens Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow is pleased to announce a live webchat on December 18, 2008, for U.S. citizens in the Russian Federation. The chat will begin at 9:00 a.m. Moscow time, 4:00 p.m. in Vladivostok, and will cover U.S. passports, Russian visas, and other issues of concern to U.S. citizens in Russia.

U.S. citizens in Russia are invited to ask questions regarding passports, visas, voting, and other emergency and non-emergency citizen services. The webchat will be hosted by Deputy Consul General Patrick W. Walsh and American Citizen Services Chief Richard G. Rosenman.

To join the webchat, participants need to logon to <http://statedept.connectsolutions.com/moscow>. Please select "Enter as a Guest", no registration is necessary. Your computer will require the Adobe Flash Player (commonly installed already but available for free download at <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>).

You are welcome to begin submitting your questions now. Please ask each question separately. Nothing will appear on the screen until the live webchat takes place on December 18.

If you have any technical questions, please respond to conx@state.gov.

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American Citizens Services Winter Holiday Schedule

Dec. 25 & 26: Closed
Dec. 29-31: Open 9-4
Jan. 1 & 2: Closed
Jan. 5: Open 9-1
Jan. 6: Closed
Jan. 7: Open 9-1
Jan. 8: Closed
Jan. 9: Open 9-1

Have Questions about Social Security ?

Staff from the Regional Federal Benefits Office in Warsaw are planning a trip to Moscow the week of January 26th. The Embassy will set aside time for consultations with the public. More details will be available in January. Please contact us via email or telephone if you would like to set up an appointment.

Ambassador's Newsletter

This month Ambassador John Beyrle begins a bimonthly newsletter, in both Russian and English, giving his views about Russian-American relations and examples of some of the areas where Russia and the United States are working successfully together. You can subscribe by writing to: askambrussia@state.gov



Questions or Comments? Contact us at moscowwarden@state.gov or call at 7-495-728-5577.
Our website is at: <http://moscow.usembassy.gov>

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New Website Devoted to Adoptions

In recognition of National Adoption Month, the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs has launched Adoption.state.gov, a new website devoted exclusively to intercountry adoption.

Last year alone, Americans adopted more than 17,000 children from abroad. Adoption.state.gov will provide adopting parents with the answers and information they need. The site includes step-by-step instructions for adopting a child from another country, and a new publication for adoptive parents, "Intercountry Adoption from A to Z."

Adoption.state.gov provides a central resource for adopting parents, adoption agencies, and others involved in the intercountry adoption process. Prospective parents will find country specific information and background about the Hague Adoption Convention on the website.

Waiver of Non-immigrant Visa Interview for Travel to the U.S.

If you have Russian friends or family planning a trip to the United States, you should be aware that certain applicants for a U.S. non-immigrant visa may no longer be required to appear for a personal interview at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow or Consulates General in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, or Vladivostok.

Since November 2007, the U.S. Embassy and the Consulates in Russia have collected ten fingerprints as part of the U.S. Governments' Biometric Visa Program designed to increase the security of U.S. visas and facilitate travel to the United States.

Effective Monday, November 10, 2008, a visa applicant who has already provided ten fingerprints at the U.S. Embassy or a Consulate General in Russia may not need to return to be fingerprinted and interviewed for a subsequent visa if:

- The applicant reapplies within 12 months after the previous visa expires;
- The applicant applies for a visa in the same visa classification as the previous visa;
- The applicant applies in his or her country of usual residence; and
- The applicant has complied with the immigration laws and regulations of the United States.

Visa applicants who fulfill the conditions listed above and who obtained a previous visa in Russia may submit visa applications through Pony Express to either the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy or to any of the Consulates General, regardless of where the previous visa was obtained. Through the Visa Interview Waiver Program, the applicant may not need to come in for an interview. However, a consular officer, after reviewing the application, may determine that a visa interview is required. Detailed instructions concerning the nonimmigrant visa application process are located on the Embassy website, <http://moscow.usembassy.gov>.

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