

## Passports

**Passports** are obtained through the Passport Services Division of the Department of State. Through your local passport acceptance agent, usually at the Post Office, you can apply for a new passport, renew your old one, or do any of a number of things, including replacing a lost, stolen, or damaged passport, or adding new pages to your existing book.

### Traveling Overseas

After you've got your passport you still have to check with the country or countries you'll be visiting to **determine whether or not you'll need a visa**. A visa is permission from a country to cross their borders and comes in the form of a stamp in your U.S. Passport. You usually have to mail your passport to the Embassy or Consulate of the country you'll be visiting, so allow plenty of time to accomplish this.

Also, check the State Department website for **travel warning** and consular information sheets that provide very helpful information about the country you plan on visiting. **The State Department** services website also contains very comprehensive information on all the services it provides both stateside and abroad. This includes **crisis assistance** for U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad, and various travel publications available on-line.

### American Embassies and Consulates General

Many U.S. Diplomatic Missions abroad have information on-line. For those that don't, check the **State Department's Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts** for addresses, and phone and fax numbers for U.S. Embassies and Consulates throughout the world.

### Passports in a hurry

Passports usually take from 30 to 40 days to issue. For a \$35.00 fee--plus the cost of 2-way overnight mail--you can "expedite" this process and receive your passport in 7 to 10 days.