

**CONSULAR NEWS
SENEGAL & GUINEA BISSAU**

**U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal
September 2007**

September Frequently Asked Question

Q. I live in Senegal and I've had trouble boarding a flight to Dakar because the airline refused to board me because I live here without a Senegalese visa in my passport. They said that all Americans staying in Senegal more than 90 days need a visa, and they did not recognize my resident card. What can I do to avoid having to purchase a round-trip ticket when I return home to Senegal?

A. This is a complicated issue that we are working on addressing with the airlines and the Senegalese authorities. Ultimately, it is the Senegalese government that decides who may enter its borders, and they share these requirements with the airlines. If an airline allows a passenger to board the plane, and that person is denied entry, the airlines not only pay a very large fine, but they also must return the person to their country of origin. Below is our understanding of visa procedures for Americans living and working in Senegal. Please keep in mind that the Senegalese government sets these policies, and any questions you have should be directed toward the Police des Etrangers at the Ministry of the Interior. Their address and phone number are: Allees Ababacar Sy, Pres du Commissariat de Police Dieuppeul, Tel: (+221) 869-3001.

In general, foreigners entering Senegal fall into one of three categories:

- 1- Entry is allowed without a visa (U.S. citizens may enter for stays less than 90 days)
- 2- A visa is required, but preliminary consultation with the Senegalese Ministry of Interior is not needed
- 3- Both a visa and preliminary consultation with Senegalese Ministry of Interior are required.

The visa can be obtained either before or arrival in Senegal; however, it is more common for Americans to obtain the visa once they are in Senegal.

Senegalese regulations do not allow embassies to issue long-term visas. All long-term visas must be issued by the Ministry of the Interior and are renewable on an annual basis. Some countries' nationals must have a visa to enter Senegal for even brief stays; Americans can come to Senegal without a visa for 90 days.

Getting a visa before coming to Senegal:

It is possible to obtain a visa before arriving in Senegal, but this must be done through the Senegalese Ministry of the Interior. Senegalese embassies cannot issue these visas. To obtain a multiple entry visa valid for one year, a US Citizen needs to write a letter to the Ministry of Interior explaining the reason why he is requesting this visa and include: (1) a letter of employment, (2) photocopies of US passport pages, and (3) a guarantee for repatriation (round trip ticket, travel orders or any other proof of repatriation).

After entering Senegal, the applicant will submit his passport with Senegalese Ministry of Interior's approval letter to the Police des Etrangers to obtain the visa in the passport.

Getting a visa after arriving in Senegal:

A U.S. Citizen entering Senegal without a visa and planning to stay and work longer than 90 days must obtain a Foreigner ID Card (FIDC) and request permission to work. The FIDC is a small booklet that has space for the visas that are renewed annually. After arrival, an applicant must submit a valid passport, FIDC or return receipt, one photo, travel ticket or any proof of repatriation to obtain the visas.

The following documents are required to obtain a Foreigner ID Card from the Ministry of the Interior:

- A letter to the Minister of Interior requesting a long-term visa for Senegal
- A photocopy of U.S. passport pages
- An "attestation tenant lieu de bulletin de naissance"*
- An "extrait de casier judiciaire"*
- A medical certificate issued by a accredited doctor
- Employment letter (Contract)
- A fee of 75.000 CFA
- CFA 15.200 for fiscal stamps
- Three photos
- Eventually a money deposit for guarantee in case of a deportation.

* These two documents can be obtained at the American Embassy Consular Section for a \$50 fee or the equivalent in CFA. The fee covers notarization of the documents and is waived for USG employees.

Holders of this card are supposed to turn the card in to the Police des Etrangers each time they leave Senegal in exchange for an exit/entry visa. They then pick up the card when they return to Senegal.

In practice, it takes several months for the Foreigner ID Card to be issued and most people obtain a receipt when they apply for this card and they turn in the receipt before leaving Senegal.

Phone number changes

Beginning October 7, 2007 most telephone numbers in Senegal will go from 7 to 9 digits. A two digit prefix will be added to fixed and cell phone numbers.

For fixed phones – 33 (Ex. 824-4079 will become 33-824-4079)

For Tigo cell phones – 76 (Ex. 123-4567 will become 76-123-4567)

For Orange cell phones – 77 (Ex. 123-4567 will become 77-123-4567)

Emergency numbers for the Police (17) and Fire (18) will stay the same.

The U.S. embassy general line will become: 33-823-4296, and the after hours number will become: 76-383-9566.

Crime Watch

A burglar attempted to break into an American family's home on August 8 at around 8:00am, just after the homeowner had left for work and before his housekeeper arrived. No one was home when the burglar scaled the wall and attempted to break into three different doors before resorting to using a pick ax that the owner had left in the yard to attempt to break a hole in the side of the house next to the lock of the backdoor. When the gardener arrived, he managed to safely talk the man away from the house. No one was injured and nothing was taken.

On Sunday Aug 5 sometime during the daylight hours, an American family's home was broken into by robbers. They scaled the back wall from an empty lot and broke in through the back door, forcing the lock. Two lap-top computers were taken along with jewelry, a new pair of tennis shoes, and cash. The house has two dogs, but they were on a front balcony and were not able to enter the house to defend it.

A 19-year old Irish man was fined approximately \$300 by a court in St. Louis, which found him guilty of public indecency on Friday August 24. He was given a four-month suspended sentence, and was released from the jail where he had spent four weeks sharing a cell with 40 other men while waiting for a verdict. The volunteer teacher was jailed after he dropped his pants outside a local government building last month on a dare by another volunteer. A young woman who was taking his photograph was also arrested, but was released earlier.

Hours for American Citizen Services

As you may know, the Consular Section is understaffed this summer due to a number of circumstances beyond our control. Effective August 1, we are open for routine American citizen services Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. We plan to return to our regular hours in October, and we sincerely regret any inconvenience this may cause.

When you arrive at the embassy, please show your U.S. passport or proof of American citizenship to the guard and go directly to the Consular Receptionist window. You do not have to wait in line with visa applicants.

Emergency American citizen services are available during U.S. Embassy normal working hours which are Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For an after-hours emergency involving an American citizen, please call 383-9566.

We are also available by e-mail at consulardakar@state.gov.

Have You Left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau?

If you have left Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please e-mail us at consulardakar@state.gov so we can remove your name from the warden registration database. If you would like to remain on the newsletter mailing list, please let us know in your e-mail.