

Embassy of the United States of America

Maputo · Mozambique



American Citizens e-Newsletter

April 2008

U.S. Embassy
Avenida Kenneth Kaunda, 193
Maputo, Mozambique

Tel: +258 21 49 2797
Fax: +258 21 49 0448
ConsularMaputo@state.gov
maputo.usembassy.gov

American Citizen Services:
Monday, Wednesday & Friday
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

In the event of an emergency
involving an American citizen,
please call +258 21 49 0723

CHECK YOUR PASSPORT'S VALIDITY

Please carefully review the validity of your current U.S. passport. Many governments require travelers to have at least 6 months validity left in their passports for entry into their countries. Regular passports are typically received within 10 calendar days after the Consular Section receives the application.

NEED MORE PASSPORT PAGES?

If your full-validity U.S. passport has not expired yet, but has no blank pages left for visas, we can add up to two sets of additional pages free of charge. Barring any unusual circumstances, we can usually add pages to your passport in about 30 minutes, while you wait.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS PAYMENTS INFORMATION

President Bush signed an economic stimulus bill on February 13th which will result in stimulus payments to over 130 million individuals starting in May 2008. The following is the text of an IRS fact sheet which provides more details and eligibility information regarding the stimulus payments.

Some low-income workers and recipients of Social Security, certain veterans' benefits and certain Railroad Retirement benefits may qualify for economic stimulus payments this year from the federal government. In most cases, payments will range from \$300 to \$600 for individuals and \$600 to \$1200 for joint filers. Taxpayers may receive \$300 for each qualifying child. Most taxpayers do not need to take any extra steps to receive the payment beginning in early May. But there are some exceptions. Individuals who might not otherwise be required to file a 2007 tax return will need to file a return this year to receive the stimulus payment. However, some people may need to amend a previously filed tax return to include benefits to reach the \$3,000 qualifying income level. Adding these benefits on an amended tax return will not increase an individual's tax liability but will establish eligibility for the stimulus payment.

For the full text of this notice and additional information regarding this and other IRS issues, please go to www.irs.gov/newsroom/index.html.

EMBASSY CLOSURES

The U.S. Embassy will be closed Monday, April 7th for a Mozambican holiday (Women's Day).

The Consular Section will be closed Thursday, April 25 for internal meetings.

MOÇAMBIQUE JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Moçambique Jazz Festival will take place at the Jardim Municipal in Matola, Friday, April 4th and Saturday, April 5th.

The Festival will feature Judith Sephuna (S. Africa), Irinah (Moz), Freshlyground (S. Africa), Stewart Sukuma (Moz), Jimmy Dlulu (Moz), Pieces of a Dream (USA), The Manhattans (USA) and other artists.

POSTMARKS FOR MAILINGS TO THE IRS

Federal tax returns, claims for refund, and other documents mailed to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) are treated as filed on the date of the domestic and foreign postmark.

However, payments are not considered as made until the actual date of receipt rather than the postmark date. This includes payments submitted with tax returns. Accordingly, you should take this into consideration when mailing a payment to the IRS in order to avoid late payment penalties and interest charges.

PAYMENTS FOR 2007

Most international taxpayers who owe taxes on their 2007 return pay by check, money order or credit card. You may not pay with cash. Checks or money orders must be issued in U.S. dollars and made payable to "United States Treasury." Be sure to include the following information on your check or money order:

- Your social security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN);
- A designation that the payment is being made for the 2007 tax year and the tax return being filed (e.g., Form 1040);
- Your name, if not already listed on the instrument; and
- Your daytime telephone number

Credit card payments may be made using any major credit card, including Visa, MasterCard, and American Express, through the following providers:

Official Payments Corporation
+1 (800) 272-9829 or +1 (877) 754-4413
www.officialpayments.com

Link2Gov Corporation
+1 (888) 729-1040 or +1 (888) 658-5465
www.pay1040.com

FIRE ESCAPE PLANNING: HOW TO MAKE A FIRE ACTION PLAN FOR YOUR HOME

When you make your Fire Action Plan:

- Take everyone into account. Make your fire plan with everyone in your household, especially children and elderly or disabled people.
- Your best escape route is your normal way in and out of your home. Decide on a different route as well, in case the normal one is blocked. Keep all escape routes clear.
- Tell everyone in your household where you keep your door and window keys.
- If your route is blocked, it may be safer to stay put and protect yourself until assistance arrives. Find a suitable room now. Choose one with a window that opens and, if possible, with a phone to call for help.

Protect Yourself and Reduce the Risk of Fire:

- Fit smoke alarms on each floor level in your home. Test the alarms each month and replace the batteries once a year.
- Keep doors closed at night. This helps delay the spread of fire and smoke.
- Switch off as many electrical appliances as possible at night and when you're away from home.
- Put out cigarettes and candles safely. Keep matches and lighters away from children.

To Save Your Life in a Fire:

- Don't open any doors that feel warm.
- When escaping, don't stop or go back for anything.
- Practice your fire action plan. Knowing what to do and acting quickly will save lives. Regularly take a few minutes to "walk" the escape route with everyone in your household and check that everyone can unlock and open doors and windows easily.
- Review your plan regularly, especially if you make changes in your home.

TEN WAYS TO HELP ENSURE THAT YOUR ABSENTEE VOTE IS COUNTED

- (1) Visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program's website at www.fvap.gov for information on the absentee registration and voting process.
- (2) If you still have questions contact the Embassy Voting Assistance Officer for help in absentee registration and voting. The Embassy's Voting Assistance officer is available at VoteMaputo@state.org.
- (3) Ensure that you have applied for your absentee ballot using the hard copy or on-line versions of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) form.
- (4) Make sure your local election official has your current mailing address.
- (5) Sign and date all election materials.
- (6) Fulfill your state's witness/notary requirements (if required).
- (7) Ensure that your ballot or FPCA is postmarked.
- (8) Register to vote and request your ballot in a timely manner - not later than September 2008.
- (9) VOTE - mail your ballot not later than October 15th of the election year.
- (10) Use the Federal Write In Absentee Ballot if you are overseas and your State absentee ballot does not arrive in time to be mailed back by your state's deadline.

OVERSEAS VOTE FOUNDATION

The Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) helps overseas and military voters participate in federal elections by providing public access to innovative voter registration tools and services. If you are an overseas or military voter, OVF's goal is to make it easy for you to get your ballot and vote. Overseas American citizens vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and can all register to vote from abroad using OVF's services.

OVF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan public charity incorporated in Delaware. Their website is www.overseasvotefoundation.org.

LEAVING MOZAMBIQUE?

If you are leaving Mozambique, and you formally registered your stay with the U.S. Embassy, please be sure to "cancel" your registration when you leave. You can deregister by visiting <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. If you are continuing your stay in Mozambique and have new contact information, or otherwise need to update your registration, please let us know by emailing us at ConsularMaputo@state.gov.

ADOPTING IN MOZAMBIQUE YAHOO GROUP

The Consular Section has created an "Americans Adopting in Mozambique" yahoo group for those who have adopted, are in the process of adopting, or are interested in adopting a child in Mozambique. We hope this group will enable us to share information and best practices. To join the group, please email Ivan at ConsularMaputo@state.gov for instructions.