

Embassy of the United States of America

Maputo · Mozambique



American Citizens e-Newsletter

March 2008

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

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

VOTING: ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF ELECTION MATERIALS

With primaries already in full swing, be sure you know all of your options when filling out and sending voting materials. Insufficient mail transit time is a common obstacle many citizens covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) encounter when voting by absentee ballot. The FVAP Electronic Transmission Service (ETS - by email and fax) has been very successful in improving delivery of voting materials. The service is an effective and efficient alternative to the by-mail delivery of election materials between local election officials and UOCAVA voters (where permitted by state law). With proper controls in place, the service can reduce ballot transit time by at least half, helping to ensure citizens are able to cast a ballot despite time and location constraints.

To date 51 states and territories allow for some type of electronic transmission of absentee voting materials for UOCAVA citizens. The provisions and guidelines for transmitting election materials electronically are identified in each state and territory section of the 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide (the Guide is available online at www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag.html).

ELECTION 2008: REGISTERING TO VOTE

There is still time to register to vote for some state primaries as well as the Presidential election. Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas and Vermont will hold primaries March 4; Puerto Rico's primary is scheduled for March 9; and Mississippi's for March 11. Pennsylvania's primary is scheduled for April, then Indiana, North Carolina, Nebraska, West Virginia, Arkansas, Kentucky, Oregon and Idaho in May.

Each state has its own deadline for requesting absentee ballots. Request your ballot today to make your vote count. Should your state's deadline have passed you should still submit your ballot request for an absentee ballot. Your request for an absentee ballot will allow you to vote in the November 2008 Presidential election.

Please consult state-specific instructions on the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website www.fvap.gov for more information on how to submit an absentee ballot.

CONSULAR TRAVEL: BEIRA, NAMPULA AND PEMBA

The Consul will be visiting Beira on March 17, Nampula on March 18, and Pemba on March 19 to provide American Citizen Services, including accepting passport, extra page and Consular Report of Birth Abroad applications, and to provide notarial services. If you require a service in any of these locations, please contact the Consular Section at consularmaputo@state.gov by March 12.

A Regional Security Officer from the U.S. Embassy will also be present to provide security information and to answer any questions.

WARDEN MESSAGES BY SMS

The Consular Section will begin using SMS technology (messages to your cell phone) to send certain warden messages and to provide quick updates on emergency situations. These updates will also be posted on the front page of the Embassy's website (maputo.usembassy.gov). If your cell phone number has changed since you registered with the Embassy, please let us know by emailing consularmaputo@state.gov. We would also appreciate confirmation of cell phone numbers by emailing the same address. We hope, in the event of an emergency, the use of this technology will allow faster and more convenient contact with American citizens in Mozambique.

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. Ivan Chunguana, our "adoption specialist in training" will moderate the group. To join the group, please email Ivan at consularmaputo@state.gov for instructions.

VOTING: CITIZENS WHO HAVE NEVER LIVED IN THE UNITED STATES

For U.S. citizens who have never lived in the U.S. please visit www.fvap.gov/vao/citnvrinus.html for state-specific information on voting.

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 the travelregistration.state.gov site. 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.

CONSULAR SECTION CLOSURE

The Consular Section will be closed Thursday, March 13 for internal meetings and training. In the event of an emergency involving an American citizen, please call 258 21 49 0723.

CONSULAR-RSO TOWN HALL MEETING

On Thursday, March 13, at 7:30 p.m. the Regional Security Officer and Consul will be holding a town hall meeting at the American International School of Maputo. This is an opportunity to ask questions about security and consular services and to submit passport applications. If you will submit a passport application, please email consularmaputo@state.gov by March 10.

STATE DEPARTMENT CHILDREN'S WEBSITE

Are you in grades K-6? If so, this website is for you! Join "Pat, Your Passport Pal" and play some fun activities.

<http://future.state.gov/fun/index.htm>

U.S. TAX INFORMATION

If you are eager to file your taxes, the IRS homepage, www.irs.gov, provides useful information for taxpayers and should be your first stop for tax questions and forms. In particular, the IRS Publication 54, *Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad*, is an invaluable resource for anyone living overseas or with income from a foreign source.

INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER

The U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section has an Information Resource Center open to the public. Located at the corner of Av. Mao Tse Tung and Av. Kim Il Sung in Maputo, the center's hours are: Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Friday 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Tel: 21 49 1916

PERSONAL SECURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

This check list, from the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Office, is a generic self-assessment tool to evaluate daily habits and practices to improve your security awareness.

◆ Daily Security Habits and Practices

- Do you vary your times and routes to and from work?
- Do you keep your doors locked and windows closed (residence and vehicle)?
- Do you check the interior and exterior prior to getting into your vehicle?
- Do you maintain a low personal profile by not doing anything that draws attention to yourself?
- Are you alert to what is going on around you?
- Are your family and colleagues aware of your daily plans and know how to reach you?

◆ Schedules that are the most predictable leave you the most vulnerable. Be unpredictable when possible in both your work and social schedules.

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- In traffic, always attempt to leave space in which to maneuver. Always leave an exit. Be prepared to take evasive action at any time.
- Avoid choke points in traffic. Be wary of diversions.
- If you are followed or harassed by another driver, try to find the nearest police station, hotel or other public facility to call the police. Never lead the person back to your home and get out of your vehicle.

◆ Whenever possible, do not have a set day for shopping, errands or other personal needs. Be unpredictable.

◆ Never give out your personal information such as family member and household staff names, addresses and telephone numbers in an open setting.

◆ Ensure all of your family members are briefed on security measures.

FROM THE EMBASSY'S HEALTH UNIT: CANCER — EARLY DETECTION

In many cases, the sooner cancer is diagnosed and treated, the better a person's chance for a full recovery. If you develop cancer you can improve the chance that it will be detected early if you have regular medical checkups and do certain self exams. Often a doctor can find early stage cancer during a physical exam or with routine tests, even if a person has no symptoms.

Exams for Both Men and Women

Skin - The doctor should examine your skin during regular checkups for signs of skin cancer. You should also check regularly for new growths, sores that do not heal, changes in the size, shape or color of moles, or any other changes on the skin. Warning signs such as these should be reported to a doctor immediately.

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Mouth - Your doctor and dentist should examine your mouth at regular visits. Also, by looking in a mirror, you can check inside your mouth for changes in the color of the lips, gums, tongue, or inner cheeks, and for scabs, cracks, sores, white patches, swelling, or bleeding. It is often possible to see or feel changes in the mouth that might be cancer or a condition that might lead to cancer. Any symptoms in your mouth should be checked by a doctor or dentist. Oral exams are especially important for people who use alcohol or tobacco products and for anyone over age 50.

Colon and Rectum - Beginning at age 50, you should have a yearly fecal occult blood test. This test is a check for hidden (occult) blood in the stool and is done because cancer of the colon and rectum can cause bleeding. However, noncancerous conditions can also cause bleeding, so the presence of blood does not necessarily mean a person has cancer. If blood is found, the doctor orders more tests to help make a diagnosis. Every 3 to 5 years after age 50, an individual should have a sigmoidoscopy. In this exam, the doctor uses a thin, flexible tube with a light to look inside the rectum and colon for abnormal areas.

Exams for Women

Breast - When breast cancer is found early, a woman has more treatment choices and a good chance of complete recovery. The National Cancer Institute encourages women to take an active part in early detection. Talk to your doctor about this disease, the symptoms to watch for and an appropriate schedule of checkups. Women should ask their doctor about: Mammograms (x-rays of the breast); Breast exams by a doctor or nurse; and breast self-examination (BSE). A mammogram can often show tumors or changes in the breast before they can be felt or cause symptoms. However, we know mammograms cannot find every abnormal area in the breast. This is especially true in the breasts of young women. Another important step in early detection is for women to have regular exams by a doctor or nurse. Between visits to the doctor, women should do self exams every month. By doing BSE, women learn what looks and feels normal for their breasts, and they are more likely to find a change. Any changes should be reported immediately to your doctor. Most breast lumps are not cancer, but only a doctor can make a diagnosis.

Cervix - Regular pelvic exams and Pap tests are important to detect early cancer of the cervix. In a pelvic exam, the doctor feels the uterus, vagina, ovaries, fallopian tubes, bladder and rectum for any change in size or shape. For the Pap test, a sample of cells is collected from the upper vagina and cervix with a small brush or a flat wooden stick. The sample is placed in a glass slide and checked under a microscope for cancer or other abnormal cells. Women should start having a Pap test every year after they turn 18 or become sexually active. If the results are normal for 3 or more years in a row, a woman may have this test less often, based on her doctor's advice.

Exams For Men

Prostate - Men over age 40 should have a yearly digital rectal exam to check the prostate gland for hard or lumpy areas. The doctor feels the prostate through the wall of the rectum.

Testicles - Testicular cancer occurs most often between ages 15 and 34. Most of these cancers are found by men themselves, often by doing a testicular self-exam. If you find a lump or notice another change, such as heaviness, swelling, unusual tenderness or pain, you should see your doctor immediately.