



EMBASSY UPDATES

NEWSLETTER FOR U.S. CITIZENS IN EL SALVADOR

Fall 2019



U.S Embassy in El Salvador
American Citizens Services Unit

Monday - Thursday, 7:00am–11:30 am

Friday, 7:30 am– 12:00 pm

Email: ACSSanSal@state.gov

The Social Security Administration visited San Salvador

On July 29th, we received a visit from a Social Security Administration representative who provided assistance to beneficiaries living in El Salvador.

We organized a town hall meeting with more than 85 U.S. citizens and social security beneficiaries. During this event, we discussed the routine and emergency services provided by the U.S. Embassy San Salvador, as well as the services provided by the Social Security Administration in Costa Rica. The town hall meeting was transmitted via Facebook. To watch the meeting, just click on the following link:

[https://www.facebook.com/embajadaamericanaelsalvador/videos/2029025760536201?
sfns=mo](https://www.facebook.com/embajadaamericanaelsalvador/videos/2029025760536201?sfns=mo)

In addition, the representative of the Social Security Administration provided one-on-one services for specific inquiries to almost 240 beneficiaries that visited the U.S. Embassy the following three days.

You may contact the Social Security Administration at:

FBU.CostaRica@ssa.gov

Every time you send an email you should include the following information:

- Full name
- Two phone numbers, including country code
- Short description of your inquiry
- Social Security Number

You can expect an answer within 15 business days.

Remember that it is **NOT** necessary for you to travel to Costa Rica, every process can be done online.



Welcome to our new Ambassador Ronald Douglas Johnson



Ambassador Johnson has served the United States Government for over three decades. He began his career as an officer in the United States Army, retiring in 1998 as a Colonel, and then as a member of the intelligence community. Mr. Johnson was the Central Intelligence Agency's Science and Technology Liaison to the United States Special Operations Command in Tampa, Florida. Previously, he was special advisor to the United States Southern Command, managing collaboration between the Command and agencies and departments, such as the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Intelligence Community, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and United States Agency for International Development. He has worked on a wide range of regional issues, including refugees, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, human rights, and tropical virus disease control. Mr. Johnson earned a B.S. from the University of the State of New York and M.S. from the National Intelligence University.



See you soon Ambassador Manes!



Ambassador Jean Manes challenged all citizens to transform El Salvador into a better place.

In fact one of her favorite phrases hung in her office:

“Do The Right Thing”

And this was her message during one of her last speeches in El Salvador:

“Many of you have visited my office in the Embassy and you know there is a phrase written on the white board. It says, **“Do the Right Thing.”**”

That phrase can mean so many things:

It can mean: pick the right priorities. Focus on the right thing. Focus on the thing that is a game-changer.

It can mean: make the right investment.

It can mean: make the morally right decision.

The right thing is rarely the easy thing. It’s the one that takes most time and involves most commitment. In some cases it means taking a leadership role on a major issue and investing more time to achieve a good outcome. Other times, it means putting your own personal needs aside and making the right decision for another person, a group, a country — your country.

So many decisions at the end of the day can come back to that one phrase, **“Do the Right Thing.”**”

Her adventurous heart taught us to not be afraid of challenges.

We wish the best of luck to Amb. Manes in her next adventure.

Follow the link to read the full speech:

<https://sv.usembassy.gov/ambassador-manes-decoration/>



UPCOMING CLOSURES

The U.S. Embassy in San Salvador
will be closed:

OCT. 14

COLUMBUS DAY

NOV. 11

VETERAN'S DAY

NOV. 28

THANKSGIVING DAY

DEC. 25

CHRISTMAS DAY



U.S. Embassy San Salvador
Final Boulevard Santa Elena, Antigua Cuscatlán, La Libertad
Telephone: (503) 2501-2999, Fax: (503) 2501-2150

Image Courtesy of flickr

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRAVEL TIPS

Register in STEP!

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program is an easy way to ensure your safety in an emergency. If you reside in a country outside the United States, or leave the country frequently, **STEP is for you!**

This program allows the U.S. Embassy to contact you in an emergency or natural disaster, so that we can assist you if necessary. It also makes it easier for you to contact your friends and family in

a crisis. It's easy to use: just create an account, then add and remove the countries you visit according to your plans.

In addition, you'll receive travel notifications about the countries you visit to help keep you safe and prepared. But **don't worry—we don't spam.**

Be smart and step on up to the STEP program by registering at:

<https://step.state.gov/>



Check the expiration date on your passport



Going somewhere? Check your passport's expiration date first. If it's expired, or will expire within six months, it's time to renew.

By renewing your passport before you travel, you save yourself the frustration of not being allowed to enter a country once you're already at the airport. A valid passport means less stress and an easier voyage!

There is **no cost** to fill out the forms and reserve a passport appointment. All fees will be paid at the time of your appointment at the Embassy.

All the requirements on how to apply and forms are available for free at <https://sv.usembassy.gov/es/u-s-citizen-services-es/solicitud-de-pasaporte/>



PROTECT YOUR PASSPORT

Traveling abroad can be stressful, so do not add more stress by losing your passport. Save your money, your time, and your trip by following three simple tips to keep your passport safe.

1. Keep your passport in a safe place.

When traveling avoid putting your passport in an exposed pocket of your backpack or in the back pocket of your jeans.

Keep your passport in a closed pouch or locked safe, out of sight and hard to steal.

2. Carry an ID instead of your passport.

Remember that here in El Salvador, it is not necessary for you to carry your passport with you all the time! *Any* official ID is enough to prove your identity. We recommend you carry an official ID (e.g. State ID, drivers license,

passport card) and present it instead of your passport. This helps you keep your passport safe and decreases the opportunity to lose it or have it stolen.

3. Dress up your passport.

To avoid people getting interested in the nationality of your passport, use a passport cover. This will help protect your passport from damage and maintain privacy.

PROTECT YOUR PASSPORT



*Do not leave your passport in your luggage!
Keep it in a pouch or safe, out of sight and
hard to steal.*

If your passport is lost or stolen and you want to apply for a new one, please contact the American Citizens Services Unit at:

ACSSanSal@state.gov

TO REMEMBER



Image Courtesy of google

Appointment is required

One appointment is required per person. If several people need to apply for ACS services, they must schedule one for each individual. To make an appointment, please [click here](#).

All services provided by the ACS Unit (including passports, consular reports of birth abroad (CRBA), follow-up appointments, and notarial services) are available by **APPOINTMENT ONLY**.

If you are a U.S. citizen living in El Salvador and are in need of medical assistance, legal assistance, or translation services, you may find someone who can provide the service in the following links:

- [Translators](#)
- [Legal Assistance](#)
- [Medical Assistance](#)

NOTE: This section contains information about local resources available for U.S. citizens visiting or living in El Salvador. Although the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador cannot recommend a specific service or provider, we provide this information for the convenience of U.S. citizens.

LOOKING FOR

RESOURCES?

Image Courtesy of google

TO REMEMBER



Image Courtesy of google

I reported my passport as lost but I found it again, can I use it to travel?

NO! Once you have reported your passport as lost or stolen, it is no longer valid. **Do not travel with it.**

If you find your passport and use it to travel you will encounter problems with immigration authorities, and you might lose your trip.

If you lose your passport, you must apply for a new one.

No photographs at the Embassy

If you are planning to renew your passport here at the Embassy, remember to bring your passport photo with you to the appointment.

We do not take passport photos at the Embassy.

The photo must be 5 x 5 cm, in color, with a white background. You must remove your glasses before taking the picture.

Please make sure to bring the photo and your passport application with you on the day of your appointment. For more information visit our website:

<https://sv.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/passports/>

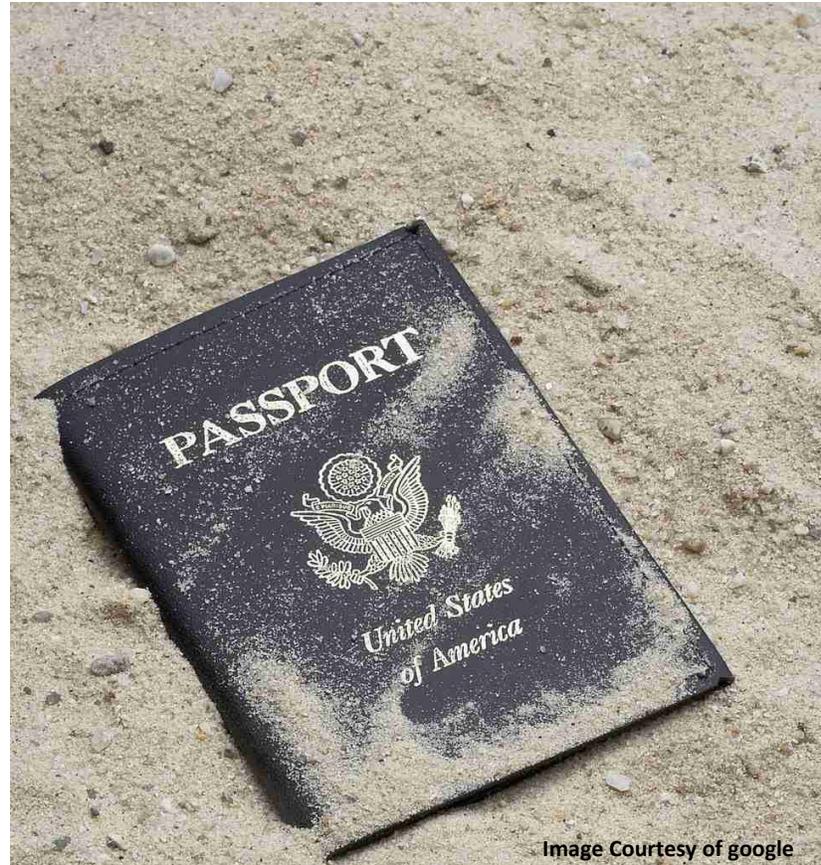


Image Courtesy of google

What is a Citizen Liaison Volunteer (“warden”)?

- A private U.S. citizen resident in a foreign country who volunteers to assist consular sections in disaster preparedness, welfare & whereabouts, and alerting fellow Americans to emergency situations.
- Citizen Liaison Volunteers often have close ties to the U.S. expat community; therefore they are often the fastest and most effective route to distributing information to Americans and are essential when normal communication channels fail.
- They facilitate distribution of routine administrative information (changes in section work hours, procedures, embassy closures, and voting information) of interest to the U.S. private community.

We asked our CLV’s what they like the most about being a volunteer:

“I like to be part of a network, ready and willing to help others.”

“I like to be able to help the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. citizens living in El Salvador.”

“I like to be able to connect with other U.S. citizens”

Volunteers wanted!

Are you connected to the U.S. citizen community in El Salvador?

We are always looking for well-connected members of the U.S. citizen community in the departments of Ahuachapan, Morazán, Chalatenango, and La Paz.

Consider volunteering to serve both the United States and El Salvador as a Community Liaison Volunteer.

Volunteers, formerly known as *wardens*, are essential in helping us connect with the U.S. citizen community and in facilitating communication in the event of natural disasters.

For more information email: ACSSanSal@state.gov



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Are you prepared for the rain?

The rain has arrived in El Salvador and with it the chance of flooding. One way to prepare for rainy season is to make sure your emergency kit is stocked and ready to go. Now is a good time to look at your kit and refresh your supplies. Have any food items or batteries expired? Do clothing items still fit? Do you have up-to-date documents packed in plastic bags? A detailed list of suggested emergency kit items appears in our Emergency Planning Guides for [tsunamis](#), [floods](#), and [earthquakes](#). Have you started preparing your emergency kit?



Image Courtesy of FlatIcon

Send us your photos at ACSSANSAL@state.gov

Emergency numbers

Números de Emergencia

 Dirección General de Protección Civil 2201-2424	 FOSALUD 132	 El Agua es desarrollo 2244-2632
 Policía Nacional Civil 911	 Cruz Verde Salvadoreña 2284-5792	 AES El Salvador 2228-5200
 Cuerpo de Bomberos de El Salvador 913	 Comandos de Salvamento 2133-0000	<small>MINISTERIO DE GOBERNACIÓN Y DESARROLLO TERRITORIAL</small> <small>GOBIERNO DE</small> EL SALVADOR <small>UNÁMONOS PARA CRECER</small>
	 Cruz Roja Salvadoreña 2239-4930	

Image Courtesy of google

