

# New Delhi Korma

Winter 2022 | Issue III | U.S. Embassy New Delhi

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## Embassy Holidays

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi will be closed the following days:

- January 17 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 26 – Republic Day
- February 21 – Washington's Birthday
- March 18 – Holi/Doljatra



## Update on Services for American Citizens

The United States Embassy and Consulates in India continue to provide in-person services to U.S. citizens at this time. Adult U.S. citizens using form DS-82 to renew a previous passport **must** send those applications by mail to the Embassy or Consulate responsible for the state where the applicant resides.

Limited appointment slots for passport renewals, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, and notarial services are available online. Additional appointment times will be made available on a regular basis. Please note that appointment availability is reduced to ensure the safety of our customer through proper social distancing. If you have an immediate need to travel, or another urgent circumstance, please email us at [ACSND@state.gov](mailto:ACSND@state.gov).

## Visa News: Expansion of Interview Waiver Program

Effective immediately, the Department of State has authorized consular officers to waive the in-person interview requirement for certain categories of visa applicants through 31 December 2022. This new authorization applies to travelers applying for F, H-1, H-3, H-4, non-blanket L, M, O, P, Q, and academic J visas who were previously issued any type of visa, if they are applying for a visa in their country of nationality or residence. This authorization does not apply to applicants who have a previous refusal that was not subsequently waived or overcome. Adjudicating consular officers also reserve the right to require an in-person interview if additional information is required from applicants.

Applicants renewing any visa within 48 months of expiration also continue to be eligible for interview waiver. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates in India released more than 20,000 additional interview waiver (dropbox) appointments for Spring 2022 to allow qualified applicants to make use of the new interview waiver authority. Due to reduced staffing and numerous pandemic-related disruptions to our operations since March 2020, appointment demand is high across all visa categories and wait times may be lengthy for most routine nonimmigrant visa appointments at the U.S. Embassy New Delhi and the consulates in Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Mumbai.

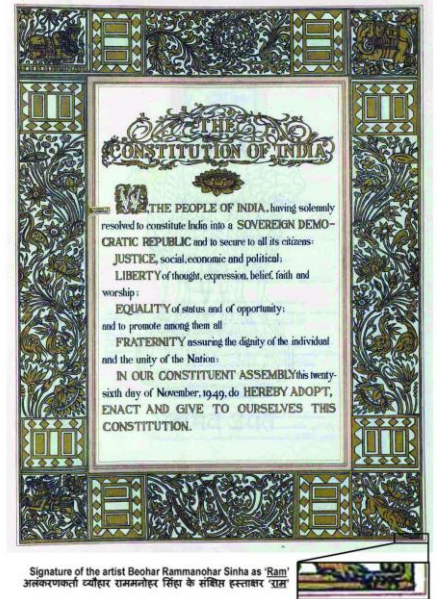
For more information, please refer to our website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/News/visas-news/important-announcement-on-waivers-of-the-interview-requirement-for-certain-nonimmigrant-visas.html>





## What is Republic Day?

Republic Day celebrates the Constitution of India coming into effect on January 26, 1950. This marks the day that India became a republic, transitioning from an autonomous realm within the Commonwealth of Great Britain to a fully sovereign nation. In India, Independence Day and Republic Day differ. India became independent from the British Raj on 15 August 1947 following the successful Indian Independence Movement and this is celebrated by Independence Day, whereas Republic Day celebrates the full adoption of the Indian constitution. Though Republic Day celebrations take place across the country, the most famous Republic Day celebration takes place in New Delhi in the form of the Delhi Republic Day Parade.



## U.S. Government Introduces the Next Generation Passport

### What is the Next Generation Passport?

The new passport is a modernized U.S. passport book which we started issuing in 2021. While our previous electronic passports (ePassports) are secure, the Next Generation Passport book (NGP) uses new technologies to produce a more robust passport with enhanced security features, such as a polycarbonate data page, laser-engraved personalization, and updated artwork.

We are only issuing the NGP for passport books. We will soon upgrade and modernize our other document, the passport card.

### What is the difference between the Next Generation Passport and the ePassport book?

The most noticeable changes to the new passport book are the polycarbonate data page and the location of the endorsement updated with detailed linework and ink colors that showcase imagery of U.S. architecture, history, culture, landscapes, and traditions.

### Do changes to the U.S. passport require current travelers to change or upgrade their book or card?

No. Passport books and cards remain valid for international travel until their date of expiration. You may continue to travel with your current ePassport book or card without a problem.

### How can I request a Next Generation Passport?

You cannot request a specific version of the passport book, and we cannot guarantee that you will receive a Next Generation Passport. We are gradually replacing existing ePassport printers with NGP printers at our passport agencies and centers. Since ePassports continue to meet and exceed international security standards, both ePassports and the NGP can be used for international travel.

The advertisement features a blue header with the text 'Meet the Next Generation Passport' and the tagline 'Smarter. Safer. Better.' Below this, three columns list key features: 'Improved security features to help protect your identity.' (with a shield icon), 'Enhanced security features make counterfeiting or altering more difficult.' (with a globe icon), and 'More secure document streamlines the entry and exit process.' (with a passport icon). The central part of the ad shows a sample of the Next Generation Passport, which includes a laser-engraved black and white photo image, an optically variable feature, and a new perforated alphanumeric passport book number throughout. The data page is multi-layered plastic, which strengthens document durability and integrity. The sample passport is for a traveler named 'HAPPY' with a birth date of 05 FEB 1966 and an expiration date of 14 OCT 2030.







## Ask the Consul

In each newsletter, we will attempt to answer a question commonly asked by citizens living in our district. If you have one you would like to submit, please send it to [acsnd@state.gov](mailto:acsnd@state.gov) with the subject line “ask the consul.”

### CAN I RENEW MY PASSPORT BOOK IF IT IS STILL VALID?

Yes. Your passport does not have to be expired for you to renew it. If you want to renew both a valid passport book and passport card, you must submit both documents. For example, if you can submit a passport book, but you lost your passport card, you cannot renew the passport card. If you want to renew either a valid book or a card, you must submit the specific document you want to renew.

We recommend renewing your passport well ahead of any planned international travel, even if it still has a few months validity left on it. Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six months beyond the dates of your trip. Learn more about your [destination's entry requirements](#).

**Please note:** Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six months beyond the dates of your trip. Some airlines will not allow you to board if this requirement is not met.

Check our [Country Information](#) to learn about entry and exit requirements for the country or countries in which you are traveling.

### WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD IS TOO YOUNG TO SIGN HIS OR HER PASSPORT BOOK?

A parent or legal guardian may sign the passport if the child is too young to sign his or her own name. To do so, a parent or legal guardian must print the child's name and sign his or her own name in the space provided for the signature. The parent or legal guardian must also write his or her relationship to the child in parenthesis next to the signature (e.g., parent or legal guardian) so we know who signed for the child.

### CAN I RENEW MY PASSPORT IF IT'S ALREADY EXPIRED?

Yes, but the passport must have been issued within the last 15 years.

In addition, you must have the passport in your possession, it cannot be damaged, you must have been age 16 or older when the passport was issued, and it must have been issued in your current name or you must show legal proof of your name change.

## Overstays and the FRRO

For those U.S. citizens in India on tourist visas, please be sure to check your legal status with FRRO through the e-FRRO portal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian government extended the e-Visa period of stay allowance without overstay penalties until **September 30, 2021**.

As such, American citizens in India were not required to submit any application to the FRRO concerning the extension of their visas before that date. Before exiting the country, you should apply for an exit permission, which should be granted without an overstay penalty.

If you require an extension beyond September 30, you may apply for a visa extension on the online e-FRRO platform. Overstaying a visa or being out of status as a foreign national in India can incur hefty exit fees and possibly jail time. Be sure to register through the e-FRRO portal and contact the Foreigner Regional Registration Office with any questions regarding your legal status in India.



## Physical Presence vs Residence: What's the Difference?

All applications for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA) must contain documented evidence of the U.S. citizen parent's physical time spent in the United States. For purposes of transmitting U.S. citizenship to your child, this can mean either physical presence or residence.

Physical presence is counted as the time that the U.S. citizen parent was actually in the United States. If the parent had residence in the United States, but spent most of their time traveling or living abroad, only the time physically spent in the United States counts as physical presence. Dates of physical presence submitted with a CRBA application should be verifiable and precise. Proof of physical presence is best shown through passport stamps, school records, or bank statements which show consistent purchases.

U.S. immigration law defines residence as the person's "place of general abode [meaning] his principal, actual dwelling place in fact, without regard to intent." Under this definition, residence is much more than an address. For example, a Post Office box is not a place of general abode or a dwelling place. By contrast, a residence is one's principal, actual dwelling place. A person has a different relationship to a residence than to any other place. For example, someone who rents a vacation home in California for a month in the summer has not established a "principal, actual dwelling place," as that term applies to immigration law. Proof of residence can include, but are not limited to, property leases, deeds, utility bills, U.S. tax records, and professional licenses.

Depending on the circumstances of the child's birth, you will be required to prove either a certain period of physical presence or residence to transmit U.S. citizenship to your child. For additional information regarding transmission requirements, you can visit [Travel.State.Gov](https://travel.state.gov).



**The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By enrolling in STEP, you will:**

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country.
- Help us contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency.
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

Visit the [STEP website](https://step.state.gov) to register or for more information.



**Voting overseas is now easier than ever. U.S. citizens can receive an absentee ballot by email, fax, or internet download, depending on the state they are eligible to vote in. Absentee voting is a two-step process:**

1. Each year, submit a completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to your local election officials.
2. Complete and return the ballot so it arrives before your state's ballot return deadline. OR
  - If you have not received your blank ballot 30 days before an election, use the [Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot](#) to vote.

**IMPORTANT: U.S. citizens abroad must submit a new FPCA each year to vote in U.S. elections.**

**2022 Midterm Elections are approaching!**





## Presidents' Day: Origins, Traditions, and Meaning

**Presidents' Day**, officially **Washington's Birthday**, is a holiday in the United States celebrated on the third Monday of February to honor all persons who served in the office of president of the United States. The federal holiday specifically honors George Washington, who led the Continental Army to victory

in the Revolutionary War, presided at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and was the first president of the United States.

The day is a holiday in most states and the various states use 15 different names.

Depending upon the specific law, the state holiday may officially celebrate Washington alone, Washington and Lincoln, or some other combination of U.S. presidents (such as Washington and Thomas Jefferson who was born in April).

Washington's birthday was celebrated on February 22 from 1879 until 1971, when the Uniform Monday Holiday Act moved it to the third Monday in February, which can occur from February 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>. The day eventually also became known as Presidents' Day and is an occasion to remember all U.S. presidents, or to honor Abraham Lincoln's and George Washington's birthdays together.

Since 1862 there has been a tradition in the United States Senate that [George Washington's Farewell Address](#) be read on his birthday. At that time, citizens asked that this be done in light of the ongoing Civil War.

## Martin Luther King Jr.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was an American civil rights activist, leading marches across the United States for the right to vote for African Americans, desegregation, labor rights, and other basic civil rights. Dr. King believed in non-violence and was particularly inspired by the activism of Mahatma Gandhi.

Most famously, Dr. King organized two of the three Selma to Montgomery (Alabama) marches which were critical in advancing civil rights. In October of 1964, Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize. Tragically, Dr. King was assassinated in April of 1968. Posthumously he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2003.

Dr. King remains one of the most important figures in American history, and his legacy remains today.





### ***U.S. Government Links***

- [U.S. Embassy New Delhi](#)
- [American Citizen Services New Delhi](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Travel information](#)
- [Ordering vital records](#)
- [Voting information](#)

### ***Indian Government Links***

- [Foreigner Regional Registration Office \(FRRO\)](#)
- [Bureau of Immigration](#)

