

Welcome to the latest issue of our quarterly newsletter the **Hyderabad Herald**, a publication intended solely for the American citizens residing in or visiting our consular district which includes the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha. We hope you find this informative and encourage you to send us your feedback. We also encourage you to submit items of general interest to our community.

While we can't accept advertising, we welcome other pieces of interest including events, meetings, or other activities. We also welcome your questions or suggestions on consular themes you would like us to address. To submit any contributions or to add or remove your name from our mailing list, just drop us an e-mail at: HydACS@state.gov and include "Herald" in the subject line.



In This Issue

Ask the Consul **P.2**

Next Generation Passport **P.3**

India Joins Pay.gov



The Department of State is pleased to announce that effective April 24th, 2022, adult U.S. citizens (age 18 and older) living in India can pay their Passport Renewal Application Fee using the online Pay.gov system. **Please note that at this time, this option is only available to citizens using form DS-82 to renew their passport.**

Pay.gov accepts the following payment methods:

- Electronic Funds Transfer from a U.S.-based bank account
- Amazon Pay
- PayPal account
- Debit or credit card (enabled for international use)

Adults can continue to submit a bank draft for the passport fees with their mail-in passport renewal application if they would prefer.

Please visit [the Mission India website](https://www.missionindia.gov) to determine eligibility to use this option.

Midterm Elections

It's not too early to start planning for this year's mid-term elections on November 8th. If you have never voted from outside of the United States before, you can do it in three easy steps:

1. **Register or re-register to vote and request a ballot** - Go to [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov) to complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which allows you to register to vote and request your absentee ballot at the same time.
 - You will need access to a printer as you must print, sign and date the FPCA.
 - The quickest way to receive your ballot is to choose an electronic option. Depending on the state, this may be by email, fax, or online download.
 - Include your email address so that election officials can contact you quickly if needed.
 - If your state delivers ballots electronically by fax only, make sure you include your fax number.

[The FVAP website](https://www.fvap.gov) has information to help you determine your state of voting residence, including information for U.S. citizens that have never lived in the United States.

Continued on Page 4



Memorial Day: Origins, Traditions, and Meaning

Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.

Memorial Day 2022 will occur on Monday, May 30.

Early Observances of Memorial Day

The Civil War, which ended in the spring of 1865, claimed more lives than any conflict in U.S. history and required the establishment of the country's first national cemeteries.

Memorial Day, as Decoration Day gradually came to be known, originally honored only those lost while fighting in the Civil War. But during World War I the United States found itself embroiled in another major conflict, and the holiday evolved to commemorate American military personnel who died in all wars, including World War II, The Vietnam War, The Korean War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For decades, Memorial Day continued to be observed on May 30, the date General Logan had selected for the first Decoration Day. But in 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which established Memorial Day as the last Monday in May in order to create a three-day weekend for federal employees. The change went into effect in 1971. The same law also declared Memorial Day a federal holiday.

By the late 1860s, Americans in various towns and cities began holding springtime tributes to these countless fallen soldiers, decorating their graves with flowers and reciting prayers.

It is unclear where exactly this tradition originated; numerous different communities may have independently initiated the memorial gatherings. And some records show that one of the earliest Memorial Day commemorations was organized by a group of formerly enslaved people in Charleston, South Carolina less than a month after the Confederacy surrendered in 1865. Nevertheless, in 1966 the federal government declared Waterloo, New York, the official birthplace of Memorial Day.

Memorial Day Traditions

Cities and towns across the United States host Memorial Day parades each year, often incorporating military personnel and members of veterans' organizations. Some of the largest parades take place in Chicago, New York and Washington, D.C.

Americans also observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries and memorials. Some people wear a red poppy in remembrance of those fallen in war—a tradition that began with the World War I poem "In Flanders Fields." On a less somber note, many people take weekend trips or throw parties and barbecues on the holiday, perhaps because Memorial Day weekend—the long weekend comprising the Saturday and Sunday before Memorial Day and Memorial Day itself—unofficially marks the beginning of summer.



Ask the Consul

In each newsletter, we will attempt to answer a question commonly asked by citizens living in our district. If you have a one you would like to submit, please send it to HydACS@state.gov with the subject line "ask the consul."

Q1: I am a U.S. citizen but have never lived in the United States. Can I still vote in elections?

A1: Voting rights vary by state for U.S. citizens born overseas who have never established residence in the United States. In [some states](#), U.S. citizens 18 years or older who were born abroad but have never resided in the U.S. are eligible to vote absentee.

If neither of your parents is from one of [these states](#), it is possible that you do not currently have voting rights. However, additional states are working to pass legislation to allow citizens born overseas who have never established residency in the U.S. to vote in the state in which their parents are eligible.

Q2: I haven't lived in the U.S. for some time. What address should I use for my voting residence and why is it important?

A2: You need a voting residence to vote by absentee ballot — even if you are only voting for federal offices. Your election office needs your exact voting residence address to determine which offices and candidates you are eligible to vote for — and to send you the appropriate ballot for your voting precinct.

Your voting residence is your address in the state in which you were last domiciled, immediately prior to leaving the United States.

In Case you Missed it: 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 page (now page 3). Visa pages have also been 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. Since ePassports continue to meet and exceed international passport security standards, both ePassports and the NGP can be used for international travel. ePassport books and cards remain valid for international travel until their date of expiration.

Can I request a Next Generation Passport?

No, but India is included in the next tranche of countries who will go live with the NGP. We hope to start seeing NGPs in the next few months.

Useful Websites



US Government

- Embassy website: <http://www.in.usembassy.gov>
- U.S. Citizen Services: <https://in.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/>
- U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov>
- Travel information: <http://www.travel.state.gov/>
- Ordering vital records: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2we/icom.htm>
- Voting information: www.fvap.gov

Indian Government

- Foreigner Regional Registration Office (FRRO): <https://indianfrro.gov.in/eservices/home.jsp>
- Bureau of Immigration: <https://boi.gov.in/>
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: <https://main.mohfw.gov.in>

Meet the Next Generation Passport Smarter. Safer. Better.



Improved security features to help protect your identity.



Enhanced security features make counterfeiting or altering more difficult.



More secure document streamlines the entry and exit process.



Laser engraved black and white photo image

Optically variable feature



New perforated alphanumeric passport book number throughout

Multi-layered plastic data page strengthens document durability and integrity



Upcoming Holidays

Please note that the Consulate will be closed on the following days:

2022

- 03 May: Eid-ul-Fitr (India)
- 30 May: Memorial Day (US)
- 20 June: Juneteenth (US)
- 04 July: Independence Day (US)
- 15 August: Independence Day (India)
- 31 August: Vinayaka Chavithi (India)
- 05 September: Labor Day (US)
- 03 October: Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday (India)
- 05 October: Vijaya Dashami (India)

Mid-term Elections Cont.



The FPCA will allow you to request absentee ballots for all federal elections in the calendar year, including any special elections. Given that states are no longer required to send ballots for an entire election cycle, we

recommend you complete a new FPCA every January.

2. **Receive and complete your ballot** - All U.S. citizens can now choose to receive a ballot electronically. Depending on which state you are eligible to vote in, you might get your ballot electronically by email, fax, or online download.

With electronic delivery selected, ballots are typically sent 45 days ahead of federal and midterm elections, and 30 days before primary, special and run-off elections for federal offices. Most states allow you to [confirm ballot delivery online](#).

If you haven't received your ballot by early October, you can [request a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot \(FWAB\)](#). You can use the FWAB to vote if you don't think you will receive ballot in time. If your ballot does subsequently arrive, you can submit it too. Only one vote will be counted.

3. **Return your ballot** - If you have received your ballot, follow the instructions to submit it as soon as you can. If your state allows you to cast your ballot electronically, we recommend that you do so. If you cannot cast your ballot electronically, you have three options to return your completed, signed, and dated ballot:
 - Mail your ballot directly to the local election officials in your state using the Indian postal system.
 - Mail your ballot directly to the local election officials in your state using a private courier service. This is secure and faster option, but more expensive.
 - Mail your ballot to the Consulate or use our "Ballot Drop Box" located at the main gate. Your ballot will be sent to the U.S. via the diplomatic pouch, sorted, and then sent to the USPS for delivery. This is a free service, but it is important to note the process takes approximately four weeks. Be sure to place your ballot in either a [postage paid envelope](#) or an envelope addressed to your state's election officials with U.S. stamps sufficient for delivery.

Ask the Consul – Cont.

A2 - Cont:

This residence may remain valid even if:

- You no longer own property or have other ties to that state.
- Your intent to return to that state is uncertain.
- Your previous address is no longer a recognized residential address.

Voting in an election for federal offices often may not be used as the sole basis of

determining residency for the purpose of imposing state and local taxes.

If you cannot remember the address where you last physically resided, check old tax records, passports, or family correspondence. Sometimes election offices can help identify your address if you were previously registered.

To claim a new legal residence or domicile, consult legal counsel as there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.