



U. S. CITIZEN UPDATE



EMBASSY INFORMATION

Bonnie Williams

PANAMANIAN LAWS AFFECTING FOREIGN CITIZENS

Hank Landis

EMBASSY CONTACT INFORMATION

Panama City

- <http://pa.usembassy.gov>
- 507-317-5000 (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri from 10:30-11:30)
- panama-acs@state.gov

MISSION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES (ACS)



To ensure the safety and security of
U.S. Citizens in Panama



ACS SERVICES



- International Child Abduction
- Arrest of U.S. Citizens
- Death of U.S. Citizens
- Victims of crime
- Emergency Financial Assistance (**Loans**)
- Passport Services
- Citizenship Services
- Child and Family Matters

DUTIES of the CLV



- Keep the expat community informed
- In extraordinary circumstances, help the embassy deliver emergency services to U.S. citizens
- Be an active part of the U. S. expat community:
 - maintain regular communication with the embassy staff and other CLVs
 - work together to identify needs and vulnerabilities of U.S. citizen communities of Panama

CLVs MUST

Safeguard the privacy of personal information that is provided in the course of duty



Refer to the embassy:

- all media or legal inquiries
- all requests to explain policies, procedures, or services beyond what is publicly available

The CLV is **NOT**...

**A representative of
the U.S. government
or embassy**



**A government
employee,
spokesperson, or
consular officer or
consular agent**



**Compensated for
performing this role**

U. S. PASSPORT RENEWAL

<https://pa.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/passports/renewal-adults-mail/>

- **Simple Renewal:**

- At the U.S. Embassy in Panama City (must make an appointment online)
- By DHL courier



- **Documents Required:**

- Most recent U. S. passport
- Completed Form DS-82 (available online & completed online)
- One U.S. passport sized photo (2x2 inch)
- Evidence if any name change
- Non-refundable application fee of \$110 via local certified check (cheque certificado) made payable to the **U.S. Embassy Panama**

PROOF OF LIFE (SSA FORM 7162)

When to file:

- Terminal digits of S.S. # 00-49: even-numbered years
- Terminal digits of S.S. # are 50-99: odd-numbered years

• SSA Form 7162:

- Mailed between April & October each year (usually May or June)
- Mailed only to a physical address (i.e., Boquete post office)
- SSA Beneficiaries living outside of the U.S. must have a foreign mailing address on record (not a Miami address. This could cause suspension of benefits until address is updated.)
- Must return only the bar-coded SSA Form 7162 that is sent to you
- A reminder is sent in October; **benefits are suspended in February for non-filers**

PROOF OF LIFE

“Foreign Enforcement Questionnaire”(FEQ)

If your benefits are suspended:

- If you receive payments:
 - in your **own name**: [Complete the SSA-7162 form \(Pdf-157Kb\)](#)
 - through a **representative payee**: [Complete the SSA-7161 form \(Pdf-484Kb\)](#)
- Make sure to:
 - Include your social security number
 - Sign and date the form



WHERE TO SEND



- **EMAIL** a scanned copy of the completed form to sjregion@ssa.gov.
 - The ***subject of the email*** should be: FEQ-country where you live-last name of the person under which you receive benefits.
(example: **FEQ-Panama-Jones**)
- **OR FAX** it to 506-2291-1032

- **THEN MAIL** the completed and signed form to:

Social Security Administration

Wilkes Barre Data Operations Center

Attn: FEQ Analyst, FEQ Forms 7161-7162

1150 E. Mountain Dr.

Room 341

Wilkes Barre, PA 18702-7997



THE GOOD NEWS

Benefits will be reinstated within 5 to 10 days from receiving your email or fax.





FEDERAL BENEFITS UNIT



All FBU questions (social security, disability, Medicare, etc.) must now be addressed to the regional office in Costa Rica U.S. Embassy

U.S. Embassy San Jose

Calle 98 Via 104, Pavas
San Jose, Costa Rica

Phone: 506-2519-2000

Fax: 506-2519-2305

FBU



- The best way to contact the SSA Regional Office in Costa Rica is to use their online form or send an email to: FBU.CostaRica@ssa.gov



- For more information, go to:
<https://cr.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/social-security/>

NEW IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS



On March 6, 2017 an edict was issued that those with tourist visas must prove that they are tourists and not permanent residents, effectively putting an end to “border hopping”.

- TOURIST VISA HOLDERS must leave the country every six months for 30 days
- This does not apply to those who have begun the residency process and have a temporary residency visa
- While the tourist visa is good for six months, the U.S. driver's license is good for only 90 days (3 months)

WHO IS AFFECTED?

- ✓ Those wanting to stay longer as a trial period
- ✓ Those ineligible for residency visa, because:
 - ✓ They cannot gather the required paperwork in time
 - ✓ They do not meet the income or investment requirements
 - ✓ They cannot get FBI clearance (or get it within the 6 month period) because of criminal history issues or fingerprint issues





IMMIGRATION



- An alternative to the FBI report is a criminal history report by Panama. You are eligible to apply for one after having been in Panama for **two uninterrupted years**.
- A Visa overstay incurs a fine of **\$50 for every month overstay**.