
THE ANDZNAGIR



Photo Credit: Heather Tehan

U.S. Embassy Yerevan during Coronavirus

There may not be very many cars in the parking lot and staff numbers in the Embassy are fewer. However, we are still here! In fact we are watching local conditions closely with the goal of expanding our public services while maintaining the safety of visitors and staff alike. We are committed to staying right here in Yerevan and sharing with you the challenges of living and working overseas amid a global pandemic.

Our daily focus – whether from home or at the Embassy – is to keep you informed and to further our relationship with Armenia. We are busy engaging with the Armenian citizens and meeting with representatives of the government of Armenia to build and promote our shared interests and values. While our events, meetings, and discussions may be virtual or involve face coverings and keeping a safe distance, they are still going ahead! Our medical unit is in regular contact with the Armenian Ministry of Health so that we can share the latest health information on our websites. And what is the Consular section doing? During these summer months, we have assisted your fellow U.S. citizens to return home. We have updated our website every day since March with the latest COVID case numbers, local safety guidelines, and travel options. We have flooded your email boxes with health and safety information, plus details on voting in this year's presidential election. The American Citizen Services (ACS) Unit at U.S. Embassy Yerevan has assisted you to apply for passports, reports of birth, and notarize documents. We are here for you.

ACS Town Hall with Ambassador Tracy

On July 15, Ambassador Tracy hosted her eighth virtual Town Hall with U.S. citizens. She shared important information on American Citizen Services (ACS) issues, including our contact information, summer travel restrictions, and voter registration and answered your questions. You can watch the full Town Hall recording [here](#).



What has the ACS Officer been doing?



ACS has been busy receiving phone calls and emails, keeping up with flights, issuing passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, and providing notarial services. Beyond our normal services, we have also been helping U.S. citizens participate in this year's elections. We have been providing information on how to register for, receive, and submit your overseas ballot. For more information, check out this *Ask the Consul* program on voting, which

you can find on Facebook. Take a moment and watch it [here](#).

Here are the three simple steps required to vote-

1. Request your ballot at [FVAP.org](https://www.fvap.org)
2. Check with your state regarding how to vote (i.e. email, fax, or physical mail).
3. Return your completed ballot as soon as possible.

American Citizens Services
(ACS) appointments can only be made online. Appointments are available Mondays and Thursdays. Please visit the U.S. Embassy's website at <https://am.usembassy.gov/> or go [here](#) to schedule your next appointment.

What Can We Do For You?

While the Embassy is still operating in a modified form, this is what we can do for you:

1. Receive your phone calls and emails and help you find information you need.
2. Notify you of flights to the U.S. and alert you to any restrictions. To ensure you receive notifications, enroll in the STEP program.
3. Accept applications for emergency or regular passports.
4. Process an application for a loan to help you return home if all other options are exhausted. All loans must be paid back.
5. Organize medical evacuation flights for United States citizens ONLY. These flights average a cost of \$250,000. You will be expected to pay the government back.
6. Notarize documents for use in the United States online appointment only.
7. Help you out of a dangerous situation and into a safe place.
8. Connect you with local resources in an emergency.

Local Laws Apply!

Your American citizenship entitles you to many things. One thing it does not entitle you to is to avoid complying with the laws of the country in which you are present. The coronavirus has triggered many new rules and quickly-changing requirements around the world. You are expected to stay informed of the changes (we try to help with that with our messages) and obey them! The Consular Section is not able to provide legal advice or represent you in court or to a local government. If you are arrested or fined, it is your responsibility to pay the fine, serve the sentence, or otherwise establish your innocence through local judicial procedures. You may wish to hire a lawyer to advise you. There is a list of lawyers on our website. Please obey local laws.

Emergency Funds

In an emergency situation and if no private method of transfer is available, family or friends in the United States may send money to a U.S. citizen in distressed circumstances overseas through the U.S. Embassy via the Overseas Citizens Services office of the Department of State.

To learn more about sending money overseas to a U.S. citizen in an emergency, visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go.html>. A fee of 30 USD is charged for setting up and maintaining a trust account (for one year or less) in order to transfer funds to, or for the benefit of, a U.S. citizen in need in a foreign country.

Voting in Election Year 2020

The U.S. Embassy is ready to help you vote from overseas. Please take the time now and take these three steps:

1. Go to [FVAP.gov](https://fvap.gov)
2. Request your ballot by completing a new Federal Post Card Application.
3. Receive your ballot, complete, and return.

Many states allow voting by fax or electronic means, but some do not! Find out now what your state requires so that your vote will be counted. Please be sure to take the steps you need to vote as soon as possible to allow for any potential delays in mail due to COVID-19. You can find more voting information on our webpage here: [https://am/usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/voting/](https://am.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/voting/)



The STEP Program

STEP is short for *The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program*. It's a way for U.S. Citizen and nationals living and traveling abroad to register with the U.S. Embassy in any given country, and a way for the Embassy to contact citizens and nationals in the event of a crisis or natural disaster, a mass evacuation, or even a family emergency. STEP is a way for family and friends to contact you during such events. STEP is also the way the U.S. Embassy in Armenia communicates important Travel Advisories and Alerts via text and SMS, as

well conveying information through newsletters and email. Though there is no requirement for citizens traveling or living in Armenia and elsewhere to register for STEP, we highly encourage it. Have your passport and itinerary handy when you register: <https://step.state.gov>



Be Prepared Before You Visit the U.S. Embassy

The American Citizen Services (ACS) Unit at U.S. Embassy Yerevan continues to provide passport, citizenship, and notarial services. Please check our [appointment page](#) for available appointments, currently available on Monday for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad and notarial services, and Thursday for passport services.

In response to COVID-19, and in order to ensure the safety and security of all visitors and staff, the following points will strictly apply to anyone with a confirmed ACS appointment:

- Arrive for your appointment early to allow time for security screening. If you arrive late, you will be asked to reschedule your appointment for another day.
- Wear a mask. In response to COVID-19 all visitors must wear masks while at the Embassy. You are required to bring your own mask(s). If you do not have a mask, you will be asked to reschedule your appointment for another day.
- **Come fully prepared** for your interview. We must limit the number of visitors in our waiting room due to social distancing requirements, so **visitors will not be allowed to fill out forms in our waiting room**, as that would delay serving other visitors. Therefore, if you are not fully prepared you will be asked to reschedule your appointment for another day.

Volunteer Opportunities

Mother Teresa Orphanage

A small, dedicated group of Catholic nuns run an orphanage for disabled children in Nork Marash (neighborhood in Yerevan). The sisters are always looking for volunteers to stop by to visit and spend time with the children. They have a wonderful local staff and international visitors who come to work with the children periodically.

Helping Hands

Helping Hands is a group of U.S. Embassy-affiliated Armenians and Americans who design monthly projects to assist socially vulnerable members of society. We need your enthusiasm and creativity! If interested, please contact Maritsa Hovhannisyan at HovhannisyanM@state.gov.



Websites

Lots of cafes and restaurants offer delivery services in Yerevan. The list here is for your convenience.

Restaurants that Deliver

If you can't find what you're looking for on menu.am or sovats.am, here are some alternative restaurants which provide delivery service:

<https://pandokyerevan.com/en>

<https://www.blackangus.am>

<http://www.winerepublic.am/>

www.toria.am

www.sas.am

Groceries

www.buy.am

www.shopon.am

www.sas.am

www.supermarket.am

www.parma.am

Fruits/vegetables

<https://gazar.am/en/>

Books/Stationery

www.penbox.am

www.noyantapan.am

www.karandash.am



What Have We Been Doing in Summer? Hiking Armenia



Armenia has a lot to offer when it comes to the outdoors. Many Embassy employees have started exploring Armenia by hiking. Last month, a group of Embassy hikers, including Ambassador Lynne Tracy, summited Mount Aragats, Armenia's tallest peak. For more information on hiking check out the below websites and applications, and get outside!

Websites

Hike Armenia: <https://hikearmenia.org/>

REI Hiking Project: <https://www.hikingproject.com/directory/8019235/armenia>

All Trails Armenia: <https://www.alltrails.com/armenia>

The Transcaucasian Trail: <https://transcaucasiantrail.org/en/home/>

Wild Armenia: <https://wildarmenia.com/blog/hiking-in-armenia/>

Applications

Gaia GPS

Garmin GPS

Maps.am

Komoot

REI Hiking Project

Best practices for working from home

[Natalie Zfat](#) - Social Media Entrepreneur

This week, thousands of in-office workers will experience their first foray into the world of at-home work, as large and small businesses try to manage the threat of [COVID-19](#) by asking their employees to [work remotely](#).

And while a LinkedIn study from October 2019 found that 82% of workers wished they could [work from home](#) at least part of the time: Take it from me, it's not as easy as it looks.

As a social media entrepreneur who has built a six-figure business from my home office over the last decade, here are my top tips (and learnings) for making your home — ahem — work for you.

1. Stick to a schedule

One of the most wonderful things about working from home is that you get to enjoy the comfort of your home all day.

It's also one of the most dangerous things about working from home.

Consider beginning and ending work at the same time each day — the way you would if you were at the office. This will help you separate professional time and personal time — and make it easier to detach both emotionally and physically at the end of the day. You can even log your day and daily tasks if that helps you.

During the day, give yourself some physical distance from your workspace by taking a lunch break — even if that means you're sitting at your kitchen table or listening to a podcast for 30 minutes. I find this makes me feel more refreshed and ready to dive back in when I return to my desk.

No matter what you do during your at-home “off time,” stay away from laundry or the dishes in the sink. Truly take this time to mentally unwind.

2. Give yourself space

Don't let your dining room table become the source for stacked papers, folders - or God forbid, a printer.

A dedicated workspace (ideally one you where you can close the door) is a solid way to keep work and life separate — and ensure you're not constantly reminded of your deadlines while sitting down for dinner.

At the end of the day, close the door (if you can), walk away, and try not to return to your workspace until the following morning.

3. Look the part

When you work from home, appearing professional can be just as important as when you work in a traditional office. (Also, it's 2020, and there's simply no excuse for a poorly lit video conference with bad audio.)

Invest in a LED ring light (for as little as \$25 on Amazon), a couple of plants, a Zoom or BlueJeans video conferencing account — and a good microphone. You'll be surprised how far this goes during video calls. (During a recent Zoom, I was told I looked like a beauty YouTuber - a *major* compliment in the social media business.)

4. Build boundaries

When it comes to working from home, I often encourage people to “build” and not “set” boundaries — because it's truly a process.

It took me years to figure out that even though I work from home, I don't have to answer an email at 9:00 p.m. when I'm sitting on the couch with my husband watching *This Is Us*. (Trust me, I'm way too fragile to respond to anything after that show anyway.)

If an emergency arises, you can, of course, make an exception, but try to limit your work to business hours only, even if that means having a template reply on-hand. One of my personal favorites: “I will be happy to look at this tomorrow with a fresh set of eyes!”

Building boundaries can be even more important when you work from home, and your environment can often always “feel” like work.

ABOUT US

Ellen Scholl serves as chief of our American Citizen Services Unit. Ellen has also lived and worked in Germany. She speaks German and Armenian.

Anahit Movsesyan is an Armenian citizen with extensive consular experience. She has worked for the U.S. Embassy for fourteen years. She previously served as Protocol Assistant to the U.S. Ambassador. Anahit speaks Armenian, Russian, and English.

Georgetta Carroll serves as our Consular Clerk. Georgetta and her family's previous post was Bucharest, Romania, where she worked in the Consular section.

As always, we welcome your comments, questions and feedback.

Please write to us at

ACSyerevan@state.gov

U.S. Embassy, Yerevan
Consular Section/ACS
1 American Ave, Yerevan 0082

Phone (M-F 8:30am-5:30pm):
(+374) 10 49-45-85

Emergency Phone (after hours):
(+374) 10 49-44-44

After applying for a passport or CRBA, you will receive an email from our office indicating that document is ready for pick up:

Passport and CRBA Pick-Up Hours
2:00 - 4:30p.m., Monday to Friday
(Excluding holidays)

Fees for Services

Notarial services -\$50 per seal

Marriage letter notary - \$50

Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) - \$100

Adult passport renewal - \$110

Minor passport / renewal - \$115

First time adult or replacement of lost or stolen passport -\$145

Fees can be paid in either U.S. dollars or Armenian drams.

Appointments can be scheduled for Monday and Thursday online. Go [here](#).

Websites to know

US Embassy Yerevan: www.usa.am

US Embassy Auction: <https://online-auction.state.gov/en-US> (Next auction 10/2020)

Employment at US Embassy:

https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms?_ref=ymm4c1h3pt0

Social Security: <https://gr.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/social-security/>