



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Finance Office

MEMORANDUM FOR: Foreign Travel Coordinators (FTCs)

FROM: Rachael Wivell  
Relocation & Policy Specialist

SUBJECT: Foreign Travel Desk Reminders and Changes

DATE: August 26, 2014

The purpose of this memo is to inform you of some recent changes at the NOAA Travel Office (NTO), and to also remind you of your responsibilities when processing foreign travel packages. The most valuable resource to ensure the most up-to-date visa/passport requirements as well as to ensure adequate lead times is the NTO foreign travel website: <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/finance/FT.html>. It is important to bookmark this site and refer to it each time you process a package since the requirements change often.

**Beginning September 1, 2014**, each Headquarters foreign travel coordinator (HFTC) will receive a Passport Listing at the beginning of each month. This listing will include the names of all of the employees within their respective Line/Staff Office who possess an official passport. It also indicates if the NTO has a foreign travel briefing on file and if we do, the date the employee conducted the briefing.

It is important to note that the NTO will no longer house expired official passports. Each month when the Passport Listing is sent, the HFTC is responsible for identifying who will need to renew and who will need to cancel their official passport on the Passport Listing and return it to the NTO by the **25<sup>th</sup> of each month**. It is the HFTC's responsibility to use this listing to:

- 1) Advise the NTO to either renew or cancel any passport due to expire within 6 months;  
and
- 2) Ensure the NTO has an up to date foreign travel briefing on file for employees who are due to travel abroad.

The HFTC may send the listing to their Field FTCs (FFTCs) for help in identifying who needs to renew and who needs to cancel, but it is ultimately the HFTC's responsibility to update the file and return it to the NTO by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Passport Listings must be sent through Accellion only since they contain personally identifiable information (PII). Note, employees who wish to renew their passport must do so within 30 days of being identified on the Passport listing or their passport will be canceled.

All FTCs (headquarters and field) are responsible for ensuring that each foreign travel package:

- 1) Is complete. Please check and bookmark our administrative requirements for foreign travel to ensure complete foreign travel packages.
- 2) Is sent in a timely fashion. See lead time requirements.
- 3) Is submitted to their servicing HFTC prior to being sent to the NTO for final processing.
- 4) Includes a travel checklist that is completely filled out and includes the FFTC address and phone number. FTCs who are in Silver Spring must indicate which building and room number as follows: SSMC \_\_/Rm \_\_\_\_. The checklist provides us a POC in case there are processing issues and also provides a return address when the package is complete.
- 5) Includes an up to date foreign travel briefing. An up to date foreign travel briefing included with each package ensures that the foreign TA is processed timely in travel manager. Therefore, it is imperative to review the NTO monthly passport listing to verify the validity of a foreign travel briefing. Please note: A foreign travel briefing is only good for one year.
- 6) Includes all necessary visa applications, if and when applicable. Visa requirements vary according to each respective embassy. Therefore, it is imperative to check and bookmark our visa requirements website each time a visa is required to ensure you are using the most up-to-date visa application and that you are providing adequate lead time.
- 7) Includes the official passport whenever a passport needs to be renewed or whenever a visa is required for passports not housed at the NTO.
- 8) Includes all of the necessary passport paperwork for passports that are due to expire within 6 months. Most countries will not allow entry into their country if a passport is due to expire within six months of entering their country. Therefore, it is imperative to review the NTO monthly passport listing to verify the validity of a passport. And if a passport needs to be renewed, it is important to check and bookmark our passport link to ensure you are using the most up to date passport applications/passport letters and to ensure you are providing adequate lead time.

FFTCs are required to go through their HFTCs when they have questions regarding how to process foreign travel packages, the status of a foreign travel package, and/or the status of a foreign TA. Please note: The NTO processes foreign TAs in Travel Manager twice a day, once at 11am and again at 3pm. If the NTO does not process a particular TA that's been sitting in Travel Manager, you can assume it's more than likely because we do not have an up to date foreign travel briefing and/or official passport on file. Contact with the NTO not only causes confusion, but also takes time away from processing foreign travel packages.

Official passport reminders:

- 1) Employees conducting official government travel overseas are **required** to travel on their official and not their personal passport, regardless of duration. Traveling on one's personal passport when on official government business is a violation of sovereignty. Please see guidance from State regarding the requirement to use an official passport for official government travel. Requests to travel on a personal passport should be rare and only submitted when we have exhausted any possibility of obtaining an official passport. Requests to travel on a personal passport must be submitted to and approved by Rachael Wivell, Travel Team Lead.
- 2) Employees must provide at least 4 weeks lead time to process an official passport that doesn't require visa(s) and more time when visas are required. Packages that do not allow adequate lead time should be extremely rare and must include an emergency letter addressed to Battie Stewart, Chief of Passport Services. Travel will be canceled whenever a short turn around passport request does not include an emergency letter.

Please note the following NTO name/address changes. Please make note of these changes to ensure all packages and questions are addressed in a timely manner.

Chasity Grimm  
20020 Century Blvd, Room 1208  
Germantown, MD 20874

HFTCs should forward this memo to their FFTCs and may direct any questions to Chasity Grimm via phone: (301)444-2129 or e-mail: [Chasity.N.Grimm@noaa.gov](mailto:Chasity.N.Grimm@noaa.gov)

cc Line/Staff Office CFOs  
Line Office AAs/DAAs  
Directors, Staff Offices