

## **Requirement to travel on an official passport when traveling on behalf of the U.S. Government:**

The Department of State (DOS) requires employees traveling OCONUS on official business to obtain an official passport for the following reasons:

- **Required visas** – A visa will not be granted for entry into a foreign country when the reason for travel to that country is stated as official business and the personal (tourist) passport is presented. In addition, a diplomatic or official visa cannot be stamped in a personal passport.
- **Foreign country entry and exit** – Some countries will deny entry at the border to someone seeking to enter on official government business who presents a personal passport. Also, problems may occur upon departure from a foreign country.
- **Violation of sovereignty** – Use of a personal passport when traveling in an official capacity misrepresents the true purpose for which the traveler has entered the country. This can have serious and adverse affects on our reciprocal relations with foreign countries. Employees of foreign governments must use official passports when they come to the U.S. on behalf of their governments. This is a traditional practice among governments and an internationally recognized policy.
- **Security concerns** – Should there be a problem while you are in the host country, the official passport provides quicker access to officials of the host country government and greater protection.

**NOTE:** An official passport cannot be obtained for travel to Taiwan, and is not required for travel between the United States and U.S. territories. U.S. territories include American Samoa, Guam, Midway Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, and Wake Island. The NTO strongly urges employees to carry a certified birth certificate when traveling between the U.S. and U.S. territories to avoid unnecessary problems. However, if you have an official or personal passport, you are expected to use your official or personal passport instead of birth evidence.