The Department of State has issued a Worldwide Caution to provide updated information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions, political violence, and criminal activity against U.S. citizens and interests abroad. U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This replaces the Worldwide Caution dated March 6, 2017.

- The updated Worldwide Caution issued September 15, 2017, is available on our website, here.
- The most recent Europe Travel Alert issued September 1, 2017, is available on our website, here.

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Are you registered to vote? More information on page 3

Worldwide Caution

Message from the Consul

Serving the interests of U.S. citizens overseas is one of the Embassy’s highest priorities. Only through consistent and meaningful engagement with members of the U.S. citizen community are we able to advance this goal.

As the new Consul at U.S. Embassy Helsinki I look forward to hearing from U.S. citizens residing or traveling in Finland and learning more about how the Embassy can better meet your needs.

If you have any questions or comments about the services we provide to U.S. citizens, I ask that you please contact us at HelsinkiACS@state.gov.

Best regards,
Jeremy R. Wisemiller
Consul
The Social Security Administration (SSA) requires all beneficiaries and most applicants living overseas to contact their specially-designated SSA Federal Benefits Units abroad for SSA provided services.

If you reside in Finland, your designated SSA Federal Benefits Unit is located at U.S. Embassy Oslo. Please send all inquiries regarding SSA provided benefits and services, including social security number and card applications, to fbu.oslo@ssa.gov. You may also contact the Oslo Federal Benefits Unit via their website, here.

For additional information on the SSA’s services abroad, please visit Service Around the World on SSA.gov.
Americans can vote. Wherever they are.

Did you know active duty military members, their spouses and overseas citizens can exercise their right to vote from anywhere in the world?

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) works to ensure that Americans living away from their voting residence can cast an absentee ballot in federal elections.

**HERE’S HOW:**

**GO TO FVAP.GOV AND SELECT THE STATE OF VOTING RESIDENCE TO REGISTER AND REQUEST A BALLOT OR TALK TO SOMEONE AT FVAP**

[Vote @ FVAP.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)  1-800-438-VOTE

**FILL OUT AND SEND IN THE FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION (FPCA)**

It is both a voter registration form and absentee ballot request form.

**HOW?** Use FVAP’s online assistant or fill out the FPCA by hand and then mail to the election office. Some States allow email, too. State-specific requirements and contact info are at FVAP.gov.

**FILL OUT THE ABSENTEE BALLOT WHEN IT ARRIVES**

**WHEN WILL THAT BE?**
For the General Election, the ballot should arrive by early October.

**ANYTHING ELSE?**
Some States require a signed affidavit or envelope.

**WHAT IF THE BALLOT DOESN’T ARRIVE BY THE DEADLINE?**
Fill out the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) at FVAP.gov and send it.

**MAKE SURE THE BALLOT WAS RECEIVED HOW?**
Select the State at FVAP.gov to check its status.

Don’t Forget!

- Register to vote & request an absentee ballot from the FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).
- Complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) each year.
- Never Resided in the U.S.? Go to [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov) for voter registration information.
Notarizing officers at U.S. Embassy Helsinki provide services similar to the functions of a notary public in the United States. Notarial services are provided for U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens whose documents are intended for use in the United States. Each notarial service is by appointment only.

For complete information, including requirements, scheduling, and examples of notarial services provided, please visit the Embassy’s notarial services page & review the following useful tips and requirements.

**Notarial Services Tips and Requirements**
- The fee per Consular seal is $50, payable in cash or by credit card.
- Bring valid government issued identification such as a passport, driver’s license, or national I.D. card. Your name must be spelled correctly in the document/s and must match the identification presented.
- Please review your document/s carefully and clearly identify all places where the notarizing officer needs to sign prior to your appointment. **DO NOT SIGN THE DOCUMENT IN ADVANCE.**
- You must understand the document you are signing, Embassy staff are not able to explain documents or provide legal advice.
- If two people need to sign the same document, or if a witness is required, the names of all attendees must be submitted in advance. Embassy staff are not able to serve as witnesses.
- Appointments should be made using the Embassy’s online reservation system.

**Processing Time**
Notarial services take approximately 30 - 45 min.

**Please Note**
U.S. Embassy Helsinki is not authorized to issue apostilles or authenticate U.S. academic credentials. For information on apostilles or the authentication of American academic credentials please review the U.S. Department of State Authentications and Apostilles website.

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**Diversity Immigrant Visa Program (DV-2019)**
The U.S. Department of State is accepting entries for the 2019 Diversity Immigrant Visa Program (DV-2019). Due to a technical glitch the online registration period has been revised. Online entries are accepted from **Tuesday, October 18, 2017,** through noon (EDT), on **Wednesday, November 22, 2017**. Please note, all entries made prior to October 18, 2017, will need to be resubmitted for the entrant to be considered.

For the DV-2019 year, 50,000 Diversity Visas will be made available. There is no cost to submit an electronic entry form, however, applicants must submit their entry at dvlottery.state.gov no later than **Wednesday, November 22, 2017.** Late or incomplete entries will not be accepted. Applicants are advised not to wait until the last week of registration to enter, as heavy demand could result in website delays.

Please visit the Diversity Visa (DV-2019) entry instructions page for additional information. A video with step-by-step guidance on submitting a DV-2019 entry is also available here.
In response to inquiries about restrictions of personal electronics on international flights entering the United States, we would like to direct members of the U.S. citizen community to current aviation security guidance provided by the Department of Homeland Security.

Current DHS guidance on aviation security indicates there are currently no airlines under restrictions for large personal electronic devices. The latest DHS press release on the issue states: There are currently no airlines under restrictions for large personal electronic devices. The Transportation Security Agency (TSA) has lifted the restrictions on large personal electronic devices for the ten airports/nine airlines in the Middle East and North Africa, which were announced in March 2017. These airports and airlines have also successfully implemented the first phase of enhanced security measures.

Even the most experienced traveler sometimes needs a friendly reminder. U.S. Embassy Helsinki encourages travelers to do the following when planning their next trip. BON VOYAGE!

GET INFORMED about where you are going, at travel.state.gov/destination.

GET REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, such as your passport and visas.

GET ENROLLED in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (step.state.gov) for security & emergency alerts.

GET INSURED for medical, evacuation and other unexpected expenses.

GET IN CONTACT with family and friends, make sure they have your itinerary & contact information in case you need to be reached during your trip.
Be Prepared for Changes to ID Requirements for Domestic Flights
The U.S. Passport and Passport Card are REAL ID Compliant

Beginning January 22, 2018, domestic air passengers with driver’s licenses issued by a state that is not yet compliant with REAL ID and that has not received an extension will need to show an alternative form of acceptable identification for domestic air travel. Both the U.S. passport card and passport book are REAL ID compliant. If you already have a REAL ID compliant driver’s license, it will remain valid for domestic air travel.

The REAL ID Act, which became law in 2005, requires driver’s licenses to meet minimum security standards for issuance and production. For air travel and certain other purposes, federal agencies are prohibited from accepting driver’s licenses and identification cards from states not meeting the Act’s minimum standards unless those states have been granted extensions.

The U.S. passport book and the U.S. passport card are REAL ID compliant and are acceptable identification to board domestic flights. The U.S. passport card is the same size as a driver’s license and only costs $55 for first time applicants or $30 for those who have already had a passport. **A U.S. passport BOOK is always required for international air travel – passport cards are not valid for international air travel.**

For more information on the acceptable forms of identification for boarding aircraft, please see TSA’s website [tsa.gov](http://tsa.gov). To find out if your state’s driver’s license or ID are Real ID compliant visit the Department of Homeland Security’s website [dhs.gov/real-id](http://dhs.gov/real-id).

Embassy Holiday Closures

U.S. Embassy Helsinki will be closed in observance of the following Finnish and U.S. holidays:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, November 10, 2017</td>
<td>Veterans’ Day</td>
<td>(U.S. Holiday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 23, 2017</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
<td>(U.S. Holiday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 6, 2017</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>(Finnish Holiday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 26, 2017</td>
<td>Second Christmas Day</td>
<td>(Finnish Holiday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 1, 2018</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>(U.S. and Finnish Holiday)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The passport card is a wallet-size travel document that can only be used to re-enter the United States at land border-crossings and sea ports-of-entry from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. The card provides a less expensive, smaller, and convenient alternative to the passport book. The card is REAL ID compliant.

U.S. Embassy Helsinki
American Citizen Services
Itäinen Puistotie 14 B
00140 Helsinki, Finland

Email: HelsinkiACS@state.gov
Web: http://fi.usembassy.gov
http://travel.state.gov