

PRESS RELEASE

March 1, 2010

PROPOSED NEW FEES FOR PASSPORT BOOKS / CARDS

The Scott County Recorder, Rita Vargas, wishes to provide notice to the citizens of Scott County regarding **proposed** new fees for passport books, cards, and other passport services. I re-emphasize the word **proposed** -- we are not often given ample notice of the effective date of fee changes, so I want to encourage U.S. citizens to apply for their passport now rather than later, if they want to avoid these additional cost. Anyone wishing to read the entire document or comment on these proposed fees should utilize the link to the *Federal Register* at the following link: <http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#documentDetail?R=0900006480a8ffe8>.

Proposed New Passport Fees

- The proposed rule for the new passport fees was published in the Federal Register on February 9, 2010 (Public Notice 6887, Federal Register, February 9, 2010, Vol. 75, No. 26, beginning at page 6321).
 - Publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will be followed by a public comment period of at least 30 days. The public will be notified of the date the new fees will go into effect.
 - The proposed schedule of fees for passport application services is as follows:
 - Total Cost: \$135 for a firsttime U.S. Passport Book for adults (age 16 and over)
 - Total Cost: \$110 for U.S. Passport Book renewal (age 16 and over only)
 - Total Cost: \$105 for a U.S. Passport Book for minors (under age 16)
 - Total Cost: \$55 for a firsttime U.S. Passport Card for adults (age 16 and over)
 - Total Cost: \$30 for a U.S. Passport Card for adults (age 16 and over) who currently hold a fully valid U.S. Passport
 - Total Cost: \$40 for a U.S. Passport Card for minors (under age 16)
 - Total Cost: \$82 for additional visa pages
 - The fee for expedited service will remain the same: \$60
 - The proposed passport "Schedule of Fees" is based on a Cost of Service Study conducted in June 2009. It's the most detailed study the Department of State has ever conducted of its for-fee services, and represents a cost correction from the last update of the Schedule of Fees four years ago.
- Use of Passport Fees** Passport application fees are not only used to cover the costs of producing a U.S. Passport Book or Passport Card. Passport fees also cover

the costs of providing emergency services for American citizens overseas in crisis situations, such as the current earthquake disaster in Haiti, helping Americans who have been the victims of crime while traveling or living abroad, and providing support to the families of American citizens who have died overseas.

Passport application fees enable us to keep up with technology and implement fraud prevention initiatives to protect the United States passport. The security features of the U.S. passport book have received high praise from document security specialists the world over. Investing in new technology to prevent passport fraud is one of our key priorities, and an ongoing initiative.

Passport fees fund the expansion of passport infrastructure and service, allowing us to offer more timely service to the traveling public, maintain high standards for adjudication in accordance with US citizenship laws, and provide appropriate attention to fraud vulnerabilities.

Over the last five years, the demand for passports has increased to an average of 15 million per year. In FY 2005, we issued 10.1 million passports; peaked at 18.4 million in FY 2007; and expect to issue over 15 million in FY 2010.

To increase our presence in underserved areas, the Department has undertaken a systematic expansion of the passport network, particularly in communities affected by the land border-crossing requirements associated with the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.

By the end of FY 2010, we will have 23 agencies providing emergency passport services to the general public, three high-volume application processing centers, and two large-scale document print centers.

Passport operations staff has doubled, growing to 3000 positions since 2005. We added, on average, 30 new jobs at each of our public agencies in Dallas, Aurora (Denver), Detroit, and Minneapolis.

Value of the Passport

The U.S. Passport Book and U.S. Passport Card for adults are valid for ten years. Passports for minors under age 16 are valid for five years.

The U.S. Passport is not just used for travel anymore. It serves as proof of U.S. citizenship and identity for important purposes such as work authorization and eligibility for many Federal benefits.