

## 8 **With Your U.S. Passport, The World is Yours!**

13 *United States Department of State*

### 16 **About Your Passport**

26 Congratulations! Your new U.S. Passport Book is your ticket for  
41 international travel by air, sea, and land. If you are 16 or older, the passport  
56 book can be used for 10 years. Passports for children under 16 are only valid  
59 for 5 years.

73 Some countries may deny you entry if your passport book will expire in less  
83 than six months. For complete information on foreign entry requirements,  
93 refer to the country-specific information pages on our website,  
96 [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).

### 99 **Safeguarding Your Passport**

113 • Sign your full name in blue or black ink inside your passport. Parents may  
128 sign on behalf of their children under 16 and should note their relation to the  
129 child.

143 • Keep your passport in a safe location while at home and abroad. If your  
157 passport is lost or stolen, report it immediately. You can report your lost or  
164 stolen passport in one of three ways:

170 • Call toll-free 877-487-2778

183 • Complete, sign, and mail form DS-64 to the address on the form  
189 (also found on [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov))

196 • Report it online at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)

209 • Passports reported lost or stolen are invalidated and can no longer be used  
211 for travel.

**215 Additional Tips for Travel**

- 225 • While overseas, carry photocopies of your passport biographical page and  
232 foreign visa with you at all times.
- 245 • Once you receive your new passport, your old passport is not valid for  
262 travel. If your old passport is linked to a valid visa, you can still use the valid  
276 visa. You must travel with both your new and old passport in this case.
- 287 • Make sure your health insurance covers you while overseas, and consider  
293 travel insurance that includes medical evacuation.
- 305 • Keep U.S. Embassy contact information with you while you travel. If there  
319 is ever an emergency, the U.S. Department of State may be able to provide  
320 assistance.

**324 Help Us Help You****329 Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**

342 Enroll in STEP to receive travel and safety update while abroad. By entering  
355 your travel itinerary and contact information in STEP, we will also be able  
366 to better assist you during an emergency. US embassies and consulates  
377 around the world can contact you directly during an emergency - including  
389 situations where family or friends in the United States are having problems  
400 trying to contact you. The itinerary and contact information is safeguarded  
411 and not released to third parties without your written authorization. Enroll  
418 today for free at [step.state.gov](http://step.state.gov).

**422 Know Before You Go**

425 We believe a well-informed traveler is a safe traveler. We provide travel  
437 information on every country in the world on [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov), plus general  
446 tips and resources on traveling, working, or living abroad.

458 We also post Travel Alerts and Travel Warnings about possible risks and  
470 security threats so you can make informed decisions about your travel plans.

### 473 **Inter-Country Adoption**

486 Every year, thousands of families in the United States experience the joy of  
498 adopting a child from another country. If you are considering inter-country  
509 adoption, make sure you learn the other country's laws and requirements  
522 first. They can often be different from U.S. laws. Find more information at  
525 [adoption.state.gov](http://adoption.state.gov).

538 When bringing your adopted child home, note that the process for how your  
551 child acquires U.S. citizenship can vary depending on the type of visa the  
563 child has when entering the United States and whether the adoption was  
575 finalized in the United States. Find out which process applies to your  
583 situation at [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov) and [adoption.state.gov](http://adoption.state.gov).

### 587 **International Parental Child Abduction**

604 Under federal and state laws, it is a crime for a parent to take a child outside  
618 of the United States without the other parent's consent. If your child is a  
630 victim of international parental child abduction, or you fear the possibility of  
642 abduction, call the Office of Children's Issues (from the U.S. and Canada at  
658 888-407-4747 and from overseas at +1-202-501-4444) as well as your local  
663 police for resources and assistance.

674 One of the most important tools for preventing international parental child  
685 abduction is the Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program (CPIAP). If a

698 passport application is submitted for a child under age 18 who is enrolled in  
709 CPIAP, the Department attempts to alert the parent or parents to verify  
720 whether they approve passport issuance. Visit [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) for more  
721 information.