



U.S. Department of State To Host Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Vermont Passport Agency

Media Note
Office of the Spokesman
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Under Secretary of State for Management Patrick F. Kennedy will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, March 4, at 2:00 p.m. to mark the official opening of the Vermont Passport Agency in St. Albans. Invited guests include the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Passport Services Brenda S. Sprague, members of Congress, state and local officials, community leaders, and members of the media.

Americans with urgent travel plans will be able to apply in-person at the Vermont Passport Agency, where passport books and passport cards will be issued onsite, alleviating the need for applicants to travel to Boston for emergency services. The new agency will occupy the first floor of the historic St. Albans Federal Building, which formerly served as the city's post office and customs house. Original brass postal boxes and two large murals painted by artist Philip von Saltza in 1939 remain on display for passport customers to enjoy.

Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Vermont Passport Agency is located at 50 South Main Street. Nearly 20 employees will staff the agency, which is projected to issue 15,000 passports during its first year of operation, serving more than 2,500 customers onsite.

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative introduced new travel document requirements that increased passport demand and demonstrated the need to expand the passport network into previously underserved areas. Over the next few months, the Department of State will open passport agencies in San Diego, California; El Paso, Texas; and Atlanta, Georgia. In 2010, a new agency was opened in Buffalo, New York, and public counters were added at existing passport centers in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Travelers with urgent travel requirements may schedule an appointment at the Vermont Passport Agency or other regional passport agencies by calling 1-877-487-2778 or visiting www.travel.state.gov.

For press inquiries, or to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony, call (202) 647-1488 or email CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov. Journalists attending the event will be able to tour the agency and interview the officials in attendance.

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