



**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL**  
**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL ISSUES MACHINE READABLE PHILIPPINE  
PASSPORTS EFFECTIVE MONDAY, 2 JUNE 2008**

***Features of New Passport In Compliance with Global Standards***

NEW YORK – The Philippine Consulate General New York wishes to inform the public that effective Monday, 2 June 2008, applications for the new Machine Readable Passports (MRP) will be processed by this Post, **providing improved document security features, as no additional cost.**

The MRP is a project of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, in compliance with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a specialized agency of the United Nations created to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. The 188 contracting states of the ICAO, which includes the Philippines, agreed to issue ICAO Standard MRPs no later than 1 April 2010. This global standard is inter-operable and harmonized with all participating countries. Because of this, compliance benefits for the governments, the travelers, the airports and the airlines, primarily in document security and ease of travel. Those who applied and have been issued MRPs in the Philippines have reported satisfaction in the speed of processing when entering a country, and the simplicity of registration, particularly at “self check-in” counters at US airlines.

In addition to the ease of travel provided by the MRP to travelers, it has superior security features compared to the old green passports, which virtually eliminates the possibility of identity theft and acts of fraud. To ensure this, all passport applications are processed at the main office at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City.

Applications received by the Philippine Foreign Service Posts abroad will be sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila via diplomatic pouch. In view of the transit time, **it will now take SIX WEEKS for a passport to be released** to the applicants, from the time the application is accepted at the Consulate General.

**PERSONAL APPEARANCE FOR ALL** is required for data verification, finger-printing and signature capture. Applications by mail will not be accepted.

**NEW PHOTO REQUIREMENTS:**

- Background – ROYAL BLUE
- Size – 4.5 cm X 3.5 cm
- Pose – image of applicant is 70 – 80% of the photograph
  - Straight frontal shot (no tilting of head)
  - “Medium” smile is allowed

- Collared shirt / decent attire
- Both ears visible
- Prescription eye-glasses allowed, provided there is no glare
- Head scarf / veil for religious or health reasons allowed
- Photos can be rejected for the following reasons:
  - Distorted image – head is tilted or smile is too wide
  - Women - excessive makeup, large earrings
  - Men – wearing makeup, earrings
  - colored contact lenses
  - use of headgear other than scarf / veil for religious or health reasons
  - use of dark eyeglasses / shades
  - photos with “red-eye” effect
  - dirty photos / poor photo quality / poor or uneven lighting
  - digitally altered photos (rendered with photoshop or other imaging programs) / unnatural skin tones

The new and improved Philippine Passports are issued by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs at no additional cost to the applicants. Maroon-colored MRPs issued in the US will still cost USD \$50.00, the same as the green-colored passports.

If you currently hold a valid Philippine passport (green passport that has not expired), there is no need to worry as ***the green Passport will still be honored as a bonafide travel document issued by the Republic of the Philippines*** until it expires, even after the roll out of the new Machine Readable Passports.

Please check the website of the Philippine Consulate General New York at <http://pcgny.net/> for the latest information regarding the Philippine Machine Readable Passport. END