



PRESS RELEASE

MJBA-024-2009

CONSULAR OUTREACH AT SEAFOOD CITY-NORTH HILLS

21 March 2009

Los Angeles, 12 March 2009 – A team from the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles will be conducting a Consular Outreach Program in North Hills, California on **21 March 2009 from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm** at the **Seafood City Supermarket**, 16130 Nordhoff St., North Hills, CA 91343.

This outreach program is being undertaken in cooperation with the *Seafood Market under Mr. Tony Castro*, *3MC under Ms. Charina Carrera* and the *Filipino American Chamber of Commerce of San Fernando Valley (FACCSFV)*.

The following Consular services will be rendered:

1. Applications for Machine Readable Passport (**Cost: \$50**) and returned to the applicant by mail at an additional cost of **\$6**.
2. Applications for the retention and re-acquisition of Philippine citizenship pursuant to Republic Act 9225 or Dual Citizenship Law (**Cost: \$50**). Oath-taking will be scheduled on the same day for qualified applicants.
3. Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV) Registration. (**Gratis**)

The Consulate will only accept payments in cash, postal money order or cashier's check. Personal checks will not be accepted.

Application forms and requirements can be downloaded from the Consulate's website at www.philippineconsulatela.org.

In view of the anticipated high volume of applicants and in order to ensure an orderly flow of operations, this Consular outreach shall be guided by the following:

1. All Applicants for any of the above consular services are requested to set up an **appointment** with the Consulate, **not later than 18 March 2009**, either through fax at **(213) 639-0990**, or through email at losangelespcg@earthlink.net.
2. **Passport Applicants** should send an advance copy of their passport application forms and data page (bearing the name and photo) of their passports to the

- Consulate (**Attn: Seafood City Outreach**) either by fax or by email. Incomplete forms will not be processed.
3. **Dual Citizenship Applicants** should send an advance copy of their application forms and supporting documents to the Consulate (**Attn: Seafood City Outreach**). Incomplete forms will not be processed.
 4. **OAV Registrants** should also send an advance copy of their application forms and supporting documents to the Consulate (**Attn: Seafood City Outreach**). Incomplete forms will not be processed.
 5. Confirmed appointments of all applicants will be posted at the Consulate's website (www.philippineconsulatela.org) **by 18 March 2009**. **Personal appearance is required** for all applicants.
 6. While **walk-in applicants** will also be **entertained**, **priority** will be given to those with **confirmed appointments** with the Consulate, as posted in the website. All **walk-in applicants** are **advised** to **transact** their **business** directly with **Consulate officials** and not through travel agencies. Walk-in applicants are by definition those who did not pass through travel agencies.

For general information, interested parties may wish to call **Vice Consul Ruel U. Gunabe (Tel: 1-213-637-3020 | losangelespcg@earthlink.net)** of the Consulate, or **Ms. Charina Carrera (Tel: 1-818-815-9400)** of 3MC or **Mr. Leo Maranan (Tel: 1-818-642-7109)**, President, FACCSFV.

For the information of the public, the Philippine Embassy and Consulates General in the U.S. started to accept and to process applications for Machine Readable Passports (MRP) on **June 2, 2008**. This is in compliance with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for its member states, including the Philippines, to issue MRPs not later than **1 April 2010**.

Since applications received by the Philippine Foreign Service Posts in the U.S. will be sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila via diplomatic pouch, it will take **six weeks** for a passport to be released to the applicants, from the time the application is accepted. **Personal appearance** for all will be required for data verification, fingerprinting and signature capture. Applications by mail will no longer be accepted.

In compliance with the new photo requirements for the MRP, applicants are requested to visit the Consulate's website.

While **some countries** may still **honor** valid **green Philippine** passports beyond 1 April 2010 as **bona fide travel documents** until they expire, **most countries** will **require** travelers to hold either **MRP or e-Passport** for their sojourn by **2010**.

Thus, all Filipinos, including those with valid green passports, are therefore encouraged to apply for their machine readable passports as early as possible. ###end