



PRESS RELEASE

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CONSULAR OUTREACH AT ISLAND PACIFIC SUPERMARKET

Los Angeles, 21 July 2009 – A team from the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles will be conducting a Consular Outreach Program in Panorama City, California on **25 July 2009 from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm** at the **Island Pacific Supermarket**, 8340 Van Nuys Blvd., Unit A, Panorama City, CA 91402.

This outreach program is being undertaken in cooperation with *Island Pacific Supermarket* under *Mr. Nino Lim* and in coordination with *Ms. Jannelle So*.

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. 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.

For general information, interested parties may wish to call the **Consulate** (Tel: 1-213-639-0980 | losangelespcg@earthlink.net), or **Island Pacific Supermarket** (Tel: 1-626-839-6361).

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