



PRESS RELEASE
MJBA-011-2010

CONSULAR OUTREACH – HOUSTON, TEXAS
17-18 April 2010

Los Angeles, 11 February 2010 – A team from the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles will conduct a Consular Outreach Program in **Houston, Texas** on **17-18 April 2010**:

Location : **West Oaks Plaza (across from West Oaks Mall)**
2703 Highway 6 South, Suite 173, Houston, TX 77082

Service Hours : **9:00 am – 6:00 pm**

The consular outreach program is being undertaken in cooperation with the ***Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Texas (PACC Texas)*** under the leadership of **Ms. Ethel Mercado**, State President, and **Mr. Nelvin Adriatico**, South Texas Region Chair.

The following consular services will be rendered:

1. Applications for Machine Readable Passport (**Cost: \$50**), to be 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.

Note: This consular outreach program will **not** accept applications for **authentication** and **notarization** of documents since these services could be **filed** with the Consulate **by mail**.

STRICTLY BY APPOINTMENT ONLY (by following the applicable scheduling steps below) AND WITH COMPLETED DOCUMENTS ONLY. No walk-in applicants will be entertained.

1. **Appointment Scheduling Steps for Machine Readable Passport (MRP) Applicants**
 - a. Visit the Philippine Consulate website (www.philippineconsulatela.org) and print the passport application form;
 - b. Complete the passport application form; make a copy and write **HOUSTON** on the upper right hand corner; and,

- c. **No later than 2 April 2010 or until slots are available**, send the **copy** of the completed passport application form and data page (bearing the name and photo) of the old passport to the Consulate either by **fax (213) 639-0990** or by **email attachment to consular.outreach.tx@gmail.com**. **Thumbprint and photo are not necessary; these will be done on site.** Incomplete forms will not be processed.

2. **Appointment Scheduling Steps for Dual Citizenship Applicants**

- a. Visit the Philippine Consulate website (www.philippineconsulatela.org) and print the Dual Citizenship Application form;
- b. Complete the Dual Citizenship Application form; and,
- c. **No later than 2 April 2010 or until slots are available**, send an **advance copy** of the completed Dual Citizenship application form and supporting documents to the Consulate either by **fax (213) 639-0990** or by **email attachment to consular.outreach.tx@gmail.com**. **Thumbprint and photo are not necessary; these will be done on site.** Incomplete forms will not be processed.

Note: Oath-Taking will be scheduled on the same day for qualified applicants.

Information FOR ALL APPLICANTS

The Consulate regularly updates the appointment schedule posted on the website as they receive the completed applications.

The **final list** of all applicants with **pre-processed applications** will be posted at the Consulate's website (www.philippineconsulatela.org) **by 5 April 2010**. **Personal appearance is required** for all applicants for data verification, finger-printing and signature capture. Applications by mail are no longer accepted.

All **applicants** are **advised to transact** their **business** directly with **Consulate officials** and not through travel agencies.

Private photographers, who are knowledgeable of the photo requirements for the machine readable passport, will be **present** at the **venue** during the Consular Outreach for those who will need photos for passport renewal. To obtain details regarding the new passport photo requirements, applicants may visit the Consulate's website (www.philippineconsulatela.org).

Fees

Fees must be paid in person at the scheduled appointment. The Consulate will only accept payments in cash, postal money order or cashier's check. Personal checks will not be accepted.

Machine Readable Passport: **\$50** processing fee + **\$6** for passports to be returned to the applicant by mail

Dual Citizenship: **\$50** processing fee

Contact Information

For information on consular matters, interested parties may call or email:

Ms. Rowena Namay

Tel: 1-213-637-3005

E-mail: consular.outreach.tx@gmail.com

For information on the *Houston venue only*, parties may call any of the following volunteers:

- **Mr. Ray Velasquez**, Consular Outreach Program Coordinator
Tel: 1-832-878-0883
- **Mr. Nelvin Joseph Adriatico**, Chairman PACC South Texas Region
Tel: 1-281-993-8383
- **Ms. Tess Tuazon**, Secretary PACC South Texas Region
Tel: 1-713-787-1938

E-mail: outreachhouston@pacctexas.org

General Summary of Machine Readable Passport Requirements & Processing Time

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 **2 June 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 are sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila via diplomatic pouch, it may take **six (6) weeks** for a passport to be released to the applicants, from the time the application is accepted.

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 be holders of either **machine readable passports** or **e-passport** for their sojourn by **2010**.

In this regard, all Philippine **passport holders** are advised to **renew** their Philippine passport **six (6) months prior** to its **expiration**, in accordance with ICAO regulations, and to **secure** their **plane tickets** only after they have **received** their **new passport**.

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