



PRESS RELEASE
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LOS ANGELES PCG TO START ACCEPTING ePASSPORT APPLICATIONS

Los Angeles, 18 May 2010 – Effective **1 June 2010**, the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles will begin accepting applications for ePassport from all Philippine passport applicants. The ePassport will **cost \$60** and processing time will be **from four (4) to six (6) weeks**.

An ePassport has an embedded IC chip where the photograph and personal information of the bearer are stored in accordance with ICAO specifications.

What advantages does the Philippine ePassport offer?

The ePassport is highly secure. Hence, it avoids passport reproduction and tampering. The ePassport database is enhanced with Automated Fingerprint Verification System (AFIS) that guards against multiple passport issuances to the same person and enhances imposter detection.

It facilitates fast clearance of travelers at immigration checks.

ePassports provide travellers benefits such as use of automated border clearance or “E-gates”, automated issuance of boarding passes, and faster travel arrangements with airlines.

For countries, the use of electronic passport also provides better border protection and security.

Why do we have to use ePassports now?

The MRP has the minimum ICAO standards in travel documents while the ePassport is the world standard in travel documents. As member of ICAO, the Philippines has an international obligation to enhance the security of its travel documents.

The issuance of ePassports will allow the Philippines to offer world-class consular services to its nationals.

Countries have greater confidence and acceptance of the ePassport since it is enhanced with biometric technology.

Why is the ePassport more expensive than the current passport?

The added security features of the ePassport are factored into the production cost. Comparative prices of ePassports from different countries, however, show that the cost of the Philippine ePassport is among the lowest in the world.

What other countries use ePassports?

ePassports are now being used in more than 60 countries worldwide including the United States and six (6) ASEAN countries namely: Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines.

I have a previously issued passport. Can I use it for travel as long as it is still valid?

Yes. Previously issued passports (MRP and non-MRP) are valid until their expiration. It is a good practice to make sure your passport is valid at least six months before intended date of travel to avoid any inconvenience.

Will there be additional requirements needed for the processing of ePassports?

None. Essentially, the requirements for ePassport processing will remain the same as that for the MRP. Personal appearance is required for the taking of biometrics (i.e., fingerprints, photo, and signature). ###end