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Polish News

January 18, 2008

City Clerk Miguel del Valle Warns Travelers to Apply Early for a U.S. Passport

City Clerk Miguel del Valle reminds traveling Chicago residents that the City Clerk's office is an official U.S. Passport Acceptance Agency and to apply early for a passport to avoid long delays.

According to the Chicago Tribune, 76% of U.S. citizens do not have passports.* City Clerk del Valle's office anticipates an increase in passport issuance with the U.S. Department of State implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) requirements for **land and sea** travel.

According to the U.S. Department of State, the WHTI requirements for **land and sea** travel are expected to be implemented in the summer of 2008. The proposed rules require most U.S. citizens entering the United States at sea or land ports to present a valid passport.

"Residents planning to travel internationally need to apply for their passport early in order to avoid long delays and possible travel disruptions," stated City Clerk del Valle. He also noted that a U.S. Passport is valid for ten years. Additionally, for those 15 or younger it is valid for five years.

When the WHTI requirements for air travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Central and South America were implemented last January, many travelers discovered long lines and delays in passport processing. The backlog created passport processing times that doubled taking up to 12 weeks to receive a passport. These delays caused many people to experience travel interruptions and forced some to cancel trips.

To apply for a U.S. Passport for the first time, each applicant must appear in person at an official passport acceptance facility with proof of U.S. citizenship, two passport specific photos and a valid form of photo identification such as a driver's license. U.S. Passport services are available at the following City Clerk del Valle office locations:

City Clerk del Valle's Office

City Hall

121 N. LaSalle St., Room 107

Phone: (312) 744-2020

Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to
4:00 p.m.

City Clerk del Valle Satellite Offices

5301 S. Cicero Ave., Phone: (312) 745-1100

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,

Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5430 W. Gale St., Phone: (312) 742-5318

Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Passport fees:

Regular Processing (6 weeks)

Adults (Age 16 & older)...\$67.00

Children (under 16)...\$52.00

Expedited Processing (3-4 weeks)

Adults (Ages 16 & older) ...\$127.00

children (under 16)...\$112.00

Regular Processing (6 weeks)

Adults (Age 16 & older)...\$67.00

Children (under 16)...\$52.00

Expedited Processing (3-4 weeks)

Adults (Ages 16 & older) ...\$127.00

Children (under 16)...\$112.00

The passport fee must be in the form of a money order or check made payable to U.S. Department of State. There is a separate \$30 execution fee that can be paid in cash, check or money order payable to the City Clerk. For more information about accepted forms of ID, passport photo requirements and a link to the Passport section of the U.S. Department of State's website please visit City Clerk del Valle's website at www.ChiCityClerk.com.

About City Clerk del Valle

Miguel del Valle was elected as Clerk of the City of Chicago in 2007. City Clerk del Valle's office is responsible for maintaining official city government records, issuing city licenses, and distributing approximately 1.3 million vehicle stickers. City Clerk del Valle is bringing more efficiency and visibility to City Clerk services by providing greater access to public records including web casting of City Council meetings, modernizing operations to expedite the sale of dog registration and city stickers.

*Chicago Tribune, (2007, December 30), "Who We Are Now"