



Media Note
For immediate release

08 January 2017
Contact: AlgiersPress@state.gov

New Payment/Scheduling System for Visa Applicants

The U.S. Embassy is pleased to announce a new system for making payment and scheduling visa appointments. Starting January 8, after completing the on-line visa application, applicants will visit an office of Aramex (located in Algiers, Hassi Messaoud, and soon, Oran) to make payment for the visa application. Aramex will issue a receipt that will allow applicants to schedule their visa appointment. We have appointments available as early as 2 February.

As a new service, for a small additional fee, applicants will be able to have their passport returned directly to their home. Our [website](#) provides all of the instructions.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Q: Why is the U.S. Embassy making this change?**
A: Until now, applicants did not have to make payment prior to booking an appointment at the Embassy. This meant that cyber cafés and travel agents would try to reserve all available appointments and “sell” the free appointments at a high price to Algerian travelers. It had become extremely difficult for Algerian travelers to book an appointment on their own. At the same time, 30-55% of the appointments booked by these fixers would fail to appear at the Embassy – slots that could have been used by legitimate travelers. We believe that by having applicants pay for their appointments in advance, we will be better able to assess and meet demand.
- **Q: Will this contract service cost the applicants more money?**
A: No. There is no additional cost to the applicant for the contract service. Applicants will simply be paying for the application earlier in the process.
- **Q: Will all applications now be handled by a contract service instead of at the U.S. Embassy?**
A: No. After making payment through our contract service, all applications are directly handled by the U.S. Embassy and first-time travelers will still come in person for an interview with a U.S. consular officer.
- **Q: How do applicants receive the passport with visa back?**
A: If the visa is approved, the applicant can now request to have the passport with visa returned directly to a home address. The applicant will pay the courier \$10.75 (in dinar equivalent) at the time of delivery. Alternatively, applicants can pick up their passport at an Aramex office for no additional cost. The U.S. Embassy is generally able to return the passport within five business days after the visa is approved.
- **Q: What about travelers who have been to the United States before and are renewing their visas? Or children and older travelers?**
A: Travelers who have been to the United States on a visa that is still valid or expired less than 12 months ago will likely not need to come to the Embassy at all. This will be

determined once the applicant answers a series of questions on the [application website](#). If the applicant qualifies for the visa interview waiver program, the application will simply pay the application fee at Aramex and then the application will be sent to the U.S. Embassy where a consular officer will review the application and return it to Aramex. The above process also applies to children under age 14 traveling with their parents, or applicants over age 79 with prior travel to the United States. See our [interview-waiver](#) page for additional information.

- **Q: Do I need to go in person to the Aramex office or can a family member or travel service agent go for me?**

A: You do not need to go in person, but the person paying will need to present a copy of your passport. Aramex will issue a receipt based on the name in that passport. If you are traveling as a family, you can get one receipt for the whole family, but you will need to come to the interview at the Embassy together with your family book. (Note: children under age 14 do not need to appear – see above)

- **Q: What about people who want to travel before 2 February?**

A: As always, the Embassy keeps available emergency appointment slots that can be used for urgent medical travel, students whose classes in the U.S. begin soon, and businessmen with urgent travel needs. Applicants can request an emergency appointment using the same system through which they requested a regular appointment.

- **Q: Where is Aramex located?**

A: Algiers: District D - El Achour, 16035 (beside the official government printing office)
Hassi Messaoud: Quartier Sadoun, No. 25, Hassi Messaoud

- **Q: Will Aramex accept credit cards?**

A: At this time no. All payment will be in cash – Algerian dinar only. We hope to offer credit card service in the future.

- **Q: Do I need to bring the fee payment receipt to the interview with the consular officer?**

A: Yes

- **Q: Will I have to pay any other fee at the embassy?**

A: Applicants from Algeria will not need to pay any additional fees at the Embassy. For nationals of certain countries there is an additional issuance fee, based on reciprocity agreements. See our [reciprocity page](#).

- **Q: Where can I find the exact amount to pay for each visa category?**

A: When you complete the [on-line visa application](#) process you will receive a printout showing the total amount you need to pay at the Aramex office. For general information see our [Visa Fee page](#).

- **Q: What about refunds if I miss my appointment or my visa is denied?**

A: Your fee receipt is valid for one year and if you miss your initial appointment you can reschedule after a waiting period of three months. Applicants who cancel their appointment, fail to show up, or reschedule their appointment (or any combination of these) more than three times will need to pay the fee again. If you attend your appointment but your visa is denied there is no refund of the application fee.

- **Q: Is the validity of visitor visas still limited to just two years?**

A: Yes, this is based on the length of visa issued by the Algerian government to U.S. citizens visiting Algeria.

- **Q: Does this change affect Immigrant Visa applicants?**

A: Immigrant Visa applicants will now need to create a [profile on-line](#). Those Immigrant Visa applicants who need to make payment prior to their interview will now do so at the Aramex office instead of the U.S. Embassy.

- **Q: If I have any problem scheduling my appointment whom should I contact?**

A: See our [Contact Us](#) page.

#####