

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact- 609-989-6465**

**County Clerk Announces Special Days for Passport Services**

Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami-Covello will once again host special passport service days for residents of Mercer County. The County Clerk, together with her staff, will visit municipalities throughout the county to accept US Passport applications on site.

Passport processing will take place on the following dates at the following locations:

**Pennington**

**Tuesday, March 19, 10am-3pm**

Pennington Borough Hall – Council Room

30 North Main St

Pennington, NJ 08534

**East Windsor**

**Wednesday, April 10, 3pm-7pm**

East Windsor Municipal Building

16 Lanning Blvd

East Windsor, NJ 08520

**Lawrence Township**

**Thursday, April 25, 11am-3pm**

Lawrence Senior Center

30 East Darrah Ln

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

 Although walk-in applications are welcome, **residents are encouraged, but not required, to call (609) 989-6473 to reserve a time to have their applications processed and photos taken, if needed.** Every effort will be made to assist residents who have not made a reservation. Additional staff members from the County Clerk’s office will be on hand to assist residents.

 To apply for a passport, residents will need:

* Proof of US citizenship in the form of a state-certified birth certificate
* US naturalization certificate or a previous US Passport
* Proof of identity in the form of a current driver’s license or state-issued identification card.

A US passport is valid for ten years for adults and five for minors (under 16). The cost for a passport is $110 for adults and $80 for minors, plus a processing fee of $35. Photos will be taken on-site for $15 for adults and $10 for senior citizens and minors. **The County Clerk will accept checks or money orders as payment; no cash or cards can be accepted.** Federal government law requires a separate check for each application.

The US Department of State now requires the full names of passport applicants’ parents’ names to be listed on all certified birth certificates to be considered as primary evidence of US citizenship. The requirements apply to all applicants, regardless of age. Certified birth certificates missing parental information will not be accepted as proof of US citizenship.

For minors, federal passport guidelines require both parents to appear in person - or one parent in person with notarized federal consent forms - when applying for a passport for a minor.

While routine applications for US Passports are now being processed within a four to six-week period, the early spring season is a good time to apply since the US Department of State historically receives large numbers of applications as the summer travel season nears. “Travelers who have not yet applied for a passport should do so. The overall demand for passports has been rising due to changes in travel requirements, which now mandate passports for air, land and sea travel outside of the United States. This includes the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico,” advises Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami-Covello.

For those unable to participate in the events listed above, the Mercer County Clerk’s office still processes US passports on a regular basis during business hours at the office, located on 209 South Broad Street in Trenton. Residents can also apply at the Mercer County Connection satellite office, which is located in the Hamilton Square Shopping Center on State Highway 33 and Paxson Avenue in Hamilton Township. The County Connection satellite office also offers evening and Saturday hours for the convenience of Mercer County residents. Passport photos are available at both locations.

For those not planning international travel in the near future, a passport is still a good form to have. In addition to being a valid form of photo identification, a passport can be used for work authorization, applying for a new passport, obtaining a driver’s license or state-issued identification card, school registration (in some districts – check with your local school system), and proof of age (for example, when purchasing certain items requiring ID).

 For further information on US Passport requirements, residents should visit [www.mercercounty.org](http://www.mercercounty.org/) and click on “County Clerk” followed by “General Info”, or call (609) 989-6473.

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