

## IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR ALL USA CITIZENS TRAVELLING TO JA

The United States Department of State's Miami Passport Agency is advising all newly naturalized US citizens that prior to travel to Jamaica, it is imperative that all US citizens in your family have valid US passports.

The US law requires its citizens traveling by air, to enter or depart the United States using valid passports.

The airlines in Jamaica will not board American citizens attempting to use an expired US passport or a naturalization certificate or any non-American travel document, including Jamaican passports. It is imperative that all US citizens intending to travel to Jamaica submit their applications to the US Passport Office in a timely fashion prior to travel. Failure to do so results in costly delays and inconvenience in Jamaica.

The US Embassy in Kingston and its Consular Agency in Montego Bay, provide all passport services by appointment only. The Embassy has warned that there are no emergency appointments for people who failed to check their passport expiration dates prior to booking travel or who traveled without ever obtaining a passport.

At a recent community forum organized by the Jamaican Diaspora Southern USA, Ryan Dooley, Director of the US Department of State, Miami Passport Agency, indicated that there had been several incidents recently, of Jamaican nationals who had recently become citizens of the USA, travelling to Jamaica with their USA Naturalization documents only. Those persons, although citizens of the USA, were not able to return, as they did not hold a valid USA passport.

"Citizens are not longer allowed to travel on their Naturalization papers. A valid US passport is required for entry into the USA" he warned.

Mr. Dooley advised that persons visit the US Immigration website at [www.travel.stage.gov](http://www.travel.stage.gov) for relevant information pertaining to US passports – forms, instructions and locations, noting that the Miami Passport Agency of the US Department of State serves its citizens by appointment only. To make an appointment, please call 877-487-2778.

The meeting which was a two-part series was held at the Holy Family Episcopal Church in Miami, and was the first of the new Advisory Board Representative and alternates for the Southern US Region namely, Dr. Susan Lycett Davis, educator and cultural activist; Ms. Pamela Gordon, attorney at law and George Pedlar, former Miramar Commissioner and business consultant.

Referring to further discussions on matters pertaining to Jamaican nationals, Jamaican Diaspora Advisory Board Representative, Dr. Susan Lycett Davis, announced that Diaspora membership cards would soon be available to Jamaican nationals across the Diaspora. Incentives to be awarded as additional membership benefits associated with the card were currently being explored. These would be added over time, she stated.

Discussions also followed on identifying persons for a local Diaspora Council. According to Dr. Davis, the Council would represent committees to positively engage the community in programs for economic development, locally and in Jamaica, in the areas of health, education, trade and investment, youth and future leaders, faith-based, culture and community development.

Following the summit, a Community Services forum provided information and relevant service in the areas of voters' registration and citizenship drive, immigration and passport, and health education awareness.