



PROPOSED UNITED STATES PASSPORT AGENCY FEE INCREASE

WHEREAS, the United States Passport Agency is requesting a final review of the proposed increase in the passport fee. The \$35 per application increase will be retained by the passport agency. The new fee increase does not include any additional increase to the passport acceptance agencies. In 2008, the acceptance agency's fee was reduced from \$30 to \$25 or a 29% cut per application;

WHEREAS, the United States Passport Agency has recently required that the passport acceptance facilities mail all passport applications from the local facility to the passport agency using a traceable mail method. The new mail method adds approximately \$5.34 to the acceptance facility's processing cost. Larger facilities that send a higher volume of passports have a lower cost per application and may be able to absorb the increased cost, smaller facilities cannot;

WHEREAS, smaller acceptance facilities often incur traveling expenses to deliver the applicant's traceable mail to the local post office for immediate delivery;

WHEREAS, additional costs are incurred by the acceptance facilities with the new requirement for a photocopy of the applicant's ID and to attach that copy to the passport application;

WHEREAS, to process the passport application in a timely manner the application facilities must stop all other office functions to accommodate for the larger volumes of families or large groups applying at the same time. Many medium and smaller facilities do multiple functions other than passports;

WHEREAS, the remote facilities must comply with the additional passport cost requirements at a loss to their facilities and still maintain the level of compliance for the passport office and provide needed service to the smaller populations;

WHEREAS, acceptance facilities have the first initial interaction with the customer for the application, identity confirmation, fee collection and fraud awareness and must be able to support and provide passport services to the general population;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, the National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials and Clerks, requests a fee increase of \$10 to offset the new passport agency requirements. The costs incurred by the additional volume of passport applicants is reflected in the increase to the U.S. Department of State and should in turn be reflected in the additional volumes and newly mandated costs required by the acceptance facilities.

Kay Wrucke, NACRC President 2009-10