

19-278

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and wishes to advise them of policy changes to the Department of State's Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Program. This note supersedes Diplomatic Note No. 19-02, dated January 7, 2019.

Chiefs of Mission are advised that effective immediately, OFM will require mission members who have been notified to the Department with a position type of "Service Staff" or "Consular Service Staff" to obtain driver's licenses and vehicle registrations from OFM. This change applies to both Embassy and Consular Service Staff (hereafter referred to as "Service Staff") holding A-2 visas, who are not U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents, or considered locally engaged staff. Additionally, eligible dependents of such Service Staff will be obliged to obtain a driver's license or non-driver identification (NDI) card from OFM. Please refer to the Accreditation Policy Handbook for the definitions of the various position types as well as the definition of "locally engaged staff" (<https://www.state.gov/ofm/accreditation/index.htm>).

The Chiefs of Mission also are advised that for reciprocity purposes, in the absence of a bilateral agreement that addresses the treatment of Service Staff, Service Staff and their eligible dependents will be treated as Administrative and Technical Staff or Consular Employees as applicable. To clarify, Embassy Service Staff and eligible dependents will be treated as Embassy Administrative and Technical Staff and eligible dependents, and Consular Service Staff and eligible dependents will be treated as Consular Employees and eligible dependents.

The Department also wishes to take this opportunity to remind the Chiefs of Mission of OFM's longstanding policy requiring that all other mission members (Diplomatic Agents, Administrative and Technical Staff, and, beginning with this note, Service Staff at Embassies, and Consular Officers, Consular Employees, and, beginning with this note, Consular Service Staff at Consulates) and all eligible dependents of such mission members to obtain their motor vehicle services from OFM.

To implement the new policy announced above, eligible Service Staff and their dependents who have a local driver's license or identification card must apply for an OFM-issued driver's license or NDI card on or before December 31, 2019, instead of a Non-Eligibility letter. Furthermore, eligible Service Staff who have registered a vehicle with a local motor vehicle department must apply to OFM for a vehicle registration and license plates on or before December 31, 2019 via

eGov. Chiefs are informed that this also applies to the mission members described above. In addition, any eligible dependents of Service Staff who have a vehicle registered locally must register their vehicle with OFM in the principal's name. The dependent may be added to the registration as a co-owner. Detailed information on OFM's driver's licensing and motor vehicle registration policies and instructions on how to apply for OFM motor vehicle services may be found at OFM's website (www.state.gov/ofm/dmv).

These changes are a result of the Department's efforts to better serve the foreign missions community within the United States in a more efficient and uniform manner. The Department requests that Chiefs of Mission ensure this information is thoroughly disseminated to all mission personnel and their family members throughout the United States. Missions may direct any questions regarding this matter to OFM's Office of Diplomatic Motor Vehicles either by electronic mail to OFMDMVInfo@state.gov or by telephone at 202-895-3500.

Department of State,



Washington, February 15, 2019.