



U.S. Embassy, Manila, Philippines

Security Message for U.S. Citizens: *Embassy Closure on January 9, 2017*

January 6, 2017

THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TRANSMITTING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS A PUBLIC SERVICE TO U.S. CITIZENS IN THE PHILIPPINES. PLEASE DISSEMINATE THIS MESSAGE TO ALL U.S. CITIZENS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION OR NEIGHBORHOOD. THANK YOU.

The U.S. Embassy in Manila will close on Monday, January 9, 2017. The Manila City government has declared January 9 a local holiday with all city offices and schools closed.

This is due to the Procession of the Black Nazarene, one of the largest religious gatherings in the Philippines. On January 9, at 0700 hours, the procession will begin at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park, and proceed to the Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene (Quiapo Church), approximately 4.5 miles total distance. The procession is expected to last approximately 20 hours due to the immense crowds along the route. Crowds will start gathering in the Rizal Park area on Sunday, January 8.

The Philippines National Police have advised that road closures and massive pedestrian and vehicle traffic along Roxas Boulevard and adjacent major thoroughfares will make **travel in the downtown Manila area difficult or impossible**, as people assemble to participate in the event and during the event itself. The police have also warned that **all cell phone coverage will be jammed** in the vicinity of areas along the route of the procession, with expected cell phone disruptions throughout Metro Manila.

The Embassy reminds U.S. citizens of the importance of taking preventive measures to ensure their safety and security while traveling and residing in the Philippines and recommends exercising caution in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. Remain aware of your surroundings and monitor local news stations for updates. The Department of State [Worldwide Caution](#), dated September 9, 2016, indicates there is an ongoing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests abroad, including the Philippines. Extremists have targeted sporting events, theaters, markets, mass transportation systems – including airlines, and other public venues where large crowds gather. Crowded nightclubs, shopping malls, buses, and popular restaurants have also been targets.

If you are a U.S. citizen in an emergency, you may contact American Citizen Services at +(63) (2) 301-2000 during the Embassy's closure. The U.S. Embassy will reopen to the public on Tuesday, January 10, 2017.

For further information:

- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for the [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the [Philippines Country Specific Information](#).
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Contact the U.S. Embassy in Manila, Philippines, located at 1201 Roxas Boulevard, at +(63) (2) 301-2000, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. After-hours emergency number for U.S. citizens is +(63) (2) 301-2000.
- Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).