

15 April 2010 - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) reminds the public to check the validity of their passports and renew them six months before expiry to avoid the hassle of getting a replacement in light of increased passport applications especially during the summer season.

A passport is valid for five years, but airlines and countries require passports with validity of six months prior to the expiry date.

"We urge everyone to check the validity of their passports, and renew them six months before expiry. This way, they avoid the hassle of rushing at the last minute to secure a passport, especially when they already need to travel overseas," DFA Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Jaime Victor Ledda said.

Currently, the DFA charges P950 for regular processing (20 working days) and P1,200 for expedited processing (10 working days). For those applying in the DFA's regional consular offices (RCOs), another four days is added for transport of the passport booklet from Manila to the RCO.

The DFA also reminds passport applicants to avail of the appointment system to ensure quick and comfortable service. Walk-in applicants are discouraged.

The DFA further reiterates that securing an appointment online is free of charge. **It is warning the public against unscrupulous individuals charging applicants P200 fee for securing for them online appointments**

Applicants can check the passport requirements and secure an appointment at www.passport.com.ph

or by calling hotline (02) 737-1000. They may also call the DFA helplines at telephone numbers (02) 831-8971, (02) 551-4437, (02) 551-4402, (02) 834-4855 and (02) 834-4424. END

