

Number Of Passport Offices Doubled

TORONTO: Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, on Monday announced that winter holiday and March break travellers can now get passport services at over 300 Service Canada Centres across the country.

She said that ‘providing quicker and better service to hard working middle class Canadians is the top priority of the Government of Canada,’ at the event at Toronto Pearson International Airport

Since 2017, passport points of service have doubled from 151 to over 300 by using Service Canada’s nationwide service delivery network. This expansion provides more access to passport services in rural and remote areas—no matter where Canadians live. Canadians have more options available when applying for or renewing 5-year and 10-year passports and child passports.

Duclos said: “Our government is making passport services more accessible for Canadians, who can apply for or renew a passport at over 300 Service Canada Centres.



In the spirit of constantly improving service delivery to citizens, we are putting in place new measures to make life easier for Canadians.”

Ahmed Hussien, Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, said: “The Passport Program is one of Canada’s most valuable services that millions of Canadians rely on. As the Minister responsible for the Passport Program, my department is committed to continuously improving front-line services, maintaining

our excellent service standards and providing Canadians with more accessible options when applying for or renewing a passport.”

Officers at Service Canada Centres:

- review passport applications;
 - validate original supporting documents;
 - collect the service fee; and
 - forward application packages for processing.
- As of May 1, 2018, 64.5 percent of Canadian adults held a

valid Canadian passport.

• In 2017–18, Canada issued more than 4.8 million passports, which translates into more than 19,000 passports issued daily.

• The expansion of passport services means that more than 97 percent of Canadians now have access to passport services within 100 km of their home.

• For fiscal year 2017-18, Service Canada met passport service standards 99.66 percent of the time, with the target being 90 percent.

Liberals Looking At National Minimum Income

OTTAWA: The Trudeau Liberals appear to be warming to the idea of a guaranteed national minimum income.

A guaranteed minimum income means different things to different people, but at its core is a no-strings-attached payment governments provide instead of an assortment of targeted benefits. What it costs in additional spending, the thinking goes, it makes up in reduced bureaucracy for both the government and recipients.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Social Development Minister Jean-Yves Duclos say that the Liberal-created Canada Child Benefit amounts to a guaranteed minimum income already.

Duclos said the current suite of federal programs could one day be enhanced to provide a minimum income of sorts to all Canadians, particularly those without children who aren’t eligible for federal benefits for families, seniors or the working poor.

Health Canada Reminder On Holiday Safety Tips

OTTAWA: The holidays are a great time to get together with family and friends. However, holiday traditions can involve some safety risks that may not be found at other times of the year. Health Canada reminds Canadians to follow these tips for a safe and happy holiday season.

Holiday lights and lighted decorations

- Use lights that have the mark of an accredited certification agency, such as the

CSA, cUL or the cETL.

- Light strings and other lighted decorations, such as wreaths and reindeer, are rated for either indoor or outdoor use. Ensure that indoor lights and decorations are used only inside. Read the instructions on the package and do not exceed the recommended wattage.

- Check all light bulbs, light strings and cords. Replace broken or burned-out bulbs,

and discard any light strings or cords that are frayed, or that have exposed wires or loose connections.

- Turn off holiday lights, lighted decorations, pre-lit trees and decorations before you go to bed or leave your home.

- Check the Healthy Canadians Recalls and Safety Alerts Database before buying or using seasonal lights, as some may have been recalled.

Holiday trees and decorations

- When buying a real tree, make sure it’s fresh and water it daily.

- Keep trees away from high traffic areas, heating vents, radiators, stoves, fireplaces and burning candles.

- Choose tinsel, ornaments, artificial icicles and other trimmings made of plastic or non-leaded metals.

- Don’t let children put decorations in their mouths, as some may be easily swallowed and harmful to their health.

- Keep metal, sharp or breakable tree ornaments, and those with small removable parts or button batteries, away from young children.

Toys and gifts

- Toys can be recalled for health or safety reasons. Check the Healthy Canadians Recalls and Safety Alerts Database for more information about the latest recalls.

- Buy age-appropriate toys. Toys for older children may contain small parts or other hazards that may make them unsafe for young children.

- Read and follow the labels, warnings, safety messages and other instructions that come with a toy.

- Purchase sturdy, well-made toys that come with contact information for the

manufacturer or importer.

- Ensure that batteries are properly installed by an adult and not accessible to children.

- Make sure that button batteries (often found in musical greeting cards, small electronic devices, children’s books and flashing jewellery) stay securely in the products.

Look for products with battery compartments that prevent easy access. Button batteries are small enough to be swallowed and can cause serious internal injuries in as little as two hours.

- Supervise children at play and teach them to use their new toys safely.

- Promptly remove and discard all toy packaging like plastic bags, plastic wrap, foam, staples, ties and protective film. A child can suffocate or choke on some of these items.

Candle Safety

- Keep burning candles away from materials that can catch fire like curtains, decorations, Christmas trees and clothing.

- Do not leave candles burning with no one in the room and extinguish all candles before you go to sleep or leave your home.

- Keep burning candles out of reach of children and pets.

- Trim candle wicks to a height of 5-7 mm (1/4 inch) before lighting the candle and trim them again every 2-3 hours to prevent high flames.

- Use well ventilated candle holders that are sturdy and will not tip over. Avoid wooden or plastic holders, as these can catch fire. Use caution with glass candle holders, which can break when they get too hot.

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