



NO 12

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OPENING OF REGIONAL PASSPORT OFFICE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, today announced the opening in Montreal of the first Regional Passport Office. This office is located at Commerce House, Mezzanine Floor, 1080 Beaver Hall Hill. Offices will be opened in Toronto and Vancouver within the next few weeks.

These centres have been chosen as the major gateway cities for Canadians travelling abroad. The regional offices will deal with passport applications of an urgent or emergency character and will offer assistance to persons encountering difficulty in answering the questions on the application form or in providing the necessary supporting documents.

This is an additional service provided by the Department of External Affairs to deal with cases where specific difficulties arise. In the normal course, passport applications should be mailed to the Passport Office in Ottawa in the addressed envelope provided. The regional offices are not equipped to process mailed applications.

The Passport Office points out that applicants should apply for their passports well in advance of departure dates. Before mailing their applications to the Passport Office, Ottawa, they should check their application carefully to ensure that there is no delay due to errors or omissions. Among the most common errors which cause delays are lack of evidence of citizenship, missed questions, unqualified guarantors, the wrong kind of photographs and failure to enclose the required \$10.00 passport fee. Errors of this kind occur in more than a third of all the applications received by the Passport Office.