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U.S. Embassy to Temporarily Resume Consular Services as Russia Pauses Hiring Ban

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The Embassy said Russia has paused its ban on hiring foreign nationals at U.S. diplomatic missions.
Vladimir Gerdo / TASS

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow will temporarily resume routine U.S. citizen services and processing of immigrant visas in priority and urgent cases after Russia paused a ban on it hiring foreign nationals, the Embassy said Friday.

On Wednesday, the Embassy halted most of its consular services to U.S. nationals and Russians seeking a visa after it said it was forced to cut 75% of its staff due to Russia's hiring ban, which was imposed amid tit-for-tat sanctions.

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"The Russian government has informed U.S. Embassy Moscow of its intent to postpone the

prohibition of U.S. Mission Russia's employment of foreign nationals," the Embassy said in an emailed statement.

The Embassy will temporarily resume services to U.S. citizens including passport services, consular reports of birth abroad and limited notarial services through July 16 as a result, it said.

American citizens with expiring visas in Russia are still advised to leave the country before the June 15 deadline, it said.

The U.S. Embassy will not process nonimmigrant visas for Russians seeking to travel, work or study in the U.S. during this time.

Russia's ban on hiring foreign staff at U.S. diplomatic missions came amid a round of tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions as relations between Moscow and Washington plummeted this spring over the conflict in eastern Ukraine, the jailing of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny and more.

Despite the strain, Biden is expected to hold a face-to-face summit with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin next month.

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