Scan Your Documents with Your Smartphone!

Did you know you can scan documents using your smartphone for the U.S. Department of State? Both Android and IOS smartphones come with pre-loaded applications (apps) that enable document scanning! There are also several **free software apps** available for download that are compatible with most smartphone models.

These apps allow you to use the camera on your phone to capture multi-page documents and turn them into .pdf files to upload as part of a Department of State application. You can determine what apps are available on or compatible with your phone by searching for **"Document Scanning Applications"** in your browser. Step-by-step written and video instructions are available for many of the apps on video streaming sites.

PLEASE NOTE: There are varying file size limitations depending on the type of consular service or visa you are applying for. Do not exceed the limits listed: eCRBA: 10 MB, Immigrant Visas: 2 MB, Visa Photos: 240 KB.

8 Tips and Tricks for Better Quality Scans:

1. Smooth out documents so they can lie flat.
2. Take your photos in a well-lit room or in direct sunlight.
3. Take photos facing the light so your shadow doesn't fall on the paper.
4. When available in an app, use the camera flash to help illuminate the paper.
5. Take the photo so the paper fills the screen without cutting off any of the document.
6. Use the "crop" tool in the application to remove any remaining background.
7. Save the scan as a .pdf file with a name that is easily recognizable.
8. Email scans to a trusted email account or save them to the cloud.