

International Document Requirements

Effective January 31, 2008, U.S. and Canadian citizens ages 19 and older should no longer expect that they will be able to prove identity and citizenship by relying on an oral declaration alone. Instead, travelers will be asked to present documents from one of the options below when entering the United States at land or sea ports of entry. Travelers who do not present one of the documents listed below may be delayed as U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers attempt to verify their identity and citizenship.

On June 1, 2009, U.S. citizens returning home from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean or Bermuda, by land or sea, will be required to present one of the travel documents listed below. Many of these documents are already available, and obtaining one now will ensure that you are ready on June 1, 2009, when they will be required.

U.S. Passport – This is an internationally recognized travel document that verifies a person’s identity and nationality. It is accepted for travel by air, land and sea.

U.S. Passport Card – This is a new, limited-use travel document that fits in your wallet and costs less than a U.S. Passport. It is only valid for travel by land and sea.

Enhanced Driver’s License (EDL) – Several states and Canadian provinces/territories are issuing this driver’s license or identification document that denotes identity and citizenship. It is specifically designed for cross-border travel into the U.S. by land or sea.

Trusted Traveler Program Cards – NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST enrollment cards can speed your entry into the U.S. and are issued only to pre-approved, low-risk travelers. The cards are valid for use at land or sea; the NEXUS card can be used in airports with a NEXUS kiosk.

Note: Beginning June 1, 2009, U.S. and Canadian citizen children under age 16 arriving by land or sea from contiguous territory may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.

Beginning June 1, 2009, U.S. and Canadian citizen children under age 19 arriving by land or sea from contiguous territory and traveling with a school group, religious group, social or cultural organization, or sports team, may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.

The group should be prepared to present a letter on organizational letterhead with the following information:

- The name of the group and supervising adult
- A list of the children on the trip, and the primary address, phone number, date of birth, place of birth, and name of at least one parent or legal guardian for each child

- A written and signed statement of the supervising adult certifying that he or she has obtained parental or legal guardian consent for each participating child.

For Travelers Other than U.S. and Canadian Citizens

All existing nonimmigrant visa and passport requirements will remain in effect and will not be altered by the changes that are implemented on January 31, 2008.

U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents

Permanent Resident Card (I-551) or other valid evidence of lawful permanent residence is required.

Mexican Citizens

Mexican citizens, including children, must present a valid passport and a B-1/B-2 nonimmigrant visa or a Border Crossing Card.

Know Your Destination Country Document Requirements

It is strongly recommended that all travelers leaving the U.S. verify the specific documentary requirements for their destination country. This information is available through the Department of State website or by consulting with the Embassy of the country you are visiting to determine what documents are needed to meet the entry requirements of that country. (Cambios Importantes en los Documentos Requeridos para Viajes Internacionales Terrestres y Marítimos) These requirements could include a birth certificate, passport, or passport and visa for entry into that country. We are implementing new procedures to better serve you and enhance the security of the United States. Travelers who do not present one of the documents listed may be delayed as U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers attempt to verify their citizenship and identity. Thank you for your cooperation. U.S. Customs and Border Protection will begin the transition to the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative secure document requirement over the next 18 months, with implementation as early as June 1, 2009.