

## GUIDELINES FOR FOREIGN TRAVELERS TO THE UNITED STATES

### A. Traveling Under the Visa Waiver Program

The only way you can travel to the United States without a visa is if you are traveling under the Visa Waiver Program.

#### Can I travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program?

There are 27 countries that participate in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).<sup>1</sup>

If your country is on this list, and you are traveling to the United States for tourism or business for 90 days or less, and the conditions below do not apply to you, you do NOT need a visa.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise, you need to obtain a visa. Please see "Getting a Visa" below.

<sup>1</sup> VWP countries include:

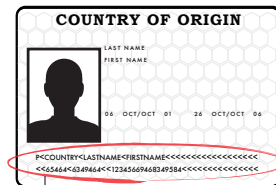
Andorra, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (for citizens with the unrestricted right of permanent abode in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man)

<sup>2</sup> You need a visa if you:

- Intend to stay longer than 90 days
- Intend to travel to the United States for a reason other than business or tourism
- Have been arrested, even if not convicted
- Have a criminal record
- Have a serious, communicable disease (including HIV)
- Have been refused entry to the United States on a previous occasion
- Have been deported from the United States
- Have previously overstayed the 90 days permitted under the VWP
- Are a child included on your parent's passport

### B. 2005 - JUNE 26 Machine-Readable Zones

All travelers to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program must have a machine-readable passport by **June 26, 2005**. A machine-readable passport has two lines of text as letters, numbers and chevrons (<<<) at the bottom of the personal information page with your picture. It looks like the image below.



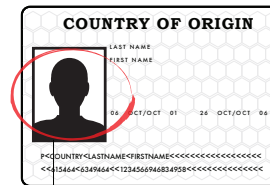
MACHINE-READABLE ZONE  
A machine-readable passport has two lines of text as letters, numbers, and chevrons (<<<) at the bottom of the personal information page with your picture.

If your passport does not have this feature, you have two options:

- Get a new passport that has a machine-readable zone. (All countries under the Visa Waiver Program issue new passports with a machine-readable zone.)
- Obtain a visa. Please see "Getting a Visa."

### C. 2005 - OCTOBER 26 Digital Photographs

New passports issued by Visa Waiver Program countries must include a digital photo, or the traveler will be required to get a visa. A digital photo is one that is printed on the page, not a photo that is glued or laminated into the passport. It looks like the image below.



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPH  
A digital photo is one that is printed on the page, not a photo that is glued or laminated into the passport.

If your passport **does not** have this feature, you can still travel without a visa if you:

- Were issued a valid passport **before October 26, 2005**, with a machine-readable zone, or
- You have "e-Passport," which includes an integrated computer chip capable of storing biographic information from the data page, a digitized photograph, and other biometric information.

If you are issued a passport **on or after October 26, 2005**, and it **does not** meet these requirements, you will need to obtain a visa. Please see "Getting a Visa."

A visa does not permit entry to the United States. A visa simply indicates that your application has been reviewed by a U.S. consular officer, and that the officer has determined you are eligible to enter the country for a specific purpose. A visa allows you to travel to the United States as far as the port of entry (airport or land border crossing), where the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer has the authority to permit you to enter the United States.

### D. 2006 - OCTOBER 26 e-Passports

New passports issued by Visa Waiver Program countries must be e-Passports, which include an integrated computer chip capable of storing biographic information from the data page, a digitized photograph, and other biometric information. You can identify the e-Passport with the symbol below.



e-Passport symbol



If your passport **does not** have this feature you can still travel without a visa if it is a valid passport, issued **before October 26, 2006**, that includes a machine-readable zone and digital photograph.

If you were issued a passport **on or after October 26, 2006**, and it is not an e-Passport, you will need to obtain a visa. Please see "Getting a Visa."

## GETTING A VISA

Foreign travelers who need a visa to travel to the United States must apply for one at an American embassy or consulate. For information on how to get a visa please go to

<http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov/obtainingvisa/index.html>

