

New Passport Requirements

Beginning January 23, 2007, citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda are required to present a passport to enter the United States when arriving by air from any part of the Western Hemisphere.

The air requirement is part of the departments of State and Homeland Security's Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). This change in travel document requirements is the result of recommendations made by the 9/11 Commission, which Congress subsequently passed into law in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

The only acceptable alternative documents to a passport for air travel will be the Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) and the NEXUS Air Card. The NEXUS Air Card will only be accepted when used in conjunction with the NEXUS Air program at certain airports. The MMD card will only be accepted when used on official business by U.S. Citizen Merchant Mariners. All active duty members of the United States Armed Forces will be exempt from the requirement to present a valid passport when entering the United States. Legal Permanent Residents of the U.S. may re-enter on the I-551 Permanent Resident Card.

A separate proposed rule addressing land and sea travel will be published at a later date with specific requirements for travelers entering the United States through land and sea border crossings. As early as 1/1/2008, citizens traveling between the US and Canada, Mexico, Central and South American, the Caribbean, and Bermuda by land or sea may be required to present a valid passport or other documents as determined by the Department of Homeland Security to enter the United States.

More Information Can Be Obtained At:

www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1168972780899.shtm