

# FACT SHEET

## Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative Land and Sea Travel Document Requirements



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

### What is the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)?

This initiative establishes document requirements for travel by land or sea into the United States from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. Travel between the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands is not affected.

### Who does the travel initiative affect?

It affects United States, Canadian and Bermudian citizens entering the United States by land or sea.

### When will WHTI Land and Sea go into effect?

Effective **June 1, 2009**, only WHTI-compliant documents are acceptable for entering the United States.

### Why is the U.S. Government implementing this travel initiative?

WHTI is the joint Department of State (DOS) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) plan to implement the statutory mandates of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA). WHTI establishes document requirements for travelers entering the United States who were previously exempt, including citizens of the U.S., Canada and Bermuda.

### What is the goal of requiring secure documents?

The goal is to strengthen border security while facilitating entry into the United States for U.S. citizens and legitimate international travelers, making the process more efficient and convenient.

### What types of documents are accepted June 1, 2009 for entry into the United States via land and sea?

- U.S. citizens can present a valid: U.S. Passport; Passport Card; Enhanced Driver's License; Trusted Traveler Program card (NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST); U.S. Military identification card when traveling on official orders; U.S. Merchant Mariner document when traveling in conjunction with official maritime business; or Form I-872 American Indian Card, or (when available) Enhanced Tribal Card.
- U.S. and Canadian citizen children under the age of 16 (or under 19, if traveling with a school, religious group, or other youth group) need only present a birth certificate or other proof of citizenship. The birth certificate can be original, photocopy, or certified copy.
- WHTI does not affect U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents, who are still required to present their permanent resident card (Form I-551) or other valid evidence of permanent residence status.
- Canadian citizens can present a valid passport, Enhanced Driver's License, or Trusted Traveler Program card (NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST).
- Bermudian citizens are required to present a valid passport.
- Mexican citizens, including children, are required to present a passport with visa, or a Border Crossing Card.
- U.S. citizens on closed-loop cruises (cruises that begin and end at the same U.S. port) are able to enter the United States with a birth certificate and government-issued photo ID. Please be aware that you may still be required to present a passport to enter the countries your cruise ship is visiting. Check with your cruise line to ensure you have the appropriate documents.

For more information, visit [www.GetYouHome.gov](http://www.GetYouHome.gov)  
or contact the Office of Public Affairs at 202-344-1780.



## What is an Enhanced Driver's License?

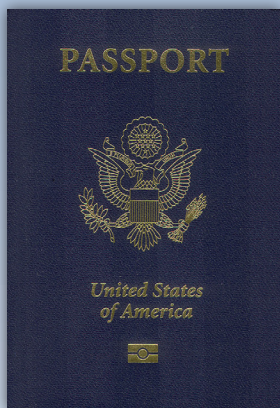


Michigan, New York, Vermont and Washington are producing an Enhanced Driver's License (EDL) that fulfills WHTI requirements. EDLs are acceptable for entry into the U.S. at any land or sea port of entry – not just at ports of entry in the issuing

states. DHS has worked closely with the government of Canada to develop similar documents for Canadian citizens; British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec are issuing EDLs.

For information on costs, validity and issuing agencies, visit the appropriate state government website, or visit [www.GetYouHome.gov](http://www.GetYouHome.gov) for a list of links to state websites and more information.

## How do I get a passport?



United States citizens can visit the State Department's travel Web site, [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov), or call the U.S. National Passport Information Center: (877) 4USA-PPT; TDD/TTY: (888) 874-7793. Additionally, instructions for obtaining a passport are available through the U.S. Postal Service at more than 9,000 locations nationwide.

Foreign nationals should contact their respective governments to obtain passports.

## What is a Passport Card and how do I get one?

This limited-use international travel document is a card-format passport. It is acceptable for entry into the United States by U.S. citizens through land and sea ports of entry from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. Visit [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) to apply for a Passport Card.



## How do I apply for SENTRI/NEXUS/FAST?



Visit [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov), click on "Travel," then click on "Trusted Traveler Programs." Note that not everyone is eligible to participate in these programs.

## What if I don't have the required documents when I travel to or return to the United States?

Travelers without WHTI-compliant documents are likely to be delayed at the border as CBP officers work to verify identity and citizenship.

## Does WHTI affect travel document requirements for entry into other countries?

No. WHTI concerns entry into the U.S. Each country has its own travel document requirements. We recommend that travelers always check with the country they are planning to visit about document requirements. Visit [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for more information.

**Visit [www.GetYouHome.gov](http://www.GetYouHome.gov) for more information.**



U.S. Customs and Border Protection