

IMPORTANT INFORMATION to International Visitors to the IPE/IFE who are in the Visa Waiver Program

All Visa Waiver travelers to the United State must use the Electronic System for Travel Authorization beginning January 12, 2009.

The following countries are currently in the US Visa Waiver Program:

Andorra	France	Luxembourg	Singapore
Austria	Germany	Monaco	Slovenia
Australia	Iceland	Netherlands	Spain
Belgium	Ireland	New Zealand	Sweden
Brunei	Italy	Norway	Switzerland
Denmark	Japan	Portugal	United Kingdom
Finland	Liechtenstein	San Marino	

The old, green I-94 forms will no longer be in use. The old I-94 system for entry into the USA is decades old and an important reason behind the changeover is to bring the program into the 21st century, automate the procedure and get rid of the paper. Currently there is no fee involved. There are also other obvious benefits for visitors. As of January 12, 2009 Visa Waiver Travelers will no longer have to fill in an I-94 form every time they enter the US. It also means that travelers will know before they leave their country of origin / arrival in the US, that they should be OK for entry (but not guaranteed). Leaving the green departure record accidentally on departure in the traveler's passport also becomes a problem of the past.

Once your details are entered into ESTA, you will then be given an application number, even if you have not provided address and flight information, although basic outline address information must be entered even if you have to update it later. Once approved and, if preferred, this can then be printed out but you must make note of the approval number for future reference (to update information for further visits, for instance). However it is not mandatory to print the approval to show to the Customs Border Protection (CBP) officer upon entry into the USA. Each family member travelling is required to complete an ESTA application.

ESTA applications can be made at any time ahead of travel but should be made at least 72 hours before departure. If ESTA approval is not given, then travel to the USA will not be permitted and therefore it is highly advisable, wherever possible, you submit applications and get ESTA approval outside the 72 hour deadline, to avoid such refusals.

International travelers who are seeking to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program are now subject to enhanced security requirements. All eligible travelers who wish to travel under the Visa Waiver Program must apply for authorization as outlined in the following web site:

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/esta/

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a travel authorization?

To strengthen the security of travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, requirements to travel visa-free have been enhanced. Nationals of Visa Waiver Program countries will still be eligible to travel without a visa but will have to obtain an approved travel authorization prior to their travel to the United States.

Here is how the travel authorization process works:

The Department of Homeland Security and the United States Customs and Border Protection have provided a secure public Web site with an automated form for you, or a third party, to complete in order to apply for a travel authorization. Once you enter the required biographic and travel information on the secure Web site, your application is processed by the system to determine if you are eligible to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program without a visa. The system will provide you with an automated response, and prior to boarding, a carrier will electronically verify with the United States Customs and Border Protection that you have an approved travel authorization on file.

Who is required to have a travel authorization?

All passengers traveling visa-free under the Visa Waiver Program are required to have an approved travel authorization prior to traveling to the United States. Even non-ticketed infants are required to have an approved travel authorization, if they do not have a visa for travel to the United States. An application may be submitted by a third party on behalf of a Visa Waiver Program traveler.

Does a travel authorization guarantee me admission to the United States?

If your electronic travel authorization is approved, this approval establishes that you are eligible to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, but does not guarantee that you are admissible to the United States. Upon arrival in the United States you will be inspected by a Customs and Border Protection officer at a port of entry who may determine that you are inadmissible under the Visa Waiver Program or for any reason under United States law.

How long is my travel authorization valid?

Unless revoked, travel authorizations are valid for two years from the date of authorization, or until your passport expires, whichever comes first. The **Authorization Approved** screen displays your travel authorization expiration date.

When do I need to apply for a travel authorization?

Applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel to the United States. The Department of Homeland Security recommends that travel authorization applications be submitted at least 72 hours prior to travel. Unless revoked, travel authorizations are valid for two years from the date of authorization, or until your passport expires, whichever comes first.