

United States Visa Advisory

The U.S. has updated its visa policies to increase security. It will likely take longer to get a visa than it used to and applicants will find that a few new security measures have been put into place. For details that may apply specifically to your country, see information posted by your nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Citizens of certain countries, traveling for visitor visa purposes for 90 days or less and who meet all the requirements, can travel to the U.S. for tourism or business under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

Visa Waiver Program

Currently, the 27 countries shown below participate in the VWP. Some citizens of Canada and Bermuda do not need a visa to visit the U.S.

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

Passports

Since October 2004 visa waiver travelers from all VWP countries must present a machine-readable passport at the U.S. port of entry. Machine-readable passports issued since October 2005 require a digital photograph printed on the data page or integrated chip with information from the data page.

A passport with a validity date at least six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the U.S. is required. If more than one person is included in the passport, each person desiring a visa must make a separate application. Special attention must be given for temporary passports.

Recommendations

To avoid frustration and disappointment:

- Advance planning by travelers is essential. Review your visa status and find out if you need a U.S. visa or a visa renewal.
- Plan to submit your visa application well in advance of your departure date. Contact your nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for a current time estimate and recommendations.
- Visit the embassy or consular section website, where you will apply for your visa and find information on how to schedule an interview appointment and pay fees. An interview is required as a standard part of processing for most visa applicants.
- Applicants must now also have two index-finger scans collected as part of the visa application process. These finger scans are normally collected by the consular officer at the visa interview window but in some countries they are collected prior to the visa interview.

Disclaimer

Please note that this information is given in good faith but that the regulations may change and the only authoritative sources of information are the U.S. Government websites at www.unitedstatesvisas.gov and travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html.

Visa Letters

A visa support letter may be provided for authors and registered attendees. Further, spouses requiring visa assistance must be registered for an IMS Guest Program event. See the IMS 2007 website (www.ims2007.org) for Guest Program details.

For additional visa assistance, please contact Dr. Zaher Bardai at zb@ieee.org.