Immigration resource news magazine for United states of america

Immigration Magazine

CBP Travel Tips for Summer, Busiest Travel Season in USA

Tiyalaw · Friday, June 1st, 2012

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Summer is the start of the busiest travel season to the United States of America (USA). U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is reminding travelers of some important tips especially to help expedite the processing of returning U.S. citizens or residents, and international visitors. CBP is agency within the Department of Homeland Security and overseas the management, control and protection of USA nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. The travel tips include:

1. Travelers may speed up their crossing through a land border port with a radio frequency identification enabled travel document (RFID-enabled cards) such as a U.S. passport card, border crossing card or permanent resident card issued after 2008, enhanced driver's license/enhanced identification card or trusted traveler card.
2. Travelers should also ensure they have an approved travel document:

- The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative requires U.S. and Canadian citizens, age 16 and older to present a valid, acceptable travel document, such as a passport, a U.S. passport card, a trusted traveler card (NEXUS, SENTRI, Global Entry or FAST/EXPRES), permanent resident card or an enhanced driver's license that denotes both identity and citizenship when entering the U.S. by land or sea.
- U.S. and Canadian citizens under age 16 may present a birth certificate or alternative proof of citizenship when entering by land or sea.
- All travelers must have a valid passport book for international air travel.

3. All nationals or citizens of the 36 Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries are required to have an approved Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) prior to boarding when traveling by air or sea to the U.S. under the VWP. ESTA applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel (and should be submitted as soon as possible) at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/esta/ An approved is generally valid for up to two years or until the applicant's passport expires, whichever comes first. Authorizations will be valid for multiple entries into the United States.
CBP provides the following "Travel Checklist":

□ Have all the required travel documents and identification for entry or re-entry to the United States. Passports are required for air travel. Visit travel.state.gov for country-specific information. (travel.state.gov)

□ Citizens of Visa Waiver Program countries should have an approved Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) before boarding.

□ Foreign nationals traveling on a visa should have a completed I-94 form when approaching CBP processing.

□ Travelers should have a completed Customs Declaration form (6059b) upon reaching CBP processing: (a) Declare everything you are bringing from abroad, even if you bought it in a duty-free shop; (b) Things bought abroad for personal use or as gifts may be eligible for duty exemptions but not things for resale.

□ Travelers should know the difference between prohibited merchandise (which is forbidden by law to enter the U.S.) and restricted merchandise (items needing special permit to be allowed into the U.S.). For more information, please visit the Restricted/Prohibited section of the CBP website at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/prohibited_restricted.xml .

□ Travelers should not attempt to bring fruits, meats, dairy/poultry products and/or firewood into the United States without first checking whether they are permitted. For more information, please visit the Bringing Agricultural Products Into the United States section of the CBP website at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/clearing/agri_prod_inus.xml .

□ Travelers should factor additional time into trips during busy travel seasons and understand that CBP must conduct a thorough inspection of the nearly one million travelers entering the country each day.

□ Travelers should understand that CBP officers can inspect you and your personal belongings without a warrant. This may include your luggage, vehicle, and personal searches and is meant to enforce our laws as well as protect legitimate travelers.

□ Travelers should monitor border wait times for various ports of entry at (http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/wait_times/ . Travelers are encouraged to plan their trips during periods of lighter traffic or to use an alternate, less heavily traveled port of entry. For more information, travelers can find up to date wait time information on the CBP website.

□ Travelers who are frequent international travelers should apply to be a member of a trusted traveler program, if not already done so. For more information, please visit the Trusted Traveler section of the CBP website at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/trusted_traveler/ .

□ Travelers should be familiarized with the “Know Before You Go” brochure or section of CBP.gov. (CBP.gov)

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This entry was posted on Friday, June 1st, 2012 at 7:00 am and is filed under Citizenship, Green Card, Green Card – Others, Green Card via Family, Green Card via Work, Immigration Forms, Immigration News, Other Visas, Others, Visas, Work Visas
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