

# VISA Guidelines

A visa allows you to travel to the United States. Only the immigration officer has the authority to permit you to enter the United States. There are two categories of U.S. visas: immigrant and nonimmigrant. Immigrant visas are for people who intend to live permanently in the U.S. Nonimmigrant visas are for people who wish visit U.S. on a temporary basis for tourism, medical treatment, business, work or study.

## Non-immigrant visas

### Apply for your Visa well in advance of your travel! Important steps to remember:

- 1) Check your visa status, and find out if you need a U.S. visa or a renewal.
- 2) Review the visa wait times information for interview appointments and visa processing at each embassy and consular section worldwide available on our website at [Visa Wait Times](#). Visit the embassy or consular section website where you will apply for your visa to find out how to schedule an interview appointment, pay fees and any other instructions.
- 3) Plan on an interview at the embassy or consulate, which is required for most visa applicants. As part of the visa interview, a quick fingerprint scan should be expected. Applicants who need additional screening are informed during the application process.

### Important points to remember:

1) For those who come from abroad to attend the IEEE CEFC 2010, please be aware that as of 12 January 2009, entry into the United States require a new Clearance form to be completed before boarding a vessel. Application for this Travel Authorization can be found at: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/esta.html?language=en>

- 1) For nationals included in the [Visa Waiver Program \(VWP\)](#) passports must be valid for at least 90 days from date of entry.
- 2) All travelers entering the USA under the Visa Waiver Program now require individual machine-readable passports. Children included on a parent's passport also now require their own machine-readable passport. Travelers not in possession of machine-readable passports will require a valid USA entry visa.
- 3) Passports issued on or after 26 October 2005, will need to have a biometrics identifier in order for the holder to travel visa free under the VWP. Machine-readable passports issued between 26 October 2005 and 25 October 2006 require a digital photograph printed on the data page or an integrated chip with information from the data page.

## Passports

Valid passport required by all nationals of countries. Validity varies - for most countries the passport must be valid for at least six months from the date on which the holder enters

the United States. If not, the holder will be admitted until the expiration date on the passport; check with the embassy.

**New Requirements for Travelers:** The US Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 requires that by 1 January 2008, travelers to and from the Caribbean, Bermuda, Panama, Mexico and Canada have a passport or other secure, accepted document to enter or re-enter the United States. In order to facilitate the implementation of this requirement, the administration is proposing to complete it in phases following a proposed timeline, to be as follows:

\* 8 January 2007 - Requirement applied to all air and sea travel to or from Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda.

\* 1 January 2008 - Requirement extended to all land border crossings as well as air and sea travel.

For details about the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative,

visit: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cbpmc/cbpmc\\_2223.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cbpmc/cbpmc_2223.html).

### **Visas**

Required by all nationals of countries except the following:

- 1) Citizens of countries under the [Visa Waiver Program](#).
- 2) Nationals of Canada provided holding valid passports.

**Note:** 1) Landed Immigrants of Canada and British residents of Bermuda who are citizens of, and have valid passports from, Commonwealth countries or Ireland are no longer eligible to enter the USA without a visa.

2) All passengers using US airports for transit purposes are required to obtain a transit visa. This does not affect qualified travelers traveling visa free under the Visa Waiver Program

### **The following are not eligible to receive a USA entry visa:**

- 1) people afflicted with certain serious communicable diseases or disorders deemed threatening to the property, safety or welfare of others;
- 2) anyone who has been arrested (except for very minor driving offences) or who has a criminal record;
- 3) narcotics addicts or abusers and drug traffickers;
- 4) anyone who has been deported from or denied admission to the USA.

If entering the USA by air or sea, passengers must hold a return or onward ticket or itinerary (if onward tickets terminate in Bermuda, Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands, travelers must be legal permanent residents of those countries), hold a completed form I-94W and enter aboard an air or sea carrier participating in the Visa Waiver Program.

If entering the USA by land from Canada or Mexico, hold a completed form I-94W\* issued by Immigration at the port of entry and a fee (only payable in US Dollars).

**Note:**

- 1) Passengers must have the full address and ZIP code of where they are staying in the USA to be able to fully complete the I-94W form.
- 2) Members of Visa Waiver Program countries who want to work, study or remain more than 90 days in the USA must apply for a visa before traveling.
- 3) Holders of UK passports with the endorsement British Subject, British Dependent Territories Citizen, British Protected Person, British Overseas Citizen or British National (Overseas) Citizen do not qualify for the Visa Waiver Program. Persons unsure about visa requirements should contact the US consulate general or the visa department of the US embassy

**Validity**

Visas may be used for travel to the USA until the date it expires, or, if marked valid indefinitely. Some visas are valid for multiple entries. The length of stay in the USA is determined by US immigration officials at the time of entry but is generally six months.

For further details please visit : [US Department of State website](#)

For Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, click on <http://usembassy.state.gov/>