



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection



# Visa Waiver Program Travelers

Introducing the Electronic System for Travel Authorization

**Beginning August 1, 2008**, the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) will be accessible via Internet for citizens and eligible nationals of Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries to apply for advance authorization to travel to the United States under the VWP.

**ESTA** will initially be available in English only. Other languages will follow. **Effective January 12, 2009**, all VWP travelers will be required to obtain an electronic travel authorization prior to boarding a carrier to travel by air or sea to the U.S. under the VWP.

## How the Electronic System for Travel Authorization Works

Log onto the ESTA Web site at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> and complete an on-line application in English. Travelers are encouraged to apply early. The web-based system will prompt you to answer basic biographical and eligibility questions typically requested on a paper I-94W form.

Applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel, however, DHS recommends that applications be submitted no less than 72 hours prior to travel. In most cases you will receive a response within seconds:

1. **Authorization Approved:** Travel authorized.
2. **Travel Not Authorized:** Traveler must obtain a nonimmigrant visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate before traveling to the U.S.
3. **Authorization Pending:** Traveler will need to check the ESTA Web site for updates within 72 hours to receive a final response.

### An approved travel authorization via ESTA is:

- Required for all VWP travelers prior to boarding a carrier to travel by air or sea to the U.S. under the VWP beginning January 12, 2009;
- Valid, unless revoked, for up to two years or until the traveler's passport expires, whichever comes first;
- Valid for multiple entries into the U.S. As future trips are planned, or if an applicant's destination addresses or itineraries change after their authorization has been approved, they may easily update that information through the ESTA Web site; and
- Not a guarantee of admissibility to the United States at a port of entry. ESTA approval only authorizes a traveler to board a carrier for travel to the U.S. under the VWP. (For additional information, please visit "For International Visitors" at [www.CBP.gov/travel](http://www.CBP.gov/travel).)

ESTA will enhance the security of the VWP and enable the United States to maintain and expand participation in the program.

After January 12, 2009, VWP travelers who do not apply for and receive travel authorization via ESTA prior to travel may be denied boarding, experience delayed processing or be denied admission at a U.S. port of entry.

The VWP is administered by DHS and enables citizens and eligible nationals of certain countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. Additional information regarding the VWP and ESTA is available at [www.cbp.gov/esta](http://www.cbp.gov/esta).

### Eligible Countries:

Countries currently enrolled in the Visa Waiver Program include:

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

We look forward to ensuring your travel remains safe and convenient today and in the future.

## Waiver of Rights

As a condition of each admission into the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, the submission of biometric identifiers (including fingerprints and photographs) during processing upon arrival in the United States shall reaffirm the waiver of any rights to review or appeal of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer's determination as to admissibility, or to contest, other than on the basis of an application for asylum, any removal action arising from an application for admission under the Visa Waiver Program.



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