

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Things You Need To Know As An International Traveler Entering The U.S. Virgin Islands

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is encouraging travelers this holiday season to know the rules and regulations relating to arrivals from international travel, a press release CBP issued on Friday has revealed.

“Programs such as Global Entry, expedite the arrivals process, but travelers can make their own experience better by being ready and aware of the requirements when entering the United States,” stated Marcelino Borges, director of Field Operations for Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands.

CBP is undergoing modernization efforts to streamline the traveler's inspection process, increase officer efficiency and reduce operating costs in order to provide better services for all travelers entering the United States. These programs allow CBP officers to process travelers safely and efficiently while enhancing security.

Travelers can take additional steps to smooth their arrivals process by familiarizing themselves with U.S. rules and regulation before departing to avoid potential penalties and fines.

Upon arrival to a US port of entry, travelers must declare the following:

- Items you purchased and are carrying with you upon return to the United States.
- Items you inherited.
- Items you bought in duty-free shops, on the ship, or on the plane.
- Repairs or alterations to any items you took abroad and then brought back, even if the repairs/alterations were performed free of charge.
- Items you brought home for someone else.
- Items you intend to sell or use in your business, including business merchandise that you took out of the United States on your trip.

Travel Requirements for U.S. Citizens and US lawful permanent residents arriving by Air

All travelers must have a valid passport for international air travel. A passport is not required for US lawful permanent residents but must continue to present a valid Permanent Resident Card.

Travel Requirements for U.S. Citizens and US lawful permanent residents arriving by Sea

When entering by sea, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) requires U.S. 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, permanent resident card or an enhanced driver's license that denotes both identity and citizenship. Nevertheless, U.S. citizens on closed-loop cruises (cruises that begin and end at the same U.S. port) are able to enter the United States with a birth certificate and government-issued photo ID. Check with your cruise line to ensure you have the appropriate documents.

Also, U.S. travelers under age 16 (or under 19, if traveling with a school, religious group, or other youth group) may present a birth certificate or alternative proof of citizenship when entering by sea. A passport is not required for US lawful permanent residents but must continue to present a valid Permanent Resident Card.

Travel Requirements for Visitors to the U.S.

All visitors, including children, are required to present a valid passport and visa. All nationals or citizens of Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries are required to have an approved Electronic System for Travel Authorization, or ESTA, prior to boarding a commercial carrier to travel by air or sea to the U.S. under the VWP. Traveler of VWP countries onboard a private boat or plane, are required to present a valid visa and passports. CBP recommends ESTA applications be submitted as soon as an applicant

begins making travel plans.

Travel Checklist

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