

Guide to Selected U.S. Travel and Identity Documents

Prepared by the Forensic Document Laboratory



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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This guide is intended to assist those tasked with examining government travel and employment authorization documents. It contains color images of the most commonly used documents, but it is not comprehensive. There are earlier valid versions of some illustrated documents and other less common documents that are not illustrated here.

Because the images are reproductions, the exact size and color may deviate from the original. Do not make identifications based on size and/or color alone.

For any questions regarding the authenticity of the documents shown in this guide, please contact the nearest office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. See www.ice.gov / contact for information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

In accordance with the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, any person born in and subject to the jurisdiction of the United States is a citizen at birth. Citizenship may also be acquired through **DERIVATION** from a U.S. citizen parent when children are born abroad or through **NATURALIZATION** after meeting the necessary residency requirements. All persons not citizens or nationals of the U.S. are aliens, who are generally classified as **PERMANENT RESIDENTS, NON-IMMIGRANTS** or **ILLEGAL ALIENS**.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS enjoy almost all the same rights as citizens. This status may be obtained through a number of different procedures and, unless taken away administratively, is granted for life. Permanent Residents must carry evidence of their status.

NON-IMMIGRANTS are admitted to the U.S. for a temporary period of time and for a specific purpose, most often as tourists. There are different categories of non-immigrants, and they are identified through letter/number symbols (such as “B-2”). Non-immigrants are also required to present evidence of their lawful status. This will usually consist of a passport containing a visa and an Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94 or CBP I-94A).

UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS are those who do not maintain legal presence in the U.S. They may have crossed the border illegally or they may have violated their non-immigrant status by accepting unauthorized employment, remaining longer than permitted, or committing some other violation. Some of these aliens purchase counterfeit documents or assume another person’s identity by using fraudulently obtained genuine documents.

A **UNITED STATES PASSPORT** is a document issued by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) to persons who have established citizenship by birth, derivation or naturalization. The primary purpose of the passport is to allow travel to and from foreign countries by establishing citizenship and acting as a vehicle to display any visas and/or entry/exit stamps that may be necessary.

Passports may also be used within the U.S. to establish citizenship, identity and employment eligibility.

Several different versions of the passport are currently valid and in circulation. Older versions remain valid until their expiration dates.



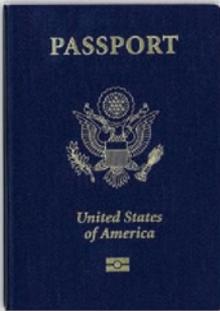
1994 Version



1998 Version

The current version of the U.S. passport, called the **E-PASSPORT**, contains an electronic chip inside the cover. This version can be identified by the chip symbol on the front cover.

The **EMERGENCY PASSPORT** booklet looks similar to the E-Passport, but it does not contain a chip and is only issued for a limited period of validity, which is no longer than one year.



Chip Symbol



DOS began issuing Form FS-240 in a new format in January 2011. The **CERTIFICATION OF REPORT OF BIRTH** (Form DS-1350) is no longer issued. Old forms have no expiration date and continue to be legally valid.

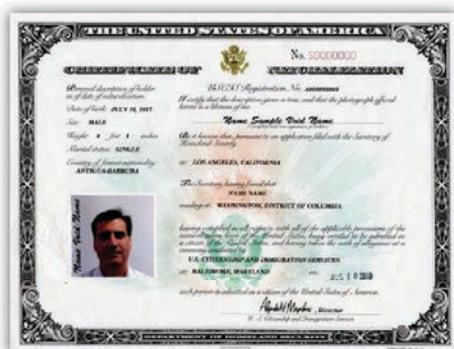
Form FS-240 is similar in quality to banknotes. It is printed on watermarked security paper and bears an embossed gold-colored Great Seal of the United States in the upper portion of the form.



FS-240 (2011 Version)

Many people obtain U.S. citizenship by going through the process of naturalization. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) started issuing a revised **CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION** (Form N-550) in 2010. Some new certificates contain an integrated image of the bearer printed directly onto the form.

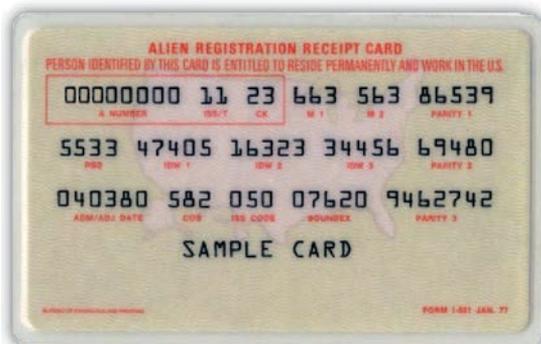
USCIS continues to issue certificates of the new revision with photographs attached to the certificate as well. Both versions of the N-550 are printed on watermarked security paper, and the bearer's image is endorsed with a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) embossing seal. Older versions of the certificate may also be encountered, with security features varying from version to version.



Residence cards are issued to aliens who have been granted permanent resident status in the U.S. Permanent residents aged 18 and older are required to have this card in their possession at all times.

The first **ALIEN REGISTRATION RECEIPT CARD** (Form I-151) was introduced in 1946. It is no longer acceptable as evidence of permanent residence.

The **RESIDENT ALIEN CARD** (Form I-551) was introduced in 1977 and phased in over a period of time. In addition to the photograph, it features the bearer's signature and fingerprint, unless waived. This version of the I-551 generally did not contain an expiration date. USCIS recommends that bearers of cards without an expiration date apply to replace their cards with the current version.



The **EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION CARD** (Form I-766) is issued to aliens who have been granted permission to work in the U.S. for a specific period of time. The card, introduced in 2004, displays the DHS seal, along with the bearer’s image, fingerprint and signature beneath a holographic film. In older cards, the reverse bore a standard bar code, magnetic strip and a two-dimensional bar code containing encoded data.



Form I-766 (May 2004 Revision)

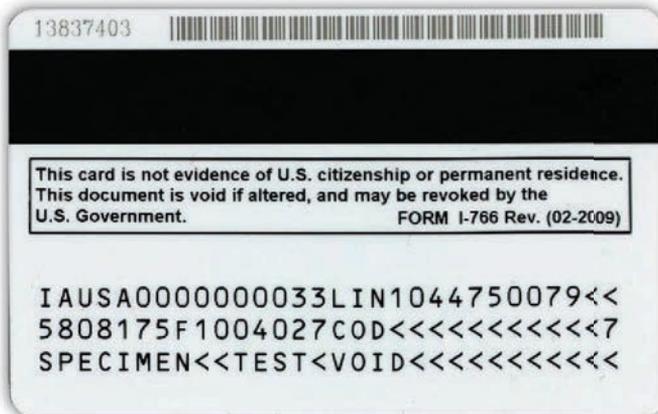


USCIS began issuing a modified version of Form I-766 in 2010. The face of the card remains unchanged from the previous version. The reverse features three lines of machine-readable coding instead of a two-dimensional bar code.

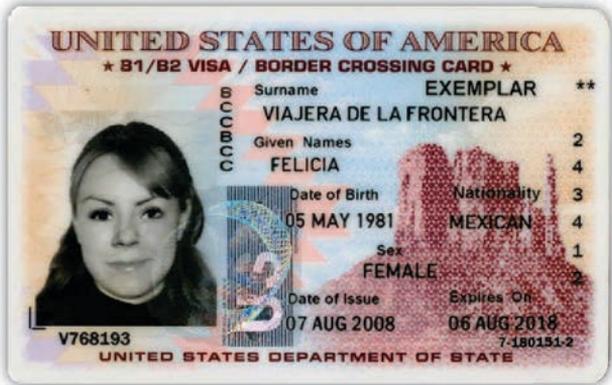
The card may have different notations that may allow the bearer to travel internationally. Many cards are “**NOT VALID FOR REENTRY**” and are used solely for employment, but others may show “**VALID FOR REENTRY**” or “**SERVES AS I-512 ADVANCE PAROLE**” and may be used as travel documents.



Form I-766 (February 2009 Revision)



The current version of the **BORDER CROSSING CARD** (Form DSP-150) was introduced in 2008. It contains laser-engraved data, an optically variable device over the right side of the bearer's portrait and three lines of machine-readable coding on the reverse side. Bearers of this card are not entitled to live or work in the U.S.



When granted admission by a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer at an authorized port of entry, an alien is issued an **ARRIVAL/ DEPARTURE RECORD** (Form I-94), the bottom portion of which is stapled to a page in the alien's passport. This document shows how long the bearer may remain in the U.S. and the terms of admission. The I-94, not the non-immigrant visa, serves as evidence of legal presence.

Nationals of some countries may enter the U.S. without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program. They are permitted to remain up to 90 days but are not eligible for employment. They may have either an endorsed green I-94W or a passport endorsed with a CBP stamp to show evidence of legal presence.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OMB No. 1651-0111
 U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Departure Record

Admission Number
132280125 22

18. Family Name
VOID

19. First (Given) Name
VOID

20. Birth Date (DD/MM/YY)
010165

21. Country of Citizenship
INDIA

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY • U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
 ADMITTED U.S.A.
MAY 12 2010
 Class **L-1**
 Until **September 30, 2012**

Admission Number
472600079 21

Departure Record
VISA WAIVER

20. Family Name
VOID

21. First (Given) Name
VOID

22. Birth Date (DD/MM/YY)
121255

23. Country of Citizenship
JAPAN

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY • U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
 ADMITTED U.S.A.
MAY 12 2010
 Class **WB**
 Until **Aug 11, 2010**

See Other Side CBP Form I-94W (05/08) STAPLE HERE

USCIS may extend a period of admission or change a non-immigrant status after an Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94) has been issued. The approval for an extension or change of status is shown on an I-797A **APPROVAL NOTICE**.

The lower portion of the form replaces the original I-94, but it does not require any endorsing stamp.

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

I-797A, Notice of Action

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

RECIPT NUMBER LIN-00-000-000000		CLASSIFICATION APPLICATION TO EXTEND/CHANGE NONIMMIGRANT STATUS	
RECIPIENT POY LIZ, 2006	ADMISSION 1	CLASSIFICATION SAMPLE	CLASSIFICATION MINORITY
NUMBER ONLY 24, 2006	PAGE 1 OF 1	SAMPLE	SAMPLE
PETITIONER: SAMPLE, SAMPLE 1234 MAIN ST ANYTOWN, ANY STATE, 00000		Notice Type: Approval Notice Class: B2 Valid from 05/25/2006 to 11/19/2006	

The above classification for extension of temporary stay is approved. The temporary stay of the named applicant is extended to the date indicated above. An unexpired Form I-94 is attached.

If the applicant has an authorized representative, this notice has also been mailed to the representative.

Please read the back of this form carefully for more information.

THIS FORM IS NOT A VISA AND MAY NOT BE USED IN PLACE OF A VISA.



Please see the additional information on the back. You will be notified separately about any other cases you filed.

DEBARRED SERVICE CENTER
U. S. INSID. & RATE: SERVICE
P.O. BOX 8262
CINCINNATI OH 45201-2321
CUSTOMER SERVICE: Telephone: 800-375-5281
Email: I797A@uscis.dhs.gov

PLEASE TEAR OFF FORM I-94 PRINTED BELOW, AND STAPLE TO ORIGINAL I-94 IF AVAILABLE

<p>Detach This Half for Personal Records</p> <p>Receipt # LIN-00-000-00000 I-94# 000000000 00 NAME SAMPLE, SAMPLE CLASS B2 VALID FROM 05/20/2006 UNTIL 11/19/2006</p> <p>PETITIONER: SAMPLE, SAMPLE 1234 MAIN ST ANYTOWN, ANY STATE, 00000</p>	<p>0000000000 00</p> <p>Receipt Number LIN-00-000-000000 Immigration and Naturalization Service</p> <p>I-94 Departure Record Petitioner:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>14. Family Name SAMPLE</td> <td>15. Date of Birth 10/19/1977</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16. Full Given Name SAMPLE</td> <td>17. Country of Citizenship SAMPLE</td> </tr> </table>	14. Family Name SAMPLE	15. Date of Birth 10/19/1977	16. Full Given Name SAMPLE	17. Country of Citizenship SAMPLE
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16. Full Given Name SAMPLE	17. Country of Citizenship SAMPLE				

Form I-797A (Rev. 10/31/05) N

PLEASE TEAR OFF FORM I-94 PRINTED BELOW, AND STAPLE TO ORIGINAL I-94 IF AVAILABLE

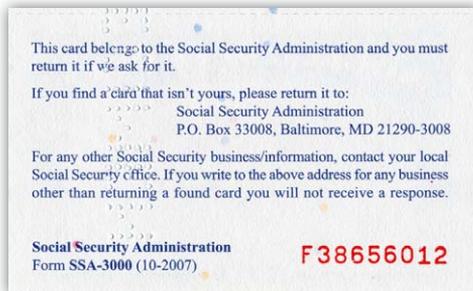
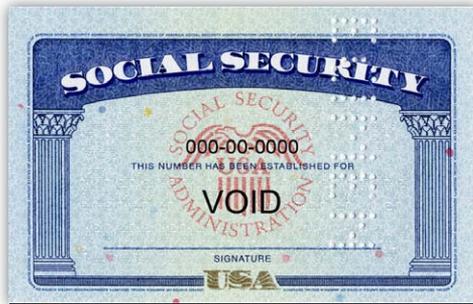
<p>Detach This Half for Personal Records</p> <p>Receipt # LIN-00-000-00000 I-94# 000000000 00 NAME SAMPLE, SAMPLE CLASS B2 VALID FROM 05/20/2006 UNTIL 11/19/2006</p> <p>PETITIONER: SAMPLE, SAMPLE 1234 MAIN ST ANYTOWN, ANY STATE, 00000</p>	<p>0000000000 00</p> <p>Receipt Number LIN-00-000-000000 Immigration and Naturalization Service</p> <p>I-94 Departure Record Petitioner:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>14. Family Name SAMPLE</td> <td>15. Date of Birth 10/19/1977</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16. Full Given Name SAMPLE</td> <td>17. Country of Citizenship SAMPLE</td> </tr> </table>	14. Family Name SAMPLE	15. Date of Birth 10/19/1977	16. Full Given Name SAMPLE	17. Country of Citizenship SAMPLE
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Form I-797A (Rev. 10/31/05) N

Although **SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS** are not immigration documents, they are often used as identification and to establish employment authorization.

Social Security cards have been issued since 1936 and have been revised more than 30 times. Originally, the Social Security card contained the seal of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In 1980, the seal changed to that of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 1995, the seal was changed again to that of the U.S. Social Security Administration.

In 1983, security features were added to the card. All Social Security cards issued since 1983 have raised (intaglio) printing and the signature line consists of micro-line printing of the words “**SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**” in a repeating pattern. In 2007, additional features, including latent images and optically variable ink, were added to the card.



Ordering Information

This guide has been prepared by the ICE Forensic Document Laboratory (FDL) and may not be sold. To order additional copies of “A Guide to Selected U.S. Travel and Identity Documents” (Form M-396), please contact the CBP National Distribution Center at:

CBP National Distribution Center
P.O. Box 68912
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Fax: 317-290-3046.

For government requests, please use CBP Form 3039. All other requests should use Form CBP Form 262.

Links for these forms are located at the bottom of the FDL page on ICE’s public website at www.ice.gov/forensic-document-lab.

Documents by Issuing Authority

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
 - Certificate of Naturalization (N-550)
 - Employment Authorization Card (I-766)
 - Notice of Action (I-797)
 - Residence Cards (I-551)
 - U.S. Travel Document (I-327 or I-571)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
 - Trusted Traveler Cards

U.S. Department of State

- Border Crossing Card
- Certification of Report of Birth (DS-1350)
- Consular Report of Birth Abroad (FS-240)
- U.S. Passport Booklet
- U.S. Passport Card
- U.S. Visa

U.S. Social Security Administration

- Social Security Cards

Helpful Websites

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security – www.dhs.gov
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services – www.uscis.gov
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection – www.cbp.gov
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement – www.ice.gov

- U.S. Department of State – www.state.gov

- U.S. Social Security Administration – www.ssa.gov



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

Form M-396
11/2011