

CNW Group Portfolio E-Mail

CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

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Are you a Canadian citizen planning on travelling to the United States? - New U.S. document requirements come into effect on June 1st. - Get your approved documents now

OTTAWA, June 1 /CNW Telbec/ - The Government of Canada is reminding Canadian citizens that as of Monday, June 1, they are required under U.S. law to present a valid passport or another approved secure document when entering the United States.

"We are pleased to hear that the United States intends to apply this law in a practical and flexible way," said Stephen Rigby, President of the Canada Border Services Agency. "Nevertheless, any Canadian citizen thinking about travelling to the United States should ensure they have an approved document as soon as possible."

Starting June 1, 2009, Canadian citizens are required to present one of the following valid documents when seeking to enter the United States by land or water:

- a passport;
- a NEXUS card;
- a Free and Secure Trade (FAST) card;
- an enhanced driver's licence/enhanced identification card (available in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec); or
- a Secure Certificate of Indian Status (when this certificate is available and approved by the United States).
- Canadian citizens aged 15 years or under only require proof of citizenship, such as an original or photocopy of a birth certificate, or an original Canadian citizenship card. Canadian citizens aged 18 years or under who are travelling with a school or another organized group, under adult supervision with parental/guardian consent, may also present proof of Canadian citizenship alone.

The U.S. document requirements for air travel require Canadian citizens flying to, through or from the United States to present a valid passport. A valid NEXUS card is also acceptable when used by a NEXUS member at a NEXUS kiosk at designated Canadian airports or at any U.S. airport when returning to Canada. The air travel requirements apply to all Canadian citizens, regardless of age, including children.

For more information about U.S. document requirements for Canadian citizens and how to apply for an approved document, visit the Canada Border Services Agency's Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca.

Backgrounder

Acceptable documents to present when entering the United States

NEXUS card

NEXUS is a joint Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that enhances security while expediting the border clearance process for low-risk, pre-approved travellers into Canada and the United States. Under U.S. law, a NEXUS card may be presented when entering the United States from within the western hemisphere by air, land and water.

For more information and to start the enrolment process, visit the NEXUS Web site at www.nexus.gc.ca.

Free and Secure Trade (FAST) card

The FAST program is a joint CBSA and U.S. CBP commercial clearance program that helps ensure safety and security while expediting legitimate trade across the Canada-U.S. border. Under U.S. law, a FAST card may be presented when entering the United States by land and water only. For more information and to start the enrolment process, visit the CBSA's Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca.

Passport

The Government of Canada continues to recommend that Canadian citizens carry a valid passport for all visits abroad, including visits to the United States. A passport is the only universally accepted identification document, and it proves that you have a right to return to Canada. Under U.S. law, a valid passport may be presented when entering the United States by air, land and water. Get ahead by applying for your passport online at www.passportcanada.gc.ca. Canadian citizens can submit their completed application in person to Passport Canada, send it by mail or use Service Canada or Canada Post services.

Enhanced driver's licence/enhanced identification card

The enhanced driver's licence (EDL) is a secure driver's licence that denotes a person's identity and Canadian citizenship and is issued by certain provinces. The enhanced identification card (EIC) offers the same advantages as an EDL for those who do not drive or who do not want to obtain an EDL.

Under U.S. law, an EDL or EIC is an acceptable document to present when entering the United States by land or water only.

EDLs are available in the provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. EICs are available in the provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba.

For more information, visit the following Web sites:

- British Columbia - www.icbc.com (Insurance Corporation of British Columbia)
- Manitoba - www.mpi.mb.ca (Manitoba Public Insurance)
- Ontario - www.ontario.ca (Government of Ontario)
- Quebec - www.saaq.qc.ca (Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec)

Secure Certificate of Indian Status

When the Secure Certificate of Indian Status is available and approved by the United States, it will be an acceptable document to present when entering the United States by land or water. Until then, the current Certificate of Indian Status is an acceptable document to present when entering the United States by land or water. For more information, visit the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Web site at www.inac.gc.ca.

Youth

Under U.S. law, Canadian citizens aged 15 years or under are only required to present proof of citizenship, such as an original or photocopy of a birth certificate, or an original Canadian citizenship card, when entering the United States by land or water. Canadian citizens aged 18 years or under who are travelling with a school or another organized group, under adult supervision with parental/guardian consent, may also present proof of Canadian citizenship alone when entering the United States by land or water.

Air travel

The air travel requirements apply to all Canadian citizens, regardless of age, including children. Canadian citizens flying to, through or from the United States are required to present a valid passport. A valid NEXUS card is also acceptable when used by a NEXUS member at a NEXUS kiosk at designated Canadian airports or at any U.S. airport when returning to Canada.

For more information about U.S. document requirements for Canadian citizens, visit the CBSA's Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca.

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For further information: Media Relations, Canada Border Services Agency, (613) 957-6500/