CBP AUTOMATES FORM I-94 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCESS

Immigration Alert
May 1, 2013

Practices & Industries

Immigration

In order to increase efficiency, reduce operating costs, and streamline the admissions process, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will begin the process of automating the Form I-94 process at air and sea ports of entry, thereby eliminating the issuance of paper Form I-94 cards.

Beginning in May, all foreign visitors arriving in the United States via air or sea who need to prove their immigration status to employers or government agencies (e.g., Social Security Administration and the Department of Motor Vehicles) will be able to access their Form I-94 arrival/departure record information online after CBP gathers travelers' information upon inspection and admission to the United States.

Since travel information will only be collected electronically for air and sea travelers, CBP will continue to issue paper Form I-94s at land ports of entry. Furthermore, since the implementation of this new program will occur over a four-week period, foreign visitors will continue to receive the paper Form I-94 until the automated process arrives at their port of entry (see the schedule below).

In the future, when traveling into the United States, CBP officers will stamp travelers' passports with an admission stamp that will show the date of admission, class of admission, and the date until which the traveler is admitted.

Please remain vigilant in keeping track of the expiration date stamped in your passport, as this date will represent the validity period of your nonimmigrant status. You should plan to depart the United States prior to that expiration date, unless you are eligible to file for an extension of your status from within the United States.

Upon final departure from the United States, travelers with I-94 cards should continue to turn in those cards to the commercial carrier or to CBP. Travelers who enter the United States under the new paperless I-94 program will have their departure from the United States transmitted to CBP by the carrier based on its manifest, and CBP will record the departure.

Implementation Schedule

April 30 through May 3: Charlotte Douglas International Airport, Orlando International Airport, Las Vegas Airport, Chicago O'Hare Airport, Miami International Airport, and Houston Bush Intercontinental Airport

May 7: Major air and sea ports within the following field offices: New York, Boston, Buffalo, Baltimore, Detroit, Atlanta, Tampa, Puerto Rico, Miami, Chicago, New Orleans, and Houston

May 14: Major air and sea ports within the following field offices: Pre-clearance, San Francisco (includes Hawaii and Guam), Tucson, El Paso, Seattle, Portland (includes Alaska), Los Angeles, San Diego, and Laredo

May 21: All remaining airports and seaports