

EMERALD ISLE IMMIGRATION CENTER

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PRESS RELEASE –

Emerald Isle Immigration Center warns travelers of tighter new ID rules when crossing borders
The Emerald Isle Immigration Center has warned travelers in the US that security at checkpoints will tighten considerably in May, as part of an overall security measure to catch those on 'watch lists'. The Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration issued statements last week announcing "greater clarity" on the types of identification that will only be accepted from next month at checkpoints in the United States.

The new measures will require that travelers produce official state-issued or federal ID to pass through checkpoints as of May 26, 2008. From that date onwards, all adult passengers aged 18 and over, will be required to show a US federal or state-issued photograph ID that contains their name, date of birth, gender, expiration date of the ID and a tamper-resistant feature. Official ID Documents that have acceptable features include Driver's Licenses, US or foreign government-issued passport, US passport card, DHS "Trusted Traveler" cards (NEXUS, SENTRI, FAST), US Military ID, Permanent Resident Card, Border Crossing Card, DHS-designated enhanced driver's license, State-issued driver's license (from a state that received REAL ID extension), a Native American Tribal Photo ID, an airline or airport-issued ID (if issued under a TSA-approved security plan, a Canadian provincial driver's license and an Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) card.

Samples of acceptable documents can be found at (PDF, http://www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/apis_documents.pdf)

Non-US/Canadian citizens are not required to carry their passports if they have US-issued documents or individual states, such as driver's licenses or Permanent Resident Cards. Those people who do not have US-issued documents are now expected to be carrying their passports while visiting the US. In a statement explaining why the new measures were being enforced, the TSA said: "This standardization of the list of accepted documents better aligns TSA with other DHS components, including Customs and Border Protection, and REAL ID benchmarks. "Between April 28 and May 26, passengers who present a photo ID that does not include a name, date of birth, gender, expiration date and a tamper-resistant feature will be reminded of the upcoming changes at the checkpoint. After May 26, passengers who do not present an acceptable ID may be subject to additional screening."

Increased scrutiny and the additional requirements for government issued-identification by TSA while flying within the US carries the risk that foreign passports may be closely examined and result in further inquiry about immigration status. While there is no uniform policy or procedure in place by the TSA in this regard, there have been instances where individuals suspected to be undocumented have been turned over to the immigration enforcement authorities by TSA. Handwritten passports or passports issued within the US without entry stamps may be considered red flags and lead to further questioning