VISA WAIVER PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

WHY THE VWP WORKS FOR AMERICA

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM TRAVEL	NON-IMMIGRANT VISA TRAVEL

ELIGIBILITY

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM TRAVEL

- Be a citizen of one of the 39 countries participating in the VWP. **These countries must adhere to the following strict security requirements:**
  - ✓ Issue biometric passports that conform to stringent international aviation security standards
  - ✓ Allow U.S. inspections of security standards, protocols and apparatus to ensure compliance with the highest security practices
  - ✓ Maintain a visa refusal rate and overstay rate of less than 3%
  - ✓ Submit data on lost and stolen passports into INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database
  - ✓ Share information about known or suspected terrorists and criminals with U.S. authorities
- Intend to travel to the U.S. for a stay of up to 90 days
- Possess a biometric passport

NON-IMMIGRANT VISA TRAVEL — ELIGIBILITY

- Possess a valid passport
- Obtain a valid visa
  - Visa validity varies per country of citizenship
- Depending on the country of citizenship, visas are valid for up to 10 years and multiple entries

APPLICATION

- To apply for a visa, a traveler must:
  - Complete a visa application
  - Submit biometrics
  - Interview with a consulate official
  - Establish a qualified reason for the visa
- Traveler is vetted against security and law enforcement databases
- Consular officers adjudicate the application, referring it as needed to agencies in Washington for additional review
- Consulate officials may conduct a second interview with certain travelers following vetting

APPLICATION/PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM TRAVEL

- Apply online via the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA)
  - ✓ Travelers are pre-screened and pre-approved via the ESTA system *before* stepping foot on U.S. soil, freeing up CBP resources to focus on lesser known travelers
  - ✓ Screening is conducted by the U.S. managed ESTA system, where the Department of Homeland Security can review several law enforcement databases, including:
    - The Terrorist Screen Database
    - Lost and stolen passports data (including INTERPOL's STLD database)
    - Visa revocations, previous visa refusals and other immigration violations

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL
(2 weeks to 3 months)

- Because non-VWP travelers are unknown, CBP must dedicate resources thoroughly vetting these travelers
  - CBP vets traveler using all available advance passenger data
  - CBP continually analyzes information using its Automated Targeting System (ATS)
  - CBP works in partnership with foreign law enforcement officials to evaluate potential risks
  - The vetting process for international passengers continues while the flight is en route to the U.S.

PORT OF ENTRY

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM TRAVEL

- Traveler submits biometrics
  - ✓ Traveler is screened and checked against biographic and biometric law enforcement databases and watchlists to verify identity
    - Traveler is admitted having been prescreened and preapproved by thorough security verification procedure
- The Department of Homeland Security monitor travelers to help reduce the number of visa overstays

NON-IMMIGRANT VISA TRAVEL — PORT OF ENTRY

- Traveler submits biometrics
  - Traveler is screened and checked against biographic and biometric law enforcement databases and watchlists
- Visa traveler may petition to extend the length of his/her stay in the U.S.
- The Department of Homeland Security monitor travelers to help reduce the number of visa overstays