

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 travel and employment authorization documents. It contains color photographs of the most commonly used documents, but it is not comprehensive. There are earlier valid revisions of some illustrated documents and other less common documents that are not illustrated here.

Because the attachments 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 (ICE).

General Information On Alien Status

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 of the United States at birth. U.S. 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** (immigrants), **NON-IMMIGRANTS** or **UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS**.

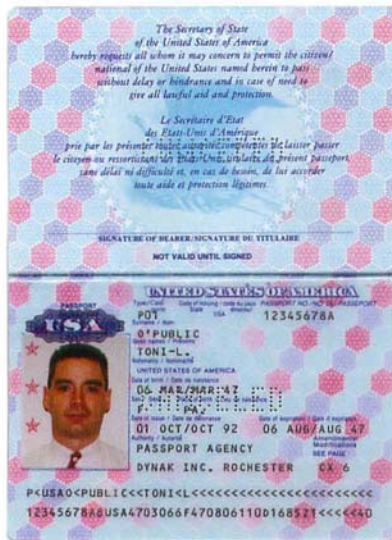
PERMANENT RESIDENT ALIENS enjoy almost all the same rights as U.S. citizens. This status may be obtained through a number of different procedures and, unless taken away administratively, is granted for life. Aliens with permanent residency must carry evidence of their status.

NON-IMMIGRANT ALIENS 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 in the U.S. to officers of ICE. 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 may have crossed the border illegally and/or been smuggled into the interior of the U.S. or those who 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.



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.



Older versions of the U.S. passport remain valid until the expiration dates printed in the passport booklet.

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The current version of the CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION, now issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), is similar to the previous version issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. It contains a gold embossed Great Seal of the United States in the top center portion. The watermark design, visible when the document is held up to a strong light, contains the emblem of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).



DHS watermark

Older versions of the certificate of naturalization continue to serve as valid evidence of U.S. citizenship. The last version issued by the INS was similar to the current DHS certificate. It too bore a gold embossed Great Seal of the United States in the top center portion. The watermark design contained the the Department of Justice seal and the letters “USA.”



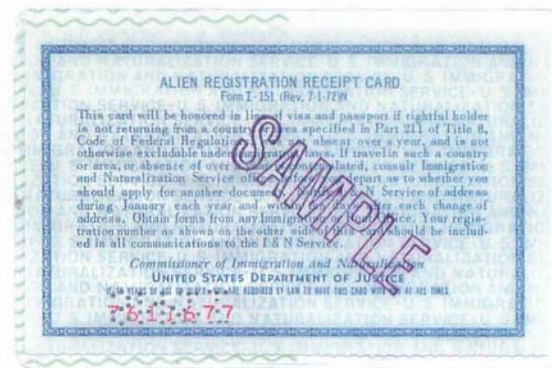
Department of Justice watermark

Earlier versions of the certificate had gray or beige background designs and did not contain the embossed seal. Original certificates of naturalization were printed on watermarked paper.

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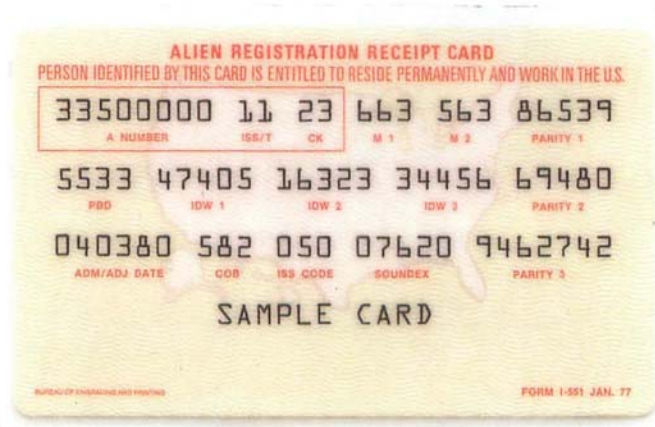
Forms I-151 and I-551 are issued to aliens who have been granted permanent resident status in the United States. They retain this status while in this country. The bearer is required to have this card in his/her possession at all times.

The first ALIEN REGISTRATION RECEIPT CARD, Form I-151, was introduced in 1946. Through 18 years of various revisions, it remained primarily green in color, causing it to become known as a "Green Card." This term is still used commonly, although the cards have not been green since 1959. The I-151 cards contained no expiration date and were only required to be renewed if the recipient was under the age of 14 at the time of issuance or if the card was lost or stolen. As of March 20, 1996, the Form I-151 is no longer acceptable as evidence of permanent residence.



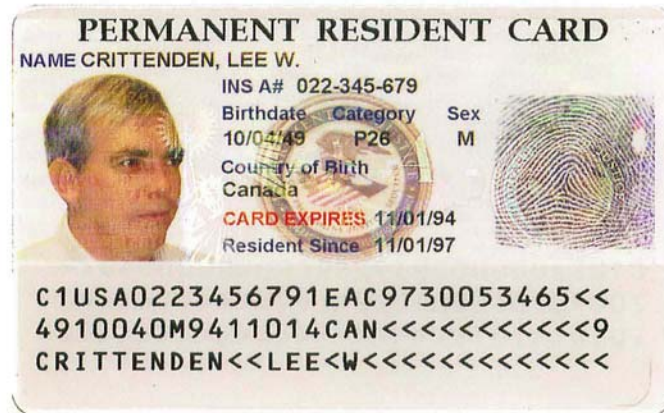
Form I-151

The RESIDENT ALIEN CARD, Form I-551, was introduced in January 1977 and phased in over a period of time. In addition to the photograph, the I-551 contains the bearer's signature and fingerprint. As with the older I-151 cards, this version I-551 generally does not contain an expiration date.



Form I-551 (1977)

The PERMANENT RESIDENT CARD, Form I-551, was introduced in December 1997. Noticeable differences on the front of the card include a change of card title from RESIDENT ALIEN CARD to PERMANENT RESIDENT CARD, a three-line machine readable zone and the addition of a hologram.



Form I-551 (1997)



Reverse

The optical memory stripe on the reverse contains encoded cardholder information as well as a personalized etching which depicts the bearer's photo, name, signature, date of birth, alien registration number, card expiration date and card number.

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This EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT, Form I-688B, was introduced in November 1989 and issued to aliens who were granted permission to be employed in the U.S. for a specific period of time. The card was produced with a Polaroid process and had interlocking gold lines across the front.



Form I-688B

In January 1997, INS began issuing a new EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION CARD, Form I-766. The front of the card bore the photograph, fingerprint and signature of the bearer. The reverse contained a standard bar code, magnetic strip and a two-dimensional bar code which contains unique card, biographic and biometric data.



Form I-766 (1997)
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The EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION CARD, Form I-766 was updated in May 2004. It incorporated the DHS seal but is otherwise similar to the previous version, with a photograph, fingerprint and signature of the bearer beneath a holograph film. The reverse side displays a standard bar code, magnetic strip and a two-dimensional bar code containing encoded data. The card was revised again in August 2004, using a full frontal face photograph instead of the three quarter face position. The reverse continues to bear the revision date of 05-2004.



Form I-766 (2004)



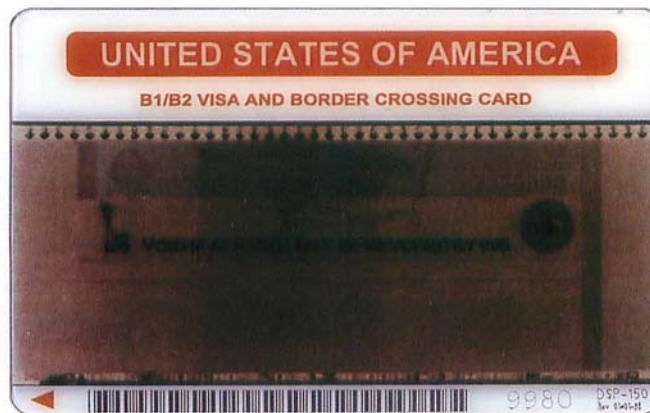
Reverse

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The U.S. Department of State introduced this version of the **BORDER CROSSING CARD**, Form DSP-150, in May 1998. The front of the card has a three-line machine readable zone and a hologram. Bearers of this card are not entitled to live or work in the United States.



Form DSP-150 (1998)



Reverse

The optical memory stripe contains encoded cardholder information as well as a personalized etching which depicts the bearer's photo, name, date of birth and card expiration date.


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When an alien has been granted admission into the U.S. by a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer at an authorized Port of Entry, he/she will be 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 status.

Departure Number	OMB No. 1651-0111
b2b633123 12	
I-94 Departure Record	
	
14 Family Name	SAMPLE
15 First (Given) Name	JANE
16 Birth Date (Day/Mo/Yr)	23 03 68
17 Country of Citizenship	NEW ZEALAND
See Other Side	CBP Form I-94 (10/04) STAPLE HERE

Form I-94

Nationals of some countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program. They are given a green I-94W and permitted to remain in the United States up to 90 days.

Departure Number	OMB No. 1651-0113
b95349308 12	
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. Customs and Border Protection VISA WAIVER	
	
14 Family Name	SAMPLE
15 First (Given) Name	JOHN
16 Birth Date (day/mo/yr)	19 07 72
17 Country of Citizenship	UNITED KINGDOM
See Other Side	CBP Form I-94W (10/04) Staple Here

Form I-94W

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USCIS can extend a period of admission or change a non-immigrant status after an I-94 has been issued. The approval for an extension or change of status is shown on an I-797A Approval Notice.

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

I-797A, Notice of Action

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

RECEIPT NUMBER LIN-06-110-510000	TAX TYP 1519	APPLICATION TO EXTEND/CHANGE NONIMMIGRANT STATUS
RECEIVED May 22, 2006	INDOCTRIN	ARRIVAL
EXPIRES July 28, 2006	FOIA 1 OF 1	REMARKS

CLASS R2
CHICAGO IL

Notice Type: Approval Notice
Class: R2
Valid From: 05/20/2006 to 11/19/2006

The above application for extension of temporary stay is approved. The temporary stay of the named applicant(s) is authorized to the date indicated above. An updated 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 NOT TO BE USED TO RE-ENTER A VISA.

Please see the additional information on the back. You will be notified separately about any other cases you filed.
 IMMIGRATION SERVICE CENTER
 U. S. IMMIGR. & NATZ. SERVICE
 P.O. BOX 32251
 SPRINGFIELD, MO 65809-2521
 Customer Service Telephone: 800-375-5283
 Form I-797A (Rev. 09/07/05)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-06-110-510000</p> <p>I-94# 05110000 12</p> <p>NAME K [REDACTED], [REDACTED]</p> <p>CLASS R2</p> <p>VALID FROM 05/20/2006 UNTIL 11/19/2006</p> <p>PETITIONER: K [REDACTED], E [REDACTED]</p> <p>CHICAGO IL [REDACTED]</p>	<p>05110000 12</p> <p>Receipt Number LIN-06-110-510000</p> <p>Immigration and Naturalization Service</p> <p>I-94</p> <p>Departure Record Petitioner:</p> <p>14. Family Name K [REDACTED]</p> <p>15. First (Given) Name E [REDACTED]</p> <p>16. Date of Birth [REDACTED]</p> <p>17. Country of Citizenship POLAND</p>
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Form I-797A (Rev. 10/31/05) N

Form I-797A

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

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-06-110-510000</p> <p>I-94# 05110000 12</p> <p>NAME K [REDACTED], [REDACTED]</p> <p>CLASS R2</p> <p>VALID FROM 05/20/2006 UNTIL 11/19/2006</p> <p>PETITIONER: K [REDACTED], E [REDACTED]</p> <p>CHICAGO IL [REDACTED]</p>	<p>05110000 12</p> <p>Receipt Number LIN-06-110-510000</p> <p>Immigration and Naturalization Service</p> <p>I-94</p> <p>Departure Record Petitioner:</p> <p>14. Family Name K [REDACTED]</p> <p>15. First (Given) Name E [REDACTED]</p> <p>16. Date of Birth [REDACTED]</p> <p>17. Country of Citizenship POLAND</p>
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Form I-797A (Rev. 10/31/05) N

Some immigrants may have an impression of an ADIT stamp as proof of permanent residence without an immigrant visa. This stamp serves as evidence of immigrant status until the bearer receives a Permanent Resident Card.



The current USCIS stamp is shown above. ADIT stamps in other formats may also be encountered. Similar stamp impressions are used to demonstrate refugee or asylum status.

Although SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS are not immigration documents, they are mentioned here because 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 20 times. Originally, the Social Security card contained the seal of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In May 1980, the seal changed to that of the Department of Health and Human Services. In April 1995 the seal was changed again to that of the Social Security Administration. Some counterfeiters have failed to notice these changes.

In October 1983, security features were added to the card. All Social Security cards issued since October 1983 have been printed with raised (intaglio) printing and the signature line consists of microline printing of the words "SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION" in a repeating pattern.



This card belongs to the Social Security Administration and you must return it if you find it.

If you find a card that isn't yours, please return it to:
Social Security Administration
P.O. Box 33008, Baltimore, MD 21290-3008

For any other Social Security business information, contact your local Social Security office. If you write to the above address for any business other than returning a found card you will not receive a response.

Social Security Administration
Form SSA-3000 (11-2006)

F 15532006

To order copies of this document,
“Form M-396; Guide to Selected U.S. Travel and Identity Documents,”
please complete the appropriate form and mail or fax to:

**Customs and Border Protection
National Distribution Center**

P.O. Box 68912
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Fax: 317-290-3046

For government requests, please use **Form CBP-3039**.

All other requests should use **Form CBP-262**.

Links for these forms may be found in the
Forensic Document Laboratory fact sheet
posted on ICE's Web site:

www.ice.gov



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

Form M-396

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