



Fact Sheet

U.S. Passport Card



- The Department of State began full production of the new **U.S. Passport Card** in July, 2008. Through January 2009, we have issued over 820,000 passport cards.
- The **processing time** for passport cards is the same as for passport books – less than three weeks for routine service. Expedite service is not yet available for passport cards.
- The passport card was designed to meet the requirements of the **land and sea phase** of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) which becomes effective **June 2009**. The card meets the specific needs of U.S. border resident communities. It facilitates entry and expedites document processing at **U.S. land and sea ports-of-entry** when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda.
- **The passport card is not valid for international travel by air.** The passport card may be used only at U.S. land and sea ports-of-entry when arriving from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda.
- The card has the same **validity period** as a passport book: ten years for an adult (age 16 and older), five years for children age 15 and younger.

Applying for the Passport Card

- There are nearly 9,400 acceptance facilities across the country accepting passport card applications, including **300+** within 25 miles of the U.S.-Canada border, and over **120** within 25 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. Locations of all acceptance facilities can be found at travel.state.gov/passport.
- First-time applicants will pay \$45 for adult cards and \$35 for children.
- If eligible, previous passport book holders can apply for their first passport card as a renewal by mail for a \$20 application fee.



RFID Technology & Security

- To facilitate the frequent travel of U.S. citizens living in border communities and to meet DHS's operational needs at land borders, the passport card contains a vicinity-read **radio frequency identification (RFID)** chip.
- **There is no personal information written to the RFID chip.** The chip points to a stored record in secure government databases.
- With RFID technology, Customs and Border Protection inspectors will be able to access photographs and other biographical information stored in **secure government databases** before the traveler reaches the inspection station.
- The passport card uses **state-of-the-art security features** to prevent against the possibility of counterfeiting and forgery. In addition, a **protective sleeve** is provided with each passport card to protect against unauthorized reading or tracking of the card when it is not in use.

travel.state.gov/passport