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From: Warren Macilwain
Sent: Friday, 4 April 2025 1:19 PM
To: Travel Advice
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: For AS approval - USA Scheduled review - 4 April 2025 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Categories: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Thanks ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)} – approved

Isn't this normally abbreviated in the socials

www.smarttraveller.gov.au/destinations/americas/united-states-america (2/2)

e.g. We've reviewed our advice and continue to advise exercise a high degree of caution in #Malawi. Demonstrations and protests can be unpredictable and may turn violent quickly. Avoid protests and demonstrations. Read more: Smarttraveller.gov.au/Malawi

Warren Macilwain
Assistant Secretary
Consular Communications & Policy Branch | Consular & Crisis Management Division
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

T: s 22(1)(a)(ii) M: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
smarttraveller.gov.au



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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, waters and community
We pay our respects to all First Nations peoples, their cultures and to their Elders, past, present and emerging

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 4 April 2025 12:44 PM
To: Warren Macilwain <Warren.Macilwain@dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>; s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: For AS approval - USA Scheduled review - 4 April 2025 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Dear Warren,

Grateful for your approval of the Scheduled Review for the USA. Both FMO and post (Washington DC) have approved suggested changes and social media. Please find attached correspondence.

https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/node/102/revisions/view/64385/64699/visual_inline

Cable reference: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Please find HOM approved track changes.

Social media (Facebook and X): *Entry requirements to the USA are strict. US authorities have broad powers to decide if you're eligible to enter. Check US entry, transit and exit requirements whether you're travelling on a visa or under the Visa Waiver Program. (1/2)*

Officials may ask to inspect your electronic devices, emails, text messages or social media accounts. If you refuse, they can deny your entry. Read and subscribe:

www.smartraveller.gov.au/destinations/americas/united-states-america (2/2)

Many thanks in advance and kind regards.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Travel Advice Section (TIN)

Consular Communications and Policy Branch (CIB) | Consular and Crisis Management Division (CCD)

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

P s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E s 22(1)(a)(ii) [@dfat.gov.au](mailto:dfat.gov.au)

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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 27 February 2025 1:39 PM
To: Warren Macilwain
Cc: Travel Advice
Subject: FW: For AS approval - USA (Scheduled Review) - 24 February 2025 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Attachments: US Travel Advice Update - February 2025.docx; TRAVEL ADVICE - Scheduled-review-cover-template February 2025 - UNITED STATES.docx; s 22(1)(a)(ii) USA scheduled reviewl.docx; USA (1).jpg
Categories: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Hi Warren
Scheduled review for USA, for review/approval. No major changes of significance.

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au> s 22(1)(a)(ii)

cheers
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director | Travel Advice Section (TIN)
Communication & Policy Branch | Consular & Crisis Management Division

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

P s 22(1)(a)(ii) M s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 24 February 2025 2:38 PM
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au>
Subject: For AS approval - USA (Scheduled Review) - 24 February 2025 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Dear ^{s 22(1)(a)(i)}

Grateful for your review and approval of the Scheduled Review for the United States. Post (Washington) have reviewed the travel advice in consultation with geographic desk, there are no significant changes. Changes include duplicating the current reference in the Passports section to passports with an X gender identifier in the LGBTQIA+ section of the advice and other minor editorial changes. I have also added our standard spiking language.

Changes to United States of America | Smartraveller

Cable reference: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Changes have been approved by HOM.

Social media (Facebook and X): *We've reviewed our advice for #USA and continue to advise exercise normal safety precautions. Read and subscribe: smartraveller.gov.au/united-states-america*

Image: USA.jpg (attached)

Many thanks in advance and kind regards.

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Travel Advice Section (TIN)

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Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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SCHEDULED REVIEW OF TRAVEL ADVICE GUIDELINES

- This template must be completed by posts when actioning their travel advice scheduled review.
- Scheduled reviews are undertaken every 6 or 12 months. The calendar of scheduled reviews is available on the [Consular Gateway](#).
- For guidance in completing a scheduled review, refer to the [Travel Advice guide](#).
- Scheduled reviews must be approved by HOM and cabled using the topic 'Consular/Public Information'. The cable must include:
 - the completed scheduled review covering template (this document)
 - updated travel advice in a Word document with tracked changes
- If no changes are required to the travel advice, post must still complete the scheduled review covering template (this document) and return it via cable.
- Post must complete all sections of the following template, which involves seeking comment from the relevant RCO (or CPX for Pacific destinations) and geographic desk.
- When CCD receives the completed form, we may need to consult further with relevant areas in the department or other agencies, including the Department of Health and Aged Care or the National Threat Assessment Centre (NTAC).
- If an increase, decrease or intra-country travel advice level change is required for your destination, you will need to complete a [travel advice level change request form](#), which is available on the consular gateway. For guidance, refer to the 'Travel Advice Level Changes' chapter in the [Travel Advice Guide](#), or email travel.advice@dfat.gov.au

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SCHEDULED REVIEW OF TRAVEL ADVICE: COVERING TEMPLATE

Destination:

United States of America

Post:

Washington and six Consulates-General

Does the travel advice need to be updated?

Text changes to the travel advice are required. The updated text in tracked-change mode from the current version of the Smartraveller travel advice is attached.



Nil changes to the travel advice, the advice is still current and accurate.



Are the Smartraveller maps displayed on the travel advice website correct?

Yes

RCO (or CPX for Pacific destinations) comments:

RCO has reviewed and agrees with post's updates to the US travel advice text.

Geographic division consulted/approval:

Yes.

HOM approval/further comment:

HOM has approved the Travel Advice and the proposed changes.

19 February 2025.

For Canberra use only: Other agency comments (if applicable):

Overview

Safety

- Avoid areas where demonstrations and protests are occurring due to the potential for unrest and violence. Monitor media for information, follow the instructions of local authorities and abide by any curfews.
- Violent crime is more common in the United States than in Australia. Gun crime is also prevalent. If you live in the United States, learn and practice active shooter drills.
- There is a persistent threat of mass casualty violence and terrorist attacks in the United States. Be alert, particularly in public places and at events.
- Severe weather and natural hazards include earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, landslides, avalanches, hurricanes, tornadoes, winter storms, extreme temperatures, wildfires, and floods. Monitor weather conditions and follow the advice and instructions of local authorities, including evacuation orders.

Full travel advice:[Safety](#)

Health

- Medical costs in the United States are extremely high. You may need to pay up-front for medical assistance. Ensure you have comprehensive travel insurance.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date before you travel.
- Insect-borne illnesses and tick-borne ailments are a risk in parts of the United States. Consider using insect and tick repellents.

Full travel advice:[Health](#)

Local laws

- Check local drug laws, including those related to the possession and recreational and/or medical use of marijuana. These vary between states. Penalties are severe and can include mandatory minimum sentences.
- Some prescription and over-the-counter medications readily available in Australia are illegal in the United States. It's also illegal to possess prescription medication without a prescription.
- The federal age for buying and drinking alcohol is 21, however, state laws regarding possession and consumption can vary. Check relevant state laws.

- Some states have laws restricting access to abortion and other reproductive health care services. Research local laws and consult your doctor before making any decisions about your medical care.
- There's no federal law that explicitly protects LGBTQIA+ people from discrimination. Some US states and localities have laws that may affect LGBTQIA+ travellers.
- Some US states apply the death penalty for serious crimes. The death penalty can also apply to serious federal offences, even if committed in states without capital punishment.

Full travel advice: [Local laws](#)

Travel

- Australian citizens can now apply for the Global Entry program direct through US Customs and Border Protection (see 'Travel' below).
- Entry requirements are strict. US authorities have broad powers to decide if you're eligible to enter and may determine that you are inadmissible for any reason under US law. Check US entry, transit and exit requirements.
- If you're visiting for less than 90 days, you may be eligible to apply for an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) and enter the US under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). If not, you'll need to get a visa before you travel. Whether you're travelling on a visa or under the VWP, ensure that you understand all relevant terms and conditions before attempting to enter the US.
- An approved ESTA or valid visa doesn't guarantee entry to the United States. US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port of entry will determine your eligibility. If CBP denies your entry, you may be held at the port of entry or a nearby detention facility while US authorities arrange your return to Australia (or the last country you visited).
- Expect enhanced screening procedures, including for domestic flights within the United States. You can be denied boarding if you show signs of illness.
- US authorities actively pursue, detain and deport people who are in the country illegally. Be prepared to show documents proving your legal presence.
- Some US states require you to have an International Driving Permit (IDP) in addition to your Australian driver's licence. Get your IDP before you leave Australia. Road rules vary between localities and states. Learn local traffic rules and driving conditions before you drive.

Full travel advice: [Travel](#)

Local contacts

- The [Consular Services Charter](#) tells you what the Australian Government can and can't do to help when you're overseas.
- Contact the [Australian Embassy in Washington DC](#) or the nearest Australian Consulate-General ([Chicago](#), [Honolulu](#), [Houston](#), [Los Angeles](#), [New York](#) or [San Francisco](#)) for consular assistance.
- Monitor the Embassy, Consulates-General and Smartraveller social media channels for information, alerts and updates relating to natural disasters, severe weather events and other significant incidents impacting the US.

Full travel advice: [Local contacts](#)

Full advice

Expand all full advice

Safety

Expand all

Civil unrest and political tension

Demonstrations and protests

Avoid areas where demonstrations and protests are occurring due to the ongoing potential for unrest and violence.

- Monitor the media for information and updates.
- Follow the instructions of local authorities and abide by any movement restrictions or curfews.

More information:

- [Demonstrations and civil unrest](#)

Field Code Changed

Crime

Violent crime

Guns, gun violence and violent crime are more prevalent in the United States than in Australia.

Mass shootings, active shooter events and hate crimes occur, including violent incidents directed towards the LGBTQIA+ community and individuals and groups from diverse cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Familiarise yourself with how to respond by reading the US Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) [Active Shooter Event guide](#).

We don't update our advice for individual gun crimes, such as mass shootings or active shooter events unless Australians face a significant risk.

According to the latest official crime statistics from the [Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#), violent crime rates vary across the country but are highest in cities and urban areas.

Even in cities with relatively low violent crime rates, there can be unsafe and no-go areas.

To protect yourself from violent crime:

- research your destination(s) before travelling and seek local advice on areas that may be unsafe
- monitor the media for new and emerging safety risks
- stay vigilant and take particular care when moving through unfamiliar and/or potentially unsafe areas, particularly at night

If you're affected by violent crime, follow advice from local authorities. If you require consular assistance, contact your nearest Australian embassy or consulate (see Local contacts).

Petty crime

Tourists are often targeted for [pickpocketing and purse-snatching](#). This can happen anywhere but is more prevalent in crowded areas and on public transport.

Conceal your valuables. Pay close attention to your personal belongings and only carry what you need. Leave other valuables in a secure location.

Rental cars can be easy to spot and are often a target of thieves. Don't leave valuables on display or unattended in a vehicle, including in the boot.

Kidnapping

Kidnapping can happen anywhere, anytime, including in destinations that are typically at lower risk. The Australian Government's longstanding policy is that it doesn't make payments or concessions to kidnappers.

More information:

- [Kidnapping](#)

Cyber security

You may be at risk of cyber-based threats during overseas travel to any country. Digital identity theft is a growing concern. Your devices and personal data can be compromised, especially if you're connecting to Wi-Fi, using or connecting to shared or public computers, or to Bluetooth.

Social media can also be risky in destinations where there are social or political tensions or laws that may seem unreasonable by Australian standards. Travellers have been arrested for things they have said on social media. Don't comment on local or political events on your social media.

More information:

- [Cyber security when travelling overseas](#)

Terrorism

Terrorism is a threat worldwide.

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) maintains the [National Terrorism Advisory System](#), a public alert system to communicate information about current and potential terrorist threats in the United States.

Threats include those posed by individuals and small groups motivated by a range of ideological beliefs or personal grievances, as well as those inspired by other recent attacks.

Attacks can be indiscriminate, including at public events, on public transport, schools and in other places where crowds gather.

Subscribe to [National Terrorism Advisory System](#) for updates and advice.

To reduce your risk of being involved in a terrorist incident:

- be alert to possible threats in public places and near known potential targets
- report any suspicious activity or items to the police
- monitor the media for new or emerging threats
- take official warnings seriously
- follow advice from local authorities

If there's an attack, leave the affected area as soon as it's safe to do so.

More information:

- [Terrorist threats](#)

Climate and natural disasters

Following the January 2025 fires in California, including in parts of Los Angeles, there is widespread infrastructure damage, including to roads and buildings. Recovery operations are underway. Monitor local media and follow the advice of local authorities.

[Natural disasters](#) and [severe weather](#) events regularly impact the US. These include:

- [wildfires](#)
- [earthquakes](#), [volcanic eruptions](#) and [tsunamis](#)
- [landslides and avalanches](#)
- [hurricanes](#), severe thunderstorms and [tornadoes](#)
- [winter storms \(freezing rain, heavy snow, blizzards\)](#)
- [extreme temperatures](#)
- [floods](#)

Monitor the Embassy, Consulates-General and Smartraveller social media channels for information, alerts and updates relating to severe weather events and natural disasters impacting the United States (see [Local contacts](#)).

Before travelling, familiarise yourself with the risks of natural disasters and severe weather events at your destination(s).

Register with the [Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System \(GDACS\)](#) to receive alerts and notifications about major disasters.

Preparedness

In the event of a natural disaster, our ability to provide consular assistance may be limited.

Prepare yourself by:

- securing your passport in a safe, waterproof location
- subscribing to emergency alert systems and monitoring local media and other sources for developments, important updates and additional pertinent information
- following the advice of local authorities

[Ready.gov](#) and the [American Red Cross](#) also provide information on preparing for natural disasters, severe weather events and other emergencies.

Anticipate disruptions before, during and after a natural disaster(s).

- Flights into and out of affected areas may be diverted, delayed or cancelled

- Other forms of travel may be impacted
- Adequate shelter might not be available
- Essential services such as water, electricity, internet and mobile phone services may be disrupted.

Keep in contact with family and friends and let them know you're safe.

The American Red Cross may be able to assist in locating family members in certain circumstances. Information is available on the [American Red Cross](#) website.

You can also mark yourself 'safe' on social media during and following disasters using the American Red Cross [Emergency! app](#) for mobile devices.

Severe weather

[Severe weather](#) can occur year-round in the United States.

Monitor the [US National Weather Service \(NWS\)](#) for forecasts, updates and severe weather alerts and warnings.

Hurricanes

[Hurricanes](#) are powerful tropical storms that routinely impact the east coast, Gulf Coast, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

While hurricanes have been known to form in every month of the year, peak activity occurs from May to November.

If you travel during hurricane season, check weather reports and closely monitor the [NWS National Hurricane Center](#) website.

The direction and strength of hurricanes can change with little warning. Hurricanes can also reach hundreds of miles inland, causing dangerous conditions, widespread damage and disruption to essential services in areas far from the coast.

If a hurricane or tropical storm is approaching, prepare early by following the advice for natural disasters above.

Tornadoes

[Tornadoes](#) can occur in all 50 US states but are most frequent and attain the highest intensities across the Central Plains and parts of the Midwest.

They're also common in the rain bands of hurricanes and tropical storms.

Tornadoes can strike with little warning and cause catastrophic damage, with wind speeds sometimes up to 500km per hour (300 mph).

While tornadoes can form at any time of year, they are more common in the warmer months between March to September.

If you're living in or travelling through an area prone to tornadoes, familiarise yourself with warning signals and emergency procedures and monitor the [NWS Storm Prediction Center's](#) website.

After a disaster

Travelling to areas affected by natural disasters and severe weather events can be dangerous.

If you plan to travel to a region after a natural disaster, check with your transport operator that services are operating.

Contact the place you intend to stay and check other sources for details on local conditions.

Health

Expand all

Travel insurance

Get comprehensive [travel insurance](#) before you leave.

There is no reciprocal health care agreement in place between Australia and the United States. Your policy needs to cover all overseas medical costs, including pre-existing conditions and medical evacuation. The Australian Government won't pay for these costs.

If you can't afford travel insurance, you can't afford to travel. This applies to everyone, no matter how healthy and fit you are.

If you're not insured, you may have to pay many thousands of dollars up-front for medical care. A visit to a doctor for even a minor issue can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars, and you may be asked to show proof of insurance or your ability to pay before receiving treatment.

Confirm:

- what activities and care your policy covers
- that your insurance covers you for the whole time you'll be away
- that your insurance covers any pre-existing medical conditions.

Physical and mental health

Consider your physical and mental health before you travel, especially if you have an existing medical condition.

See your doctor or travel clinic to:

- have a basic health check-up
- ask if your travel plans may affect your health
- plan any vaccinations you need.

Do this at least 8 weeks before you leave.

If you have immediate concerns for your welfare or the welfare of another Australian, call the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on +61 2 6261 3305 or contact your [nearest Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate-General](#) to discuss counselling hotlines and services available in your location.

More information:

- [General health advice](#)
- [Healthy holiday tips](#) (HealthDirect Australia)

Medication

Not all medication available over the counter or by prescription in Australia is available in other countries.

If you plan to bring medication with you, check whether it's legal in the United States. Take enough legal medication to last the duration of your trip.

Some medications may be considered illegal or controlled substances, even if available over the counter or by prescription in Australia. It's also illegal to possess any prescription medication in the United States without a prescription.

If possible, keep your medication in its original container and carry a copy of your prescription or a letter from your doctor stating:

- what the medication is
- your required dosage
- that it's for personal use

More information:

- [Medication](#)
- [US Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) - Travelling with Medication](#)
- [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)

Health risks

Insect and Tick-borne diseases

Various [insect-borne illnesses](#) can occur throughout the United States, including West Nile virus and viral encephalitis (multiple types).

Sporadic outbreaks of dengue, chikungunya virus and zika have also occurred in the United States (including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands).

Research your destination and get local advice before you travel.

To protect yourself:

- ensure that your accommodation is insect-proof
- use insect repellent
- wear long, loose, light-coloured clothing

[Tick-borne ailments](#) such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Ehrlichiosis and Powassan virus are also present.

Check for ticks after being outdoors, especially in tall grasses and wooded areas.

More information:

- [Infectious diseases](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

Other health risks

Further information about health risks in the United States, including communicable diseases and preventative measures, is available from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Medical care

While the standard of hospitals and healthcare facilities in the United States is similar to Australia, medical costs are significantly higher.

A visit to a doctor for even a minor issue can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars and you may be asked to show proof of insurance or your ability to pay before receiving treatment.

Get comprehensive [travel insurance](#) before you leave Australia and make sure that it covers you for the duration of your trip, for all activities you intend to undertake, for any pre-existing medical conditions and for all overseas medical costs, including medical evacuation.

Commented: 22/11/2017 Link Updated

Field Code Changed

The Australian Government won't cover these costs and there's no reciprocal health care agreement between Australia and the United States. This means that you aren't covered by Australian Medicare in the United States.

Local laws

Expand all

Local law

You're subject to all local laws and penalties, including those that may appear harsh by Australian standards. Research local laws before travelling.

If you're arrested or jailed, the Australian Government will do what it can to help you in accordance with our [Consular Services Charter](#). But we can't get you out of trouble or out of jail.

Drugs

Federal and state laws for drug-related offences vary, including laws related to the possession and recreational and/or medical use of marijuana (cannabis).

Penalties for drug-related offences can be severe and often include minimum mandatory sentences.

Some medications readily available in Australia are illegal or considered controlled substances in the United States, even if prescribed by an Australian doctor.

It's also illegal to possess any prescription medication without a prescription. See [Health](#).

More information:

- [Carrying or using drugs](#)
- [US Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) - Travelling with Medication](#)
- [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)

Commented s 22(1)(a)(i) Link updated

Field Code Changed

Alcohol

The federal legal age for buying and drinking alcohol is 21 years old. State laws regarding the possession and consumption of alcohol can vary. Check the relevant state laws.

LGBTQIA+

No federal law explicitly protects LGBTQIA+ people from discrimination, and not all state and local non-discrimination laws include protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Some states and localities have laws that may discriminate against or otherwise affect LGBTQIA+ travellers. Check relevant state and local laws.

[Although Australian passports comply with international standards for sex and gender, we can't guarantee that a passport showing 'X' in the sex field will be accepted for entry or transit by another country.](#)

[Contact the nearest United States Embassy or Consulate before you arrive at the border to confirm if authorities will accept passports with 'X' gender markers.](#)

More information:

- [Advice for LGBTQIA+ travellers](#)
- [US Human Rights Campaign](#)

Abortion and reproductive health

Some US states have laws restricting access to abortion and other reproductive health care services.

Research local laws and always consult your doctor before making any decisions about your medical care.

More information:

- [Center for Reproductive Rights: Abortion Laws by State](#)

International surrogacy

[Surrogacy laws](#) can be complex. Get legal advice before you agree to an arrangement.

Other laws

Some US states apply the death penalty for serious crimes. The death penalty can also apply to some serious federal offences, even if committed in states without capital punishment.

More information:

- [Death Penalty Information Center](#)

Australian laws

Some Australian criminal laws still apply when you're overseas. If you break these laws, you may face prosecution in Australia.

More information:

- [Staying within the law and respecting customs](#)

Dual citizenship

The United States recognises dual nationality.

If you're a United States dual national, you must:

- travel with both your Australian and US passports
- use your US passport to enter and exit the United States and its territories
- use your Australian passport to enter and exit Australia

More information:

- [Dual nationals](#)
- [US Department of State - Bureau of Consular Affairs](#)

Travel

Expand all

Visas and border measures

Every country or territory decides who can enter or leave through its borders. For specific information about the evidence you'll need to enter ~~a foreign destination~~ [the United States](#), check with the nearest ~~US Embassy or Consulate or immigration department of the destination you're entering~~ [US Embassy or Consulate](#).

Australian citizens can now apply for the Global Entry program direct through [US Customs and Border Protection](#) (USCBP). The Global Entry program is a US Government program that allows faster border clearance entering the United States for some Australians subject to strict eligibility criteria. For more information see [Global Entry for Australians](#).

The United States has strict entry requirements. US authorities won't allow you to enter the country if you don't comply.

If you're visiting the United States for less than 90 days, you may be eligible to:

- apply for an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) and
- then enter under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)

Otherwise, you'll need to get a visa before you travel.

Visa and other entry and exit conditions, including currency, customs and quarantine rules, can change at short notice. Contact your nearest [US Embassy or Consulate](#) for the latest details.

More information:

Field Code Changed

- [US Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) - ESTA](#)
- [US Department of State - Visa Information](#)

Visa-free travel for short stays

If you plan to visit the United States and/or its territories, including the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, for less than 90 days, you may be able to travel under the VWP.

The VWP is intended for short, infrequent visits to the United States and can be used by tourists and business travellers. Conditions apply, [including that you cannot enter into employment in the United States when you travel under the VWP](#).

Ensure you know all terms and conditions before applying for your ESTA and attempting to enter the [US-United States](#) under VWP.

If you don't satisfy US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at your port of entry that you're entitled to be admitted under the VWP, you may be denied entry and detained.

You can't enter the United States under the VWP if you have:

- been denied an ESTA or denied previous entry under the VWP
- been denied a US visa
- an emergency passport, document of identity or [Provisional Travel Document](#)
- a criminal record
- been arrested but not convicted
- dual citizenship with Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Sudan or Syria
- travelled to Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen since 1 March 2011, with limited exceptions
- travelled to Cuba since 12 January 2021 (see 'Travel to Cuba' below).

Before you can travel under the VWP, you must apply and be pre-approved via the ESTA.

US authorities recommend applying as soon as you know you'll be travelling. ESTA approvals can take up to 72 hours.

ESTAs are valid for 2 years and for multiple entries [when travelling on the same passport](#).

You'll need to apply for a new ESTA if:

- you renew your passport within the 2 years and/or
- your VWP eligibility changes

If there are differences between your ESTA, passport or ticket information, you could be:

- referred for secondary inspection (where a CBP officer may interview you) and/or
- refused entry

If your ESTA application is denied, you must apply for a visa from a [US Embassy or Consulate](#).

US authorities generally won't tell you why your ESTA application was rejected, and you can't appeal their decision.

If you provide false or incorrect information on an ESTA, you may be permanently banned from future travel to the United States.

More information:

- [US Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) - ESTA](#)

Visas

If your ESTA application is denied or, you're not eligible to travel under the VWP, or you intend to stay for more than 90 days, you'll need to apply for a visa from a [US Embassy or Consulate](#).

The category of visa you need to apply for will depend on your reason for travel.

More information:

- [US Department of State - Bureau of Consular Affairs](#)
- [Embassy of the United States of America in Australia](#)

Entry into the US

An approved ESTA or valid visa allows you to board a US-bound plane or vessel or request entry at a land border. It doesn't guarantee entry to the [USUnited States](#).

US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port of entry will decide if you can enter the country.

Entry requirements are strict. Authorities have broad powers when deciding if you're eligible to enter and may determine that you are inadmissible for any reason under US law.

At the port of entry, be prepared to answer questions about:

- the purpose of your visit
- how long you plan to stay
- where you will stay

- your ties to Australia

Officials may ask to [inspect your electronic devices](#), emails, text messages or social media accounts. If you refuse, they can deny your entry.

Whether you enter the United States under the VWP or on a visa, you'll likely need to have:

- an onward or return ticket that doesn't terminate in Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean unless you're a resident of one of those countries, and,
- proof you have enough money to support yourself during your stay

You can be refused entry if you provide false information or can't satisfy the officials you're visiting for a valid reason.

You may be held at the port of entry or a nearby detention facility ([for example, in Hawaii](#)) while US authorities arrange for you to be returned to Australia (or the last country you visited).

If you're refused entry under the VWP, you generally don't have the right to an attorney or to appeal the decision.

The Australian Government cannot intervene on your behalf, and our ability to provide consular assistance in these circumstances may be limited.

Arrival and departure record (Form I-94)

When you arrive at the port of entry, US authorities will determine your admissibility and decide when you must leave the country. This date may be different from the expiry date of your ESTA or visitor visa.

A US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) official should:

- stamp your passport and write the date by which you must leave the United States
- issue you an electronic Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record)

Your I-94 is evidence of your legal status in the United States and shows the date by which you must leave the country.

You can [check your I-94 with CBP](#) each time you enter the [US United States](#).

If you stay past your I-94 expiry date, you can be detained, deported and banned from re-entering the United States.

Renewing your I-94 and/or extending your stay

You can't extend or renew your I-94 by travelling to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean for 30 days or less and then re-entering the United States.

If you travel to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean and return to the United States while your I-94 is still valid, you'll be readmitted for the amount of time left on it.

If your I-94 has recently expired and US authorities think the purpose of your trip outside the United States was only to be issued a new I-94 to extend your stay in the United States, they can:

- refuse you entry
- detain and deport you

If you're on a visa and need to extend your stay in the United States, lodge a request with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on [Form I-539](#) before your I-94 expires.

VWP entrants are generally not eligible to extend their stay beyond 90 days or change their status.

If a serious emergency, such as hospitalisation, prevents you from departing before your I-94 expires, USCIS has the discretion to grant you additional time to leave. This is known as 'satisfactory departure'.

For further information, see [Immigration Relief in Emergencies or Unforeseen Circumstances](#).

To request satisfactory departure, contact the [USCIS Contact Center](#).

Health-related requirements

US authorities may deny boarding any US-bound traveller showing signs of illness.

Expect enhanced screening procedures, including for domestic flights within the United States.

For further information regarding precautions to take before and during travel to the United States and after arrival, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) website.

Other formalities

Biometrics

You'll have your fingerprints scanned and your face photographed when you arrive in the United States.

More information:

- [US Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) - Biometrics](#)

Children

Children of all ages must have their own ESTA approval or US visa.

US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) requires children under 18 years of age travelling alone or with only one parent or legal guardian to carry a letter of consent signed by both the travelling and non-travelling parent/s or guardian/s to help prevent delays due to further questioning at ports of entry and departure. CBP recommends that the letter is notarised.

More information:

- [Advice for people travelling with children](#)

Travel to Cuba

[The United States enforces restrictions on travel to Cuba](#). This applies to anyone under US jurisdiction, including Australians who live or work in the United States.

The United States designated Cuba a 'State Sponsor of Terrorism' on 12 January 2021. If you've travelled to Cuba since 12 January 2021, you're not eligible to participate in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and must apply for a visa to enter the United States (see 'Visa-free travel for short stays' above).

If you enter the United States under the VWP and then travel to Cuba, you won't be able to re-enter the United States under the VWP. You'll have to apply for a US visa, even if you've arranged to just transit the United States to fly back to Australia.

If you have a US visa and plan to visit the United States after you've been to Cuba, you'll also need documents to prove the purpose of your trip. Immigration officials may question you at the port of entry.

More information:

- [Travel advice for Cuba](#)

Immigration enforcement

The United States has strict immigration laws. US authorities actively pursue, detain and deport people who are in the country illegally.

It's common for US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers to carry out random travel document checks, including on public transport.

If you're a tourist or visitor, be prepared to show your passport and entry stamp, ESTA or valid US visa, and a copy of your electronic [Form I-94](#).

If you're living in the United States but not a US citizen, be prepared to show proof of legal residence, such as a US permanent resident card, valid US visa and electronic Form I-94, and US driver's licence issued by the state in which you live.

If you travel on an incorrect visa, breach the conditions of your ESTA or visa, or are found to be unlawfully present in the United States, you may be held at the port of entry or a nearby detention facility ([for example, in Hawaii](#)) while US authorities arrange your return to Australia (or the last country you visited).

Passport

Australians entering the United States on their Australian passport need only have a passport valid for their intended period of stay. However, different rules may apply in countries you plan to transit or stop in on your way to or from the United States.

Be sure to check the entry requirements of all countries you intend to transit or visit on your trip.

Some countries won't let you enter or transit unless your passport is valid for 6 months after you plan to leave that country.

You may be denied boarding and become stranded in these countries if your passport isn't valid for more than 6 months.

Some foreign governments and airlines apply the rule inconsistently. Travellers can receive conflicting advice from different sources.

The Australian Government does not set these rules. Check your passport's expiry date before you travel. If you're not sure it'll be valid for long enough, consider getting [a new passport](#).

[A passport or United States-issued form of photo identification is usually required to board domestic flights in the United States. Your domestic travel can be delayed or even denied if you cannot present identification at airport security screening.](#)

Lost or stolen passport

Your passport is a valuable document. It's attractive to people who may try to use your identity to commit crimes.

Some people may try to trick you into giving them your passport. Always keep it in a safe place.

If your passport is lost or stolen, tell the Australian Government as soon as possible:

- In Australia, contact the [Australian Passport Information Service](#).

- If you're overseas, contact the nearest [Australian embassy or consulate](#).

Passport with X gender identifier

Although Australian passports comply with international standards for sex and gender, we can't guarantee that a passport showing 'X' in the sex field will be accepted for entry or transit by another country.

Contact the nearest [US eEmbassy, high commission or eConsulate of your destination](#) before you arrive at the border to confirm if authorities will accept passports with 'X' gender markers.

More information:

- [LGBTQIA+ travellers](#)

Money

The local currency is the United States Dollar (USD).

[Declare all amounts over USD \\$10,000](#) (or its foreign equivalent) on arrival and departure. This covers all forms of currency, not only US dollars and not only cash. Failing to do so is a serious violation and can result in the seizure and forfeiture of your money. Criminal penalties can also apply.

Banks and ATMs are widespread throughout the United States, and currency exchange services are available in most major cities and airports.

Major credit cards are almost universally accepted. Contactless and mobile payment options are also readily available, particularly in cities and at most major retailers.

Local travel

Road travel

Speed limits and road rules vary between states and localities within states.

If you plan to drive in the United States:

- learn local traffic laws before you drive
- pay close attention to signs and other posted regulations
- check weather conditions before a long journey
- be cautious of snowfall in mountainous or isolated areas
- take extra water when driving through dry desert areas and in areas in which petrol stations can be scarce

More information:

- [Driving or riding](#)
- [Information for foreign nationals driving in the US](#)

Driver's licences and International Driving permits (IDP)

While some US states will allow you to drive on your Australian driver's licence for a limited time, others require you to also have an International Driver's Permit (IDP).

You should obtain an IDP before you leave Australia.

Some rental car companies also require you to have an IDP.

Contact your rental car company and the motor vehicle department in each US state you intend to drive in for further information.

Driving without an IDP where one is required can void your travel and vehicle insurance.

More information:

- [US State Motor Vehicle Departments](#)

Motorcycles

You need a motorcycle licence to operate a motorcycle in the United States.

Check with your travel insurer whether your policy covers you when using a motorbike, quad bike, ATV or similar vehicle, and always wear a helmet.

Electrically-powered personal vehicles

Rules relating to electric transportation, such as e-bikes and e-scooters, vary between localities. Learn local laws before hiring or using these items.

Check with your travel insurer whether your policy covers you when using electric transportation, and always wear a helmet.

Taxis

Taxis are plentiful in most cities and generally safe to use. Ridesharing options are also widely available.

Take the same safety precautions that you would in Australia.

Sea travel

The United States is home to most of the major cruise lines and some of the world's busiest cruise ports.

Popular destinations for cruises originating and returning to or terminating in the United States include Alaska, Florida, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

Before embarking on a cruise, take steps to be [prepared](#) and reduce the risk of things going wrong. This includes choosing a travel insurance policy that covers you for cruising and any activities you do on shore.

If you're embarking on a round-trip cruise to Canada, Mexico and/or the Caribbean, make sure your passport, ESTA or visa and I-94 will allow you to re-enter the United States (see Visas and border measures), [and you meet the entry requirements for the countries your cruise will stop in](#).

More information:

- [Going on a cruise](#)

Air travel

DFAT doesn't provide information on the safety of individual commercial airlines or flight paths.

Check [USA's air safety profile](#) with the Aviation Safety Network.

More information:

- [Air travel](#)

Local contacts

Expand all

Emergencies

Depending on what you need, contact your:

- family and friends
- travel agent
- insurance provider
- employer
- airline

Fire and rescue services

Call 911.

Medical emergencies

Call 911.

Police

Call 911.

Always get a police report when you report a crime.

Your insurer should have a 24-hour emergency number.

Consular contacts

Read the [Consular Services Charter](#) for what the Australian Government can and can't do to help you overseas.

For consular assistance, contact the nearest Australian embassy or consulate.

Check the embassy or consulate websites for details about opening hours and any temporary closures.

Australian Embassy, Washington DC

Contact the Australian Embassy in Washington DC if you're in:

- Alabama
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Maryland
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Virginia
- West Virginia

Australian Embassy
1601 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington DC 20036

Phone: +1 202 797 3000

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Facebook: facebook.com/AusInTheUS

X: twitter.com/AusInTheUS

Australian Consulate-General, Chicago

Contact the Consulate-General in Chicago if you're in:

- Indiana
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

Australian Consulate-General, Chicago
123 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1330
Chicago IL 60606

Phone: +1 312 419 1480

Email: Chicago@dfat.gov.au

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Facebook: facebook.com/AusCGChicago

Instagram: instagram.com/auscgchicago/

Australian Consulate-General, Honolulu

Contact the Consulate-General in Honolulu if you're in

- Hawaii
- Guam
- The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas

Australian Consulate-General, Honolulu
Penthouse, 1000 Bishop Street
Honolulu HI 96813

Phone: +1 808 529 8100

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Facebook: facebook.com/AustralianConsulateGeneralHNL

X: twitter.com/AusCGHonolulu

Australian Consulate-General, Houston

Contact the Consulate-General in Houston if you're in:

- Arkansas
- Louisiana
- Oklahoma
- Texas

Australian Consulate-General, Houston

3009 Post Oak Blvd, Suite 1310

Houston TX 77056

Phone: +1 832 962 8420

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Australian Consulate-General, Los Angeles

Contact the Consulate-General in Los Angeles if you're in:

- Alaska
- Arizona
- southern California
- Colorado
- New Mexico
- southern Nevada
- Utah

Australian Consulate-General, Los Angeles

2029 Century Park East, 31st Floor

Los Angeles CA 90067

Phone: +1 310 229 2300

Email: losangeles@dfat.gov.au

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Facebook: facebook.com/AustralianConsulateGeneralLA

X: twitter.com/AusConsulateLA

Instagram: [instagram.com/ausconsulatela](https://www.instagram.com/ausconsulatela)

Australian Consulate-General, New York

Contact the Consulate-General in New York if you're in:

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Puerto Rico
- the Virgin Islands of the United States

Australian Consulate-General, New York
150 East 42nd Street, 34th Floor
New York NY 10017

Phone: +1 212 351 6500

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

Facebook: facebook.com/AustralianConsulateGeneralNYC

Instagram: [instagram.com/ausconsulateny](https://www.instagram.com/ausconsulateny)

Australian Consulate-General, San Francisco

Contact the Consulate-General in San Francisco if you're in:

- northern California
- Idaho
- Montana
- northern Nevada
- Oregon
- Washington State

- Wyoming

Australian Consulate-General, San Francisco
575 Market Street, Suite 1800
San Francisco CA 94105

Phone: +1 415 644 3620

Email: sanfrancisco@austrade.gov.au

Website: usa.embassy.gov.au

24-hour Consular Emergency Centre

In a consular emergency, if you can't contact an embassy or consulate, call the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on:

- +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas
- 1300 555 135 in Australia

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Title: CONSULAR: United States: Travel Advice Periodic Review - February 2025
MRN: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To: Canberra
Cc: RR : Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, New York CG, San Francisco
From: Washington
From File:
EDRMS
Files:
References: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
The cable has the following attachment/s -
TRAVEL ADVICE - Scheduled-review-cover-template February 2025 - UNITED STATES.docx
US Travel Advice Update - February 2025.docx
Response: **Routine, Requires Action**

Post has reviewed the Travel Advice for the United States and suggests that updates be made as indicated in the attached document.

2. Proposed changes include duplicating the current reference in the Passports section to passports with an X gender identifier in the LGBTQIA+ section of the advice. Other minor editorial changes are also suggested.

3. The six Australian Consulates-General in the United States, RCO North America (s 22(1)(a)(ii)) and UPS were consulted in the preparation of this update.

4. HOM Rudd has approved the proposed changes.

text ends

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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