

ALERTS

Immigration Client Alert: Here come the holidays...ready to travel?

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With the holiday season rapidly approaching, now is the best time for visa holders to review their travel documents and begin planning for renewals if necessary. Planning ahead can alleviate much of the stress of international travel and the visa process.

Passport Validity

It is a basic question, but often the most obvious things are overlooked. Renewing a foreign passport in the U.S. can take several weeks. Additionally if a visa holder's passport has six (6) months validity or less, and they need to apply for a new visa, they may be required to renew the passport before applying for the visa. Citizens of certain countries are required to have a passport valid for six months beyond their intended period of stay in the U.S.

Visa Renewal

Visa renewal almost always requires a visit to a U.S. Consulate abroad, which in turn requires an appointment. Due to the high demand for visa appointments during the holidays, some Consulates have already opened up their appointment calendars for the month of December. Additionally Consulates have holiday closings, leaving fewer days for visa processing. It is critical that applicants book their appointments as soon as their travel plans are determined to confirm appointment availability and how long the visa process may take.

In addition, visa processing requires preparation of forms and gathering of necessary documents. Document requirements vary from Consulate to Consulate, and often requirements and procedures can change. It is important for applicants to confirm the most current procedures and requirements.

Finally applicants should remember any family members travelling will also be subject to the same passport and visa requirements.