

THE WORLD SERIES OF POKER FAQs FOR TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES¹

1. Do I need a visa to enter the United States?

a. Citizens and Permanent Residents of Canada.

Citizens and permanent residents of Canada do not need to obtain a visa before visiting the United States. However, WSOP will provide you with a travel letter (see below), and you should read the section below called “When I arrive in the United States, what should I say to the Immigration Officer at the airport/border?”

b. Citizens of Visa Waiver Program countries.

The United States has an online program called “ESTA,” under which visitors to the United States who are citizens of countries that participate in the US’s Visa Waiver program (VWP) simply register online (<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/>) and can come to the United States without having to obtain a visa at an embassy or consulate first. Current VWP countries are:

- Andorra
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Brunei
- Chile
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Monaco
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Portugal
- Republic of Malta
- San Marino
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- United Kingdom

¹ This document is provided for *your general information purposes only*. Do not bring this with you to the United States or to any embassy or consular appointments.

If you are from one of these countries, simply go to <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/> and sign up for ESTA, if you do not already have it. **You will need either a visa or an ESTA to obtain a National Interest Exception (discussed more below).**

Here's what you will need to apply for ESTA:

- Valid passport from one of the countries listed above.
- Valid credit card (MasterCard, VISA, American Express, and Discover (JCB, Diners Club)) or PayPal to pay the US \$14 **per application**.
- Your contact information.
- Your most recent employment information, if applicable.

c. What if I am not from a VWP country?

If you are from a country NOT listed above, **please contact the United States Embassy in your country for more information about obtaining a nonimmigrant B-1 visa.**

For Argentina, Belarus, and Brazil, here are the links to your US Embassies:

<https://ar.usembassy.gov/visas/nonimmigrant-visas/> (Argentina)

<https://ru.usembassy.gov/visas/nonimmigrant-visas/> (Russia)

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visitor.html> (Brazil)

Please note, you will need to fill out a form DS-160 Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application. (Go to <https://ceac.state.gov/CEAC/>). Regarding the process to secure a new visa stamp, you should understand that each U.S. Consulate worldwide is different in their local requirements on how to make an appointment, how to pay the government fees, and submit the DS-160 application. You should review the Department of State's website for the specific consulate you will be visiting and follow their local procedures (see: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>).

There is also a general State Department site covering common questions (see: <http://www.travel.state.gov/content/visas/english.html>). You will need to gather and prepare the required documents before your visa interview.

2. Are there current travel restrictions to the United States?

A travel ban currently suspends entry into the United States of certain non-US citizens who are traveling prior to **November 8, 2021** (discussed more below). There are several geographic-based COVID-19 Presidential Proclamations in effect that restrict nonimmigrant visa issuance and travel to the U.S.

Until November 8, 2021, the following Presidential Proclamations still remain in effect and restrict visa issuance and travel to the U.S.:

- [Proclamation 10143 of January 25, 2021](#) (Restrictions on Travel from Schengen Area, United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil and South Africa)
- [Proclamation 9984 of January 31, 2020](#) (China Travel Proclamation - Extended by Proclamation 10143)
- [Proclamation 9992 of February 29, 2020](#) (Iran Travel Proclamation - Extended by Proclamation 10143)
- [Proclamation of April 30, 2021](#) (Restrictions on Travel from India)

These Presidential Proclamations limit travel to the United States by individuals who were physically present in the following countries during the 14-day period prior to their planned entry or attempted entry to the United States:

- Brazil
- China
- Iran
- Ireland
- Schengen Area (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland)
- United Kingdom
- South Africa
- India (effective May 4, 2021)

Note: This includes layovers in any of these locations.

3. What are the exceptions to traveling to the United States?

As mentioned above, if traveling prior to November 8, 2021, certain travelers are eligible for a waiver of these restrictions under a National Interest Exception (NIE). An explanation of NIE under the Proclamations for travelers from the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Schengen Area, China, Iran, Brazil and South Africa and India is provided on the Department of State website. If an individual NIE request is granted, it is valid for 12 months from the date of approval and for multiple entries, as long as they are used for the purpose under which they were granted.

If you have not been in the travel-restricted countries in the 14 days prior to your entry to the U.S., the travel restrictions do not apply to you. Note, though, that circumstances could change suddenly

or dramatically between the date of your departure and the date of your return, so be prepared with contingency plans.

4. How do I qualify for an NIE?

Among the qualifications for NIEs are those traveling to provide vital support or executive direction to critical infrastructure; those traveling to provide vital support or executive direction for significant economic activity in the United States; journalists; travel due to extraordinary humanitarian circumstances; or travel in support of national security or public health.

For the purposes of WSOP, you will need to explain why your presence at WSOP provides vital support to critical infrastructure or for economic activity. You will need to provide your name, passport, visa or ESTA, biography, job title/position, dates of travel and an itinerary. You will also need a letter of support from WSOP. Please contact [insert contact person and info] if you would like to apply for an NIE. We advise that you begin applying for your NIE no more than 30-days of your travel date as many consulates are experiencing delays in responding to requests.

You must be **in the country** where the NIE will be filed at the time of submitting the NIE request to the U.S. embassy or consulate.

Note: NIE's are not for tourism.

5. Does my spouse or other family member qualify for an NIE to travel with me to the United States for WSOP?

Spouse and children seeking to get a NIE waiver to travel on ESTA are not likely to be approved since the spirit of the rule is to support critical business travel.

Family members that are derivative to the primary applicant who holds a work visa (i.e. H-1B, L-1, E-2, O-1 etc.) should be approved since they also need to travel to live in the U.S. with the principal. Their information should be included at the time the principal files the NIE request. In addition, they are *strongly encouraged to travel at the same time* as the principal applicant to avoid issues at the port of entry, since NIE data regarding the family members may not be in the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) system. If they must travel separately, they should carry a copy of the NIE approval e-mail from the U.S. Consulate as well as the original request that was sent to the U.S. Embassy, the principal applicant's passport ID page, their visa or ESTA, marriage certificate with translation for spouses, and birth certificates with translations for children. *Family members cannot use the NIE for tourism.* It must be to follow to join the principal applicant who is in the U.S. on critical business.

6. Can I travel to a non-restricted country for 14-days and then travel directly to the United States?

You can choose to spend 14-days in a non-restricted country (i.e. Mexico, the Caribbean or Canada) and then travel directly to the United States if you do not choose to go through the NIE process.

7. Do I need a negative COVID test to travel to the United States?

International travelers must test negative for the coronavirus no more than three days before boarding flights bound for the United States. [You are required to show](#) a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. For more information on testing requirements please see the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website](#). For state and local requirements, go here: <https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov/travel-visitors/travelers-visitors/>.

8. When will the travel restrictions to the United States be lifted?

On September 20, 2021, the White House announced plans to reopen international travel to the United States in early November. On October 15, 2021, the White House confirmed that the travel bans will be lifted on **November 8, 2021**. Under the plan announced by COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Zients, travelers will need to show proof of full vaccination prior to boarding their overseas flights, and a negative COVID-19 test will also be required within three days prior to departure.

9. If I live in a country that is presently unrestricted from travel to the United States, will I be subject to the new vaccination rule?

It is unclear whether the new rule will include exceptions for unvaccinated travelers who do not live in one of the restricted countries. For example, travelers currently living in Japan are not subject to the current travel restrictions. However, as its vaccination rate is currently 53%, many travelers may not be permitted to travel to the United States beginning in November if they are not vaccinated. We anticipate that the White House will provide specifics and clarification on the new rule in subsequent communications.

10. What vaccines will be accepted for entry into the United States?

The World Health Organization (“WHO”) has a [list of approved vaccinations for emergency use](#), including the widely accepted Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson and Johnson vaccines. However, it is unclear if any other WHO approved vaccines will be recognized by the United States government. The White House said the final decision on what vaccines would be accepted is up to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC pointed to its prior guidance when asked what vaccines it will accept:

"The CDC considers someone fully vaccinated with any FDA-authorized or approved vaccines and any vaccines that (the World Health Organization) has authorized," [said spokesperson Kristen Nordlund](#). That list could change pending additions by either agency, she said.

The FDA and WHO have approved the Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. The WHO has approved for emergency use the Oxford/AstraZeneca AZD1222 vaccine, as well as the Oxford/AstraZeneca formulation of the Serum Institute of India's Covishield. WHO has also approved Sinopharm (Beijing)'s BBIBP-CorV and the Sinovac CoronaVac vaccines.

Travelers who plan to travel to the United States in November should begin the vaccination process in preparation. If travelers have access to the vaccines currently recognized by the CDC, we advise choosing those vaccines.

11. What Proof of Vaccinations Will Be Used?

It is presently unclear what forms of vaccination proof the United States will accept. No doubt that immigration officials will put measures in place to detect and prevent the use of fraudulent vaccination records, but as of yet we do not have detailed information about how the certification process will work.

12. Other than my passport, what should I bring to the United States?

- **Copy of the NIE Support Letter.** If you are traveling prior to November 8, 2021, be prepared to show the copy of the NIE support letter if the Officer requests it.
- **Proof of a negative COVID-19 test.** Be prepared to show your negative COVID-19 test to airlines prior to checking in for your flight.
- **Proof of your return flight.** Be prepared to show your return ticket, or a copy of your reservation showing the date and time of your return flight.
- **Proof of sufficient funds:** You may be asked to show that you have sufficient funds for your stay. Generally, a major credit card will suffice.
- **Travel medical insurance covering emergency medical, hospitalization, and repatriation:** You are encouraged to obtain travel medical insurance before coming to the United States, but are not required to do so.
- **Proof of accommodation:** You may be asked to show proof of where you will stay. You should be ready to tell the Officer the name of the hotel where you will be staying. Please bring a copy of your hotel confirmation.

13. When I arrive in the United States, what should I say to the Immigration Officer at the airport/border?

When you arrive, you should tell the Officer you are here to participate in a live eSports tournament. **You should only answer the questions asked by the Officer. Don't offer information unless the Officer specifically asks (don't ask, don't tell).** The Officer will recognize the validity of all NIEs approved by the Department of State.

If you are asked detailed questions about the purpose of your visit, here are some suggested answers for the Immigration Officer:

- You are coming to the US to participate in the World Series of Poker events in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- You do not work for WSOP or any other U.S. employer.
- You are not being paid any special payment to participate in the competition.
- You do not intend to immigrate (move to) the United States. You are just here to participate in the tournament. Be prepared to talk about your ties to your home country: your home, your family, your life in your home country.

In addition, we will provide you with a letter from WSOP explaining the purpose of your visit. **Do not provide the Officer with the letter right away.** However, if the Officer asks further questions, or if you are sent to secondary inspection, please provide the letter.

NOTE: U.S. visa applicants are now required to disclose certain information about their social media presence, such as usernames or "handles," and any previous contact information, including email addresses and telephone numbers, used by applicants in the past five years to the Department of State when applying for nonimmigrant or immigrant visas at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Those travelling on ESTA may be asked for their social media handles and other information (such as email addresses and phone numbers) as well.

Please keep in mind that passwords are NOT required and should NOT be provided. We strongly suggest you set all of your social media on "private" setting for the short time period you are at the airport making entry to the US. Do not provide any passwords to your social media sites. Your smart phone should be locked and you should be logged out of your social media accounts on your phone when you get to the airport.

Do be prepared to provide your social media usernames or "handles," and any previous contact information, including email addresses and telephone numbers, used by you in the past five years, in case you are asked to provide that information to the Officer.

We look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas. Safe travels!