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## **CBP ANNOUNCES MOVE TO AUTOMATED FORM I-94 CARDS**

On Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) [announced](#) that the agency has submitted a rule for publication in the Federal Register to automate the issuance of the Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record Card. For decades, the Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record card has been issued to foreign nationals entering the United States in order to document classification of admission and duration of authorized stay in the United States.

Last year CBP announced plans to potentially phase out the issuance of Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record cards upon admission to the United States. The announcement last year immediately drew criticism. Because the Form I-94 serves as proof of a temporary nonimmigrant's lawful status in the United States, many federal, state, and local agencies and benefits programs rely on the Form I-94 when adjudicating applications for such things as Social Security Number cards, state Driver's Licenses, and even unemployment benefits.

Additionally, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (CIS) requires presentation of the Form I-94 to document lawful status when an applicant seeks an extension or change of nonimmigrant status in the United States. U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) and some state and local law enforcement agencies also may require presentation of the Form I-94 card as clear and tangible proof of lawful status in the United States.

The current CBP announcement backs away from the original plan to phase out Form I-94 issuance. Instead, CBP will begin automating the issuance of Form I-94 cards, which travelers may print later from the CBP website at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94). CBP has announced the website will become active, and the rule will go into effect, 30 days after the publication of the CIS rule in the Federal Register. Until the automated system is activated for Form I-94 issuance, it is unclear how soon the printable Form I-94 card will be available to the traveler.

CBP estimates the automation of Form I-94 card issuance will save the agency \$15.5 million per year, while streamlining and speeding up the admissions process at airports and land border crossings. Critics are concerned that sporadic access to computers could leave lawful temporary nonimmigrants without the ability to print the documentation needed to prove their lawful status. Additionally, any delays in updates to the Form I-94 online system could leave even the most tech-savvy travelers without the ability to print immediate and tangible proof of their lawful status.

As always, FosterQuan will continue to monitor changes in immigration procedures and will make future updates available in future Immigration Updates® and on the FosterQuan website at [www.fosterquan.com](http://www.fosterquan.com).