



EMAIL BULLETIN

**THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELAND SECURITY ANNOUNCE THE JANUARY 23, 2007 EFFECTIVE
DATE OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL INITIATIVE (WHTI)
PASSPORT REQUIREMENT**

**All Travelers Entering the United States by Air Must Present a Valid Passport
Beginning January 23rd**

30 November 2006

On November 24, 2006, the U.S. Departments of State and Homeland Security published notice in the Federal Register implementing regulations requiring the presentation of valid passports for international travel beginning January 23, 2007. This significant change in law is but one step to be taken under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), the goal of which is to further strengthen the security of travel to and from the United States.

Under current law, citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda are permitted to enter the United States from other locations in the Western Hemisphere without presenting a passport. Beginning January 23, 2007, all such travelers departing or entering the United States via air travel will be required to present a valid passport. Certain limited exceptions apply for citizens of Mexico traveling for business or leisure with a valid, biometric-enabled Border Crossing Card; for citizens of the United States and Canada traveling with a valid NEXUS card under the NEXUS Air Program; and for citizens of the United States traveling with a Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) on maritime business.

The Departments of State and Homeland Security anticipate extending the passport requirement to land and sea departures and arrivals during the next phase of WHTI implementation. Land and sea regulations are expected to go into effect as early as January 2008.

Because the new passport requirement applies to departures and arrivals and impacts U.S. citizens as well as certain foreign nationals previously exempt from presenting a passport upon entry, employer representatives are encouraged to distribute information about the new requirement to the company's full workforce, so that all personnel subject to international travel may apply for their passports in advance of the January 23, 2007 effective date. For assistance in drafting an appropriate communication for distribution to your workforce, please contact your Tindall & Foster, P.C. immigration attorney.

Your Tindall & Foster immigration attorney will be able to assist you in the preparation of an accurate and timely communication for dissemination to your workforce.

For more information on how to apply for a U.S. passport, please visit the U.S. DOS web site at www.travel.state.gov, or call 1-877-487-2778. DOS officials have advised that additional resource allocations have been made to accommodate the anticipated increase in U.S. passport applications. Should an urgent need for international travel arise for an employee who does not hold a passport, expedited adjudication may be available. For assistance in obtaining expedited issuance of a passport, please contact your Tindall & Foster immigration attorney.