

Department of State Upgrades Security of Proof of Passport Application

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The Department has strengthened security standards for access to the proof of passport application that some Americans are temporarily using to enter and re-enter the United States from points in the Western Hemisphere. To control access to the proof of application, the locator number alone will no longer allow access to the proof of application. This change was recommended by a member of the public and will further safeguard passport customers' personal information, while allowing them to obtain the data they need to meet recently-instituted flexibility in documentation requirements for travel to the Western Hemisphere by air.

To obtain the required proof that they have a pending passport application, travelers must go to <http://travel.state.gov>, and provide their last name, date of birth, and the last four digits of their social security number to verify their identity. The temporary flexibility, which allows Americans to return from air travel within the Western Hemisphere by presenting government-issued identification and proof of a pending U.S. application for a U.S. passport, was announced by the Departments of State and Homeland Security on June 8, and will remain in effect until September 30, 2007. In the meantime, the Department of State has committed to process the record number of passport applications received, and to reduce the passport application turnaround time, all to serve the travel needs of Americans.

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