



eTA

OVERVIEW OF THE ELECTRONIC TRAVEL
AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENT
[CANADA.CA/eTA](https://canada.ca/eTA)



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada



- Announced in 2011, the *Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness Action Plan* establishes a new long-term partnership between Canada and the U.S. to enhance security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services.
- Implementation of the Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) requirement is a Canadian commitment made in the context of the Perimeter Action Plan, and is intended to harmonize the Canadian and U.S. approaches to the pre-departure screening of visa exempt foreign nationals.
 - The U.S. introduced its Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) in 2008 mainly as a means of addressing residual security and admissibility threats posed by this group

Overview of the eTA requirement



- Foreign nationals who are citizens of countries for which there is no requirement to hold a visa to enter Canada (except for U.S. citizens) need to obtain an eTA before flying to or transiting through Canada.
 - An eTA is not required of foreign nationals for whom no visa is required to enter Canada on the basis of their purpose of travel (for example, air crew members, diplomats who have received Accreditation in Canada, etc.)
 - The eTA applies in the air mode only – land and marine requirements have not changed
- Approved eTAs are valid for five years, or until passport expiry, whichever is soonest, and can be used for multiple visits to Canada.
- Applying for an eTA is a simple and inexpensive (\$7 Canadian) online process that takes just a few minutes to complete.
 - Clients can apply at Canada.ca/eTA, and must have a valid passport, a credit or debit card, and an email address
 - Most applicants can expect their eTA to be approved within minutes of application submission

eTA implementation timelines



- Travellers have been able to voluntarily apply for their eTA since August 1, 2015. However, eTA became a mandatory entry requirement for prescribed travellers on March 15, 2016.
- To ensure a smooth transition to this new requirement, the Government of Canada put in place a transition period (leniency period) to help travellers arriving in Canada unaware of the eTA requirement.
 - This leniency period, during which travellers were permitted to fly to Canada without an eTA, ended on November 9, 2016
- As of November 10, 2016 all Canada-bound travellers are verified prior to boarding their flight to ensure they have the appropriate travel documents.

Who needs an eTA? Who does not?



- U.S. citizens are exempt from the requirement to obtain an eTA
 - U.S. citizens should nevertheless travel with a valid U.S. passport
- U.S. lawful permanent residents require an eTA
 - Valid Green Card or proof of permanent residence is required to apply, to board a flight, and to enter Canada
- Canadian citizens – including Canadian dual citizens – and Canadian permanent residents are not eligible to apply for an eTA
 - Canadian citizens are encouraged to travel using a Canadian passport
 - Canadian permanent residents must travel with a valid permanent resident card or permanent resident travel document
- A complete list of those who require and do not require an eTA can be found at Canada.ca/eTA



- On May 1, 2017, the Government expanded eTA eligibility to citizens from **Brazil, Romania, and Bulgaria** who:
 - have held a Canadian visitor visa in the past 10 years, or
 - currently hold a valid United States (U.S.) nonimmigrant visa
- eTA expansion makes it easier and less costly for low-risk travellers, including those who are travelling to the U.S. and have already been screened by a trusted partner, to travel to Canada
 - Under the Canada-U.S. information sharing agreement, IRCC is able to confirm the validity of U.S. visas held by eTA applicants.
- As the eTA applies in the air mode only, eTA-eligible Brazilians, Bulgarians and Romanians who are travelling to Canada by car, bus, train or boat still require a visitor visa.

Applying for an eTA



- Applying for an eTA is a simple and inexpensive (\$7 Canadian) online process that takes just a few minutes to complete
 - Clients can apply at Canada.ca/eTA, and must have a valid passport, a credit card, and an email address to apply
 - Most applicants can expect their eTA to be approved within minutes of application submission
 - Travellers should be advised to use only the official Government of Canada website: Canada.ca/eTA, and to be cautious of sites that appear legitimate but are charging more than \$7 Canadian
- Approved eTAs are valid for five years, or until passport expiry, whichever is soonest, and can be used for multiple visits to Canada
 - Once approved, the eTA is electronically linked to the traveller's passport; therefore, no physical evidence of an eTA exists

What happens after a client applies?



- Once an application is submitted, automatic checks are performed by the system.
 - If the system does not detect any derogatory information in any available databases, does not detect a possible duplicate identity, and complies with processing rules, then it will automatically approve the application.
- If the application cannot be automatically approved, it is referred for manual review.
 - The applicant is then notified of the next steps within 72 hours.
- Complex applications may be referred to an overseas mission for further assessment.

Referrals to Overseas Missions



- When a decision cannot be made in-Canada (e.g., due to delegated authorities, need for interview, etc.) or previously issued eTA requires revalidation by an officer overseas, the application is referred to a mission.
- A file may also be forwarded to a mission should local knowledge be required to determine criminal equivalencies.



- Fewer than 1% of eTA applications have been refused to date.
 - The majority refused eTA applications were due to the applicants not providing additional information requested by an IRCC officer.
- The reasons for the refusal of an eTA are found in the refusal letter sent to the client either by email, or via their secure IRCC online account, if they were prompted to link their eTA to one.
- eTA applicants can seek **judicial review**, although many can overcome the refusal by providing the additional information that was requested of them initially as part of a new eTA application.

How is the eTA requirement enforced?



- On November 10, 2016, the Government implemented the Interactive Advance Passenger Information (IAP) system.
 - This system assists airlines in verifying that **all** travellers (including those who are eTA-required) have the appropriate documents to travel to or transit through Canada by air
 - The IAP program was also a key commitment in the *Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness Action Plan*
- IAP allows the Government to obtain passenger information prior to flight departure to Canada and send back a “board/no-board” message.
 - “No board” messages are issued to airlines if:
 - No eTA is on file (for visa-exempt foreign nationals)
 - No visa is on file (for visa-required foreign nationals)
 - The traveller is the subject of a removal order

Questions?



Visit us online at:

Canada.ca/eTA

Annex A: eTA-required foreign nationals



- Foreign nationals of visa-exempt countries
- Persons who have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence (Lawful Permanent Residents) (these individuals must carry valid proof of status – such as a Green Card – when travelling to Canada)
- Holders of a passport or travel document issued by the Holy See
- Holders of a national Israeli passport
- Holders of a passport issued by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
- Holders of a passport issued by the United Kingdom to a British National (Overseas), as a person born, naturalized or registered in Hong Kong
- Holders of a passport issued by the United Kingdom to a British Subject, which contains the observation that the holder has the right of abode in the United Kingdom
- Holders of an ordinary passport issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan that includes the personal identification number of the individual

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