

Alert

September 26, 2024



Recent Updates Impacting International Travelers

Overview

1. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is proposing to delay the enforcement of the REAL ID enforcement until at least 2027
2. The U.S. Department of State rolls out online passport renewal
3. ETIAS rollout currently scheduled for 2nd quarter of 2025

Details

TSA Delays Real ID Enforcement Until at Least 2027

- The REAL ID ACT, passed by Congress in 2005, aimed to establish minimum security standards for driver's license issuance and production
- This was enacted by the 9/11 commission to set standards for the issuance of government identifications including driver licenses
- The original deadline for REAL ID was set for May 7, 2025
 - Under this deadline, all passengers 18 years and older travelling on domestic airlines would require a REAL ID in order to travel
- Recently, multiple publications have reported that this deadline will be delayed to at least 2027 due to a variety of issues including by not limited to:
 - Only 56% of all state-issued IDs were REAL ID compliant
 - The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) projects that only 70% of IDs will be REAL ID compliant by 2025
 - As of now, the TSA is still keeping the 2025 deadline but will postpone enforcement until May 2027 to allow more time for individuals to secure a REAL ID

Cozen O'Connor's Assessment

- Ensure that you have a REAL ID and don't wait until the last minute (we all know how long the lines can get at state motor vehicle agencies)
- U.S. passports are already REAL ID compliant
- How do you know if you have a REAL ID?
 - REAL ID-compliant cards will have one of the following markings on the upper top portion of the card. If the card does not have one of these markings, it is not REAL ID-compliant and won't be accepted as proof of identity to board commercial aircraft.



Online Passport Renewal

- On September 18, 2024, Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced you can now renew your passport online
- Simply go to the website Travel.State.Gov/renewonline and ensure that you meet the necessary requirements that are listed specifically on the website
- Create an account and complete the application



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Related Practice Areas

- Immigration Policy & Strategy

- Upload a digital photo, sign, and pay

Cozen O'Connor's Assessment:

- While this is bad news for locations that assist with passport renewals including pharmacies, post offices, and libraries, this is very good news for international travelers providing an efficient and easy process to renew passports
- As a reminder, always double check your passport prior to travel to ensure validity
 - NOTE: Some countries require a passport to be valid for at least 6 months after intended international travel, so be sure to double-check prior to departure

ETIAS Rollout

- The European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) is now scheduled to launch in the second quarter of 2025. This is a delay from previous plans to launch in 2020, 2022, 2023, and 2024
 - The delay is due to the Entry/Exit System (EES) not being ready yet. The EES is a system of e-gates at the external borders of Schengen that is considered a prerequisite for ETIAS
 - For more information about this, please see a previous client alert we published back in August 2023 <https://www.cozen.com/news-resources/publications/2023/etias-to-launch-in-2024-how-it-will-impact-over-1-billion-travelers-to-europe->
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