US-VISIT

www.dhs.gov/us-visit

Homeland Security

US-VISIT is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security program that enhances our country's entry and exit system. It enables the United States to effectively verify the identity of incoming visitors and confirm compliance with visa and immigration policies.

The goals of US-VISIT are to:

★ Enhance the security of our citizens and visitors
★ Expedite legitimate travel and trade
★ Ensure the integrity of the immigration system
★ Safeguard the personal privacy of our visitors

The initiative will involve collecting travel information and "biometric identifiers" (such as fingerprints, using a simple, inkless device) from visitors to assist the border officer in making admissibility decisions.

The identity of visitors who need a visa to travel to the U.S. will be verified upon their arrival and departure. These entry and exit procedures address our critical need for tighter security and our ongoing commitment to expedite travel for the millions of legitimate visitors we welcome each year to conduct business, learn, see family, or tour the country.
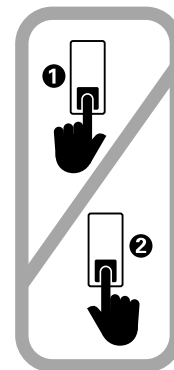
The verification process strengthens security by more accurately verifying the identity of visitors who legitimately travel into the United States. By capturing "biometrics" through the use of simple fingerprint scanners, we will be able to conduct this verification process more quickly and with more certainty than by searching databases by name alone.

Upon Arrival

Many of the arrival processes will remain unchanged and will be familiar to international visitors. At an airport or seaport, travel documents such as a passport and a visa will be reviewed and a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer will ask specific questions regarding the visitor's stay in the U.S.
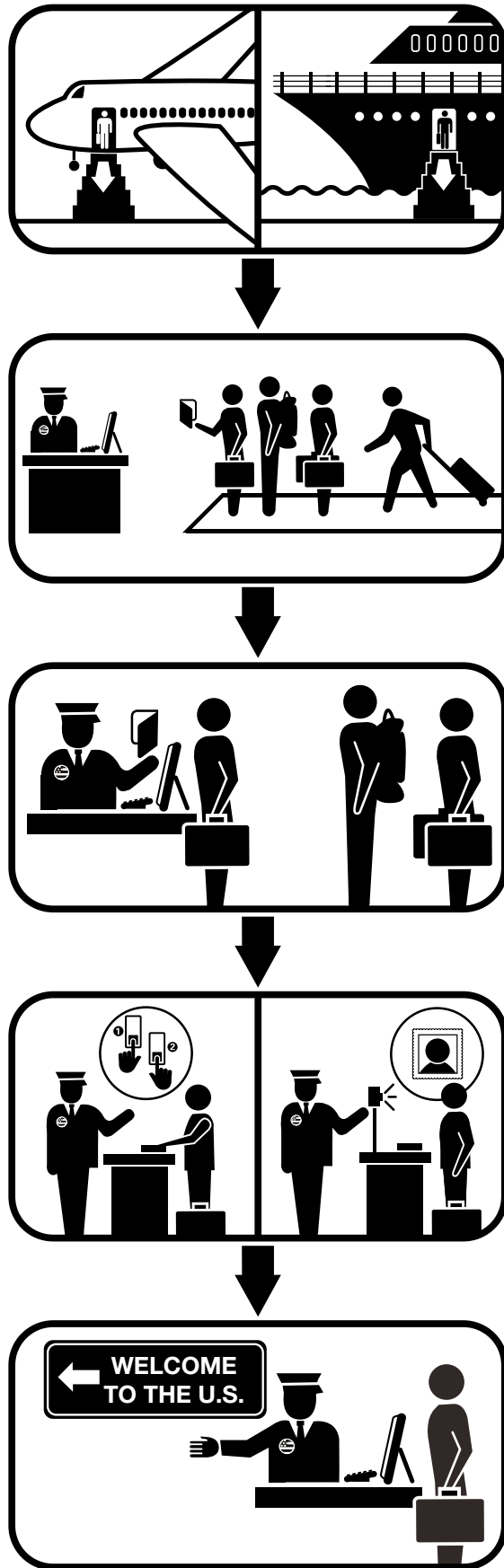
As part of the enhanced procedures, **most visitors traveling on visas will have two fingerprints scanned by an inkless device and a digital photograph taken.** All of the data and information is then used to assist the border inspector in determining whether or not to admit the traveler. **These enhanced procedures will add only seconds to the visitor's overall processing time.**

All data obtained from the visitor is securely stored as part of the visitor's travel record. This information is made available only to authorized officials and selected law enforcement agencies on a need-to-know basis in their efforts to help protect the nation against those who intend to harm American citizens or visitors to our country.

US-VISIT Arrival Process for Visitors Traveling with a Visa

Upon Departure

The most notable change for international visitors will be new exit procedures.

As part of US-VISIT, most **visitors who require a visa will eventually need to verify their departure.** The US-VISIT system is being designed to make this check out process easy by planning the placement of automated self-service workstations in the international departure areas of airports and seaports. By scanning travel documents and capturing fingerprints on the same inkless device, the system is intended to validate the visitor's identity, verify their departure, and confirm their compliance with U.S. immigration policy.

Compliance with these new security procedures is critical because the exit information will also be added to the individual's travel record to protect their status for future visits to the United States.

Upon completion of testing and evaluation, the law requires that US-VISIT capability be implemented at airports and seaports by December 31, 2003.

US-VISIT will enhance the security of the United States **while expediting legitimate travel and trade.** While this has required some changes in our entry and exit procedures, many things have not changed. The United States of America is still a nation where diversity is celebrated and people from all over the world are welcome. Today we – like most other countries – are working to keep our borders secure while we maintain the freedom to exchange ideas, keep businesses thriving, and enrich lives all over the world.

US-VISIT helps to secure our borders, expedite the entry/exit process and enhance the integrity of our immigration system while respecting the environment and the privacy of our visitors.

For more information, please consult **www.dhs.gov/us-visit**