

BORDER CROSSING BASICS

-Entering the United States-

What Documents do I Need to Enter the United States?

US and Canadian citizens 16 years and older who enter the US at land and sea ports of entry will need to present a Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) compliant document:

- Passport
- US Passport Card
- NEXUS Card
- FAST Card (issued to commercial truck drivers)
- Enhanced Drivers License

Children ages 15 and younger will be able to enter with original (or copy) of birth certificate or other proof of citizenship document such as naturalization certificate.

Who is Required to Report?

Every person must report his or her arrival or intention to arrive in the United States. 'Arrival' of the vessel means the time when a vessel first comes to dock in US waters.

When calling in, the Customs and Border Protection Officer will inform the master of the vessel whether a face-to-face inspection is required.

When is Reporting Required?

- After having had physical contact with a foreign vessel entering US waters from foreign waters
- When a vessel returns after having touched foreign soil

Do I Need to Report if I am Merely Anchoring in Foreign Waters?

- If you are merely anchoring you would not be required to report your arrival to US CBP unless you had physical contact with another vessel or person in foreign waters
- If you went ashore by any means, for any reason, you will need to report your arrival with CBP when returning to the United States.

How Do I Report?

CBP clearance may be obtained in one of three methods:

- Phone-In Reporting (upon arrival or before landing)
- CBP Video Phone
- Report in Person

Phone-In Reporting

All passengers must be in possession of a pre-approved form I-68 or a NEXUS/FAST card and call (800-827-2851) to report your arrival up to four hours in advance.

- Only the master of the vessel or his/her designee may go ashore only for the purpose of reporting their arrival
- NO other persons may leave the boat, or board the boat and no baggage may be removed or loaded until the report of the arrival is made and release is granted by CBP.
- The master will be informed whether it will be necessary for the vessel to actually stop at an approved inspection location or whether it may proceed to its intended destination. If it may proceed, a clearance number will be given.

CBP Videophone Inspection

If utilizing the videophone, all passengers and crew must report to the videophone for inspection with identity and citizenship documents ready for presentation. Be prepared to write down an eighteen digit receipt number which must be provided to Border Patrol Agents or other Law Enforcement Officers when requested.

- CBP videophones stations located at: Dunkirk, Erie Basin Marina, North Tonawanda, Youngstown, Wilson, Olcott, Point Breeze, Rochester, Sodus Point, Oswego, Sackets Harbor, Clayton, Alexandria Bay, Morristown, Ogdensburg and Waddington

Reporting in Person (*Thousand Islands & Lake Champlain areas only*)

Report in-person for inspection to the nearest open marine Port of Entry during the established hours for that location.

What Information do I Need When Reporting?

- Name, date of birth, citizenship and BR # (if applicable) of master and all passengers (with supporting documents)
- Name of boat, /or documentation/registration number
- US Customs and Border Protection User Fee Decal Number (if 30 feet or longer)
- Port of arrival, home port, and last foreign port of call
- Details of visit
- Quantities of certain foods and articles on board
- Other pertinent CBP questions

What is CBP's Authority to Examine Me?

US Customs and Border Protection Officers and Agriculture Officers are authorized to search, inspect, examine all persons, luggage and merchandise entering the US from a foreign country.

CBP Officers are authorized at any time to go on board of any vessel or vehicle at any place in the United States or within the customs waters or, as he may be authorized, within a customs-enforcement area established under the Anti-Smuggling Act, or at any authorized place, without as well as within his district and examine the manifest and other documents and papers and examine, inspect, and search the vessel or vehicle and every party thereof and any person, truck, package, or cargo on board, and to this end may hail and stop such vessel or vehicle, and use all necessary force to compel compliance.

What if I Fail to Report My Arrival to CBP?

Failure to report conveyance Arrival can result in a civil monetary penalty of \$5,000 for a first-time violator. Each subsequent violation could result in a \$10,000 monetary penalty.

Conveyance subject to seizure and forfeiture.

In addition to a civil penalty, any master who intentionally commits a violation, upon conviction may be liable for fine of not more than \$2,000 or imprisonment for one year or both.

What is a Boater Registration (BR) Number?

The Boater Registration Number is unique to your vessel/master and should be kept for subsequent visits into the United States. In the case of the master the number is attached to both the vessel and the person. Passengers can also get BR numbers that are only attached to their name. If the number is lost, it can be retrieved by a CBP Officer.

You will receive a BR number when you are issued a NEXUS card. If you do not already have a NEXUS card or BR number, you will be issued a BR number upon your first arrival. You will be asked a series of questions pertaining to the master of the vessel, passengers and vessel information. You will be issued a BR number that you can give each time you make entry with CBP. The BR number allows CBP to speed up the process.

The Fort Erie NEXUS office will provide boater registration numbers to current NEXUS card holders but they must report in person. No appointment is necessary, however, they must be in possession of the NEXUS cards and their boat information. The office hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 am – 8:00 pm; Saturday-Sunday 8:30 am – 3:00 pm.

Anyone who is not a NEXUS card holder and wishes to obtain a boater registration number should report to a Port of Entry (example: Peace Bridge)

What is a User Fee Decal and Do I Need One?

All vessels 30 feet in length or greater are required to pay an annual processing user fee of \$27.50 if crossing the international border. (Simply crossing the international line does not require a decal. You must have entered Canada and qualify for CBP reporting requirements when returning to the United States.) The purpose of the decal is to help pay inspection processing.

Decals are required upon first arrival of the calendar year into the United States. Vessels only require a decal upon entering the United States from foreign waters.

The User Fee year begins January 1st and ends December 31st. Therefore, all User Fees expire January 1st and are eligible for renewal. The User Fee will NOT be pro-rated for purchases made mid-year.

Decals may be purchased via the internet at: **www.cbp.gov**

You are advised to carry a copy of the decal application for verification if you have submitted payment and have not received your decal.

What is an I-68? How Do I Get One?

Under the I-68 program, applicants for admission into the United States by small pleasure craft boats are pre-registered and issued a single boating permit for a 12-month period. The I-68 permit allows boaters to enter the United States from Canada for recreational purposes with only the need to report to CBP for further inspection by placing a phone call to report their arrival.

- I-68 holders may still be required to report to a CBP port of entry upon request
- With an I-68 form you are still required to carry proof of citizenship

To enroll in the program each applicant 14 years of age and older must appear in person at a local CBP office for an interview. Proof of identity, citizenship and three passport sized photos are required for the interview. Contact any local CBP office in advance for an appointment:

- Buffalo, NY (716) 881-4447
- Niagara Falls, NY (716) 282-3141
- Lewiston, NY (716) 285-1676

Children less than 14 years of age may be listed on one or both of the parents' I-68.

Fees are \$16 US for individuals or a total of \$32 for a family.

What is a NEXUS Card and Am I Eligible?

Affords prescreened, low-risk travelers expedited processing by US and Canadian border officials.

- Can be used as proof of citizenship for land border crossing and for small boat arrivals
- Valid for five years from date of issue
- Citizens and permanent residents from both Canada and US are eligible
- Applicant must be approved by both Canada and US and present proof of status

Application fee is \$50 (non-refundable) US or Canadian currency for applicants 18 years or older (no fee for minors 17 and under). Applications for NEXUS participation can be made via the internet: **<https://goes-app.cbp.dhs.gov>**

NEXUS card holders are still subject to reporting to a designated CBP marine port of entry upon request.

Do I Need an I-68 and NEXUS Card?

You do not need both a NEXUS card and an I-68. The NEXUS card is an enhanced replacement for the I-68.

All boaters should obtain Form I-68 or a NEXUS card. However, boaters who choose not to obtain them will be required to report in-person for inspection by a CBP Officer at a port of entry each time they enter the United States.

-Entering Canada-

What Documents do I Need to Enter Canada?

Citizens of the United States are not required to have a passport or visa to enter Canada. However, proof of citizenship (birth certificate) and photo identification is required. If you are a permanent resident of Canada or the US, you should bring your Permanent Resident card with you.

Parents who share custody of their children should carry copies of the legal custody documents. It is also recommended that they have a letter of authorization from the custodial parent to take the child on a trip out of the country. The parents' full name, address and telephone number should be included in the letter of authorization.

Adults who are not parents or guardians should have written permission from the parents or guardians to supervise the children. The permission letter should include addresses and telephone numbers where the parents or guardian can be reached.

Who Is Required to Report?

- All non-resident visitors arriving in Canada by private vessel
- Canadians arriving back to Canada from a foreign port; this includes landing in a United States port or entering tributary waters of the United States.

When is Reporting Required?

- When anchoring in Canadian waters
- If entering tributary waters of Canada
- Mooring to another boat in Canadian waters
- Disembarking passengers onto Canadian land
- Docking on Canadian soil

How Do I Report?

Entering Canada as a NEXUS Participant

The master of the boat must call the NEXUS Reporting Center (866-996-3987) at least 30 minutes and up to four hours before entering Canada. **All** passengers must possess a NEXUS card for this to apply.

The boat master must provide the following information:

- estimated time of arrival
- name and location of the designated arrival site
- registration number and name of the boat
- full name, date of birth and citizenship of all NEXUS member on board
- the destination, purpose of the trip and length of stay for each passenger
- passport or visa details of passengers when applicable or required
- declaration of all goods, firearms and weapons being imported (including those within personal exemption guidelines)

As proof of presentation, the boat master will receive a report number for his or her records and he or she must produce this number when asked to do so by border officials.

If a border official is not at the specified landing site to meet the boat at the reported estimated time or actual time of arrival, the individuals who have reported may proceed to their intended final destination.

Entering Canada as a Non-NEXUS Participant

The boat must arrive at a designated marine telephone reporting site and the boat master must immediately call the reporting center (888-226-7277). Only the boat master may leave the boat until authorization is given by the CBSA.

The boat master must provide the following information for all persons on board:

- Vessel registration number
- Name and date of birth
- Proof of citizenship
- Designated landing point
- Length of absence from Canada (residents)
- Purpose and duration of trip (visitors)
- Declaration of all goods
- Declaration of currency or monetary instruments greater or equal to \$10,000, firearms or weapons

The master will be given a report number which must be recorded and retained in event a CBSA Officer requires proof of reporting

The CBSA Officer may require that all persons remain on board for a personal inspection of the vessel.

What are the Requirements for the Pleasure Craft Operators Card?

The Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations require operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes to have proof of competency on board at all times.

The operator card is good-for-life. Boaters can obtain their card after receiving a mark of at least 75% on a Canadian Coast Guard accredited test. A list of course providers is available from the Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety.

These regulations apply to non-residents if:

- the pleasure craft in Canadian waters for more than 44 consecutive days
- they operate a pleasure craft that is licensed or registered in Canada

A person who is not a resident of Canada is competent to operate a pleasure craft in Canada if the person:

Age/Horsepower Restrictions

- No person under 16 shall operate a personal watercraft
- No person under 12 shall operate a vessel with 10 hp or over (unless supervised)
- No person between 12-16 shall operate a vessel with 40 hp or over (unless supervised)
- 16 or older, no restrictions

Can I Drink on My Boat?

A boat with permanent sleeping accommodations and permanent cooking and sanitary facilities, is considered to be a private place while the boat is at anchor or is secured to the dock or land. If ALL the criteria is met, then yes, one may consume alcohol.