



IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY NEWS RELEASE

US VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTENDED NON-BIOMETRIC PASSPORTS

The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) understands that some Singaporeans holding the non-biometric passports which had been extended, were unable to enter the US without a valid visa.

2 Arising from this, ICA has checked with the US Embassy on the visa requirements for entry into US. The US Embassy has now notified that under the US VWP requirements, passports **issued or extended** after 26 October 2006 are required to be biometric in order for the holder to enjoy visa waiver entry into US. The US Embassy has conveyed this requirement to all travel agencies and airlines recently. All Singapore Passports (BioPass) issued from 15 August 2006 are biometric passports and holders can continue to travel to the US under the VWP.

3 ICA would like to highlight that the non-biometric passports are still valid for travel. However, the imposition of the visa requirements is the prerogative of the foreign immigration authorities concerned. Singaporeans intending to travel overseas should check with the relevant foreign authorities and ensure that they meet the entry requirements before embarking on their journey.

4 For Singaporeans holding the non-biometric passports and who wish to travel to the US, they are advised to check directly with the US Embassy on their entry/visa requirements.

5 Alternatively, the affected Singapore passport holders may consider applying for the BioPass to enjoy visa-free entry to the US. Singapore citizens may choose to apply for a BioPass via any one of the four available modes:

- a. Application online via APPLES;
- b. Application by post;
- c. Application by deposit box;
- d. Application in person over our Passport application counters.

6 The BioPass application forms are available at ICA's website <http://www.ica.gov.sg>, Neighbourhood Police Posts and Community Clubs. You can also call 6738 3352 for a form to be mailed to you. If in doubt as to whether you need to apply for a visa to the US, you may wish to call ICA at 6391 6100 for clarifications.

END OF NEWS RELEASE

Immigration & Checkpoints Authority

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