

PASSPORT INFORMATION:

US Residents in these 9 States Will Need a Passport to Fly Domestically in 2019

New rules that came in 2018 mean some American residents will require a passport for domestic flights. Will you be affected?

Do You Need a Passport to Fly?

Until recently, American citizens only needed a passport to fly internationally. However, due to the REAL ID act, citizens of nine American states now do need a passport to fly domestically as well.

What is Happening With the New Passport Requirements?

Starting on January 22, 2018, the residents of nine specific US States will need a passport to fly domestically within the USA as their state driver's licence will no longer be valid. While this may be news to some people, it's actually been a long time coming. The REAL ID act passed in Congress in 2015, as a security precaution post 9/11. However, it wasn't until 2013 that this act actually started to be rolled out. Many US states are compliant, however, the government did grant some states an extension to early 2018. A couple of these extensions are still under review, however, the extension period for nine specific states is officially up meaning citizens of these states do need a passport to fly in the USA.

Do You Need a Passport to Fly Within the US?

The residents of nine American states will not be allowed to fly domestically with their state identification cards starting on the 22nd of January, 2018. The following states are affected, and do need a passport to fly in the USA:

- Kentucky
- Maine
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Montana
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Washington

Why are State Identification Cards not Valid for Domestic Flights?

The state IDs that exist in each of these 9 states do not meet the federal ID minimum security requirements (based on REAL ID Act of 2005). Individuals from these states need to update their state driver's licenses and ID forms to meet these standards. It is best to check with your individual state government for the most up to date information. That being said, if you plan on doing a lot of domestic flying, it might be in your best interest to apply for a passport.

*Please note that military IDs and permanent resident cards (AKA green cards) will still be accepted.

How do I Get a Passport?

To get a passport, American citizens have two options. The first is to apply by mail and the second is to apply in person. If you are a first-time passport applicant, then you must apply in person. If you have previously had a passport, you may be able to apply by mail, however, mail applications come with several other requirements to please be sure to check ahead of time.

Passport applications will require you to fill out forms (there are different forms depending on whether you are applying in person or by mail) as well as proof of US Citizenship, current ID, photocopies of current ID and proof of citizenship, as well as the applicable fees. If you are applying by mail, you will also need to include your last passport in your application package.

Do you need a passport to go on a cruise?

Individuals applying for a passport should know that there are a few different fees associated with the passport application. Those who are first-time applicants will have additional fees. The breakdown of these fees, as well as all other requirements for applying for an American passport, can be found online here.

If you are an American citizen living in one of these 9 states, your best bet is to apply for a passport as soon as possible. Especially if you have upcoming travel plans. Please be aware that the application process may be slower than usual due to this act.