

# One Minute Memo™



## Passports Required for Air Travel to United States as of January 23, 2007

On November 22, 2006, the U.S. Departments of State and Homeland Security announced that citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda must present a passport to enter the United States when arriving by air from any part of the Western Hemisphere. This new rule will go into effect on January 23, 2007.

This change in requirements stems from recommendations made by the 9/11 Commission, which Congress subsequently passed into law in the form of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. These new travel document requirements make up the Departments' Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), which will be implemented in two phases:

### Phase I:

The first phase involves travel by air, and requires all citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda to hold a passport or other accepted document that establishes the bearer's identity and nationality to enter the United States from within the Western Hemisphere. This phase goes into effect January 23, 2007.

### Phase II:

The second phase involves travel by land and sea; however, the specific requirements have not yet been established. As early as January 1, 2008, U.S. citizens traveling by land or sea between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda may be required to present a valid U.S. passport or other documents as determined by the Department of Homeland Security. Currently under development, the Passport Card (also referred to as the PASS Card), a limited-use passport in credit card format, will be available for use for travel only via land or sea (including ferries) between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda.

As a result of this change in passport requirements, all citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda should ensure possession of a valid passport to enable international travel after January 23, 2007.

*If you have any questions regarding the new passport requirements, please contact the Seyfarth Shaw attorney with whom you work or any immigration attorney on our website, [www.seyfarth.com](http://www.seyfarth.com).*

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