



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

CBP Simplified Travel Air Entry/Exit Tear Sheet

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is streamlining international travel and inspections through facial comparison technology. Your photograph will be taken either by CBP, or by one of CBP's travel partners (i.e., airline, airport authority, or the Transportation Security Administration), who will then securely submit the photo to CBP. The CBP Traveler Verification Service (TVS) will compare this photo with images from your previous CBP encounters, passports, visas, and other travel documents, solely for the purpose of verifying your identity and confirming that you are the true bearer of the travel documents you are presenting.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are U.S. citizens required to provide facial images for CBP's biometric entry/exit system?

All travelers are subject to identity and document verification when entering and exiting the country. However, CBP only requires in-scope foreign nationals to have their pictures taken when entering the U.S. CBP does not require any travelers, including U.S. citizens, to have their photos taken when exiting the U.S. If you do not wish to participate, please notify a CBP officer or an airline or airport representative in order to seek an alternative means of verifying your identity and documents.

How is my privacy protected if I have my picture taken? Will CBP keep my photo?

CBP has taken a number of proactive measures to protect your information and privacy. Photos of in-scope foreign nationals are stored in secure DHS systems in order to confirm your arrival or departure from the United States, consistent with existing laws and processes. However, photos of U.S. citizens will be discarded within 12 hours of identity verification. The DHS and CBP privacy offices continually review this program to ensure compliance with applicable federal privacy laws and regulations as well as best practices in privacy and information security. More information is available at www.dhs.gov/privacy-impact-assessments. Click on "CBP" at the left and then "DHS/CBP/PIA-056 Traveler Verification Service."



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How does CBP secure traveler photos?

CBP is committed to securing traveler information. CBP employs four primary safeguards to protect the data: secure, two-factor authentication, irreversible biometric templates for matching, brief retention periods, and strong encryption during transit and storage in a secure cloud environment.

What requirements does CBP have of its partners who collect data?

In accordance with CBP's business requirements, CBP does not permit its approved partners to retain the photos they collect under this process for their own business purposes. Additionally, these partners must encrypt the photos at all times throughout this process.

How does CBP ensure the accuracy of the facial comparison technology?

CBP continuously monitors performance of the TVS and conducts a variety of statistical tests. CBP is also collaborating with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to perform an independent and comprehensive scientific analysis of CBP's operational face-matching performance, including impacts of traveler demographics and image quality.

Where can I obtain more information about CBP's Simplified Travel initiative?

For more information on the facial comparison process, how data is safeguarded, permissible data sharing, and photo retention, please visit www.cbp.gov/biometrics or www.dhs.gov/privacy, or contact the CBP INFO Center at 1-877-CBP-5511 (outside the U.S., call 202-325-8000). You may also scan the QR code below to connect with the CBP Biometrics website.

¹ An "in-scope" traveler is any alien who is required by law to provide biometrics upon entry into the United States pursuant to 8 CFR 235.1(f)(ii).

