



CANADA TO REQUIRE ELECTRONIC TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FOR NON-VISA NATIONALS AND BIOMETRICS FOR ALL VISA-NATIONALS

Electronic Travel Authorization

Effective August 1, 2015, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will implement a new Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) program with the stated aim of improving safety and security. Under this program, similar to the U.S. ESTA program, individuals who do not require a visa and are seeking entry as a business visitor or tourist must register prior to traveling to Canada. Evidence of registration under the eTA must be presented before an applicant will be permitted to board a plane to Canada.

The registration fee will be \$7 CAD and eTAs will be valid for 5 years or until the passport provided expires.

There are several limited exceptions to the eTA registration requirement, including: U.S. citizens, applicants for a Work or Study Permit, transportation crew members, and individuals transiting through Canada.

It is important to note that U.S. Permanent Residents, who do not require a visa in order to travel to Canada, will be required to obtain an eTA if traveling to Canada for business or tourist purposes.

Biometrics

CIC has also announced that over the next five years CIC will begin to require all individuals who require a visa to submit biometrics as part of their visa application. The new requirement will apply even for short trips for business or tourism. Previously, the biometrics screening was limited to individuals from approximately thirty (30) select countries. The change will also require all non-U.S. citizen applicants seeking a Work Permit or Study Permit, including visa-exempt nationals, to undergo the biometrics process.

As always, Foster will continue to monitor changes in Canadian immigration law and procedure and will provide additional information in future Immigration Updates®, and on our firm's website at www.fosterglobal.com.