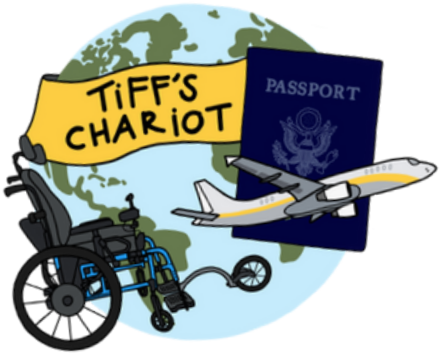
Tiff's Travel Tips



By Tiffany G.

DID YOU KNOW? Beginning on May 7, 2025, a REAL ID or a valid passport, federal government PIV card or U.S. military ID will be required to fly domestically, enter a federal building or visit a military base. Here are the basics to know on Passports (as of March 2025):

- Where can I apply to get a Passport?

I got mine at the Triple AAA but there are lots of options to get yours. Acceptance facilities include post offices, clerks of court, public libraries, and other local government offices. New applicant and minor applicants must apply in person, cannot be done online.

- Can I check the status?

The status of your passport will be sent to the email on the application. Or you can check online.

- How long is it good for?

Some countries and airlines will not allow entry if your passport expires in less than 6 months.

  - Adults – 10 years
  - Minor 16 or older - 10 years
  - Minor 16 and younger – 5 years

- How long will it take?

Anywhere between 2-10 weeks for processing - not including mailing time, which can take up to 2 weeks.

  - Routine 4-6 weeks
  - Expedited 2-3 weeks
  - Urgent: Appointment is needed & has international travel within 14 days.

- Who can get a US passport?

US Citizen or a qualifying US Non-Citizen Nationals - someone born in American Samoa or Swains Island

- Can I do anything ahead of time?

Fill out online or fill out form and print it and make a copy. Prepare your Proof of U.S. citizenship – Stamped US birth certificate, Passport, need more proof? (And a copy of it). Bring photo ID and a copy.
You also need a photo from shoulders up

- How much is it?
  - Passport Book: $130 (Application Fee) + $35 (Execution Fee)
  - Passport Card: $30 (Application Fee) + $35(Execution Fee)
  - Both: $160 (Application Fee) + $35 (Execution Fee)
    - Add additional $60 for expedited processing time.
    - Add additional $21.36 for faster (1-2 day)
    - shipping



But where can I go without a passport?

With the increasing number of detainees, I still recommend traveling with a passport. The world of travel is changing every day, the below countries could change in the blink of an eye so triple check!
For those who do not want to travel abroad for any reason, let me share with you where you can visit without a passport (as of March 2025):

UST:

- Puerto Rico: need a REAL ID
- US Virgin Islands- including St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John: need a REAL ID
- Northern Mariana Island: need a REAL ID
- Guam: need a REAL ID and birth certificate to prove citizenship
- American Samoa: passport OR certified birth certificate, and a ticket for onward passage out of American Samoa and a EPWP (entry permit).

Terms to know:
UST - US Territories; Islands that are technically part of the US and you don't need a passport
USD – US Destination; Any of the 50 states in the country, you do need a passport
CLCD - Closed Loop cruise Destination; A cruise that ends where it began, you do not need a passport to get off the ship

USD:
The 48 states; Alaska, Hawaii, & Florida Keys

CLCD:
Bermuda, Dominican Republic, British Virgin Islands, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, St. Maarten/St. Martin, The Cayman Islands and Turks & Caicos.



- Required Documents: Don't forget your government or state-issued ID and an original birth certificate if you plan on cruising
- Passport Highly Recommended: just in case you DON'T want to be stuck at a detention center.
- Stay Updated: Rules change every day; triple check requirements with your cruise or check your news.