



NEWS RELEASE

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New Biometric Border Crossing Cards (Laser Visa) Will be Required of Mexican Border Crossers Beginning October 1, 2002 *More Than Five Million New BCCs Have Been Issued*

WASHINGTON – Beginning October 1, 2002, holders of the old non-biometric Mexican Border Crossing Card (BCC) will be required to present the new biometric BCC at all U.S. ports of entry along the U.S./Mexico border. Over the past year, the INS and the U.S. Department of State have encouraged Mexican nationals to apply in a timely manner for the new biometric card (Laser Visa), Form DSP-150. Since April 1998, the Department of State has issued more than five million new biometric cards.

On October 1, 2001, the Immigration and Naturalization Service began accepting only the new biometric BCC. This requirement was mandated by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. The Enhanced Border Security Act of 2002 extended the date until October 1, 2002 to replace the old border crossing cards using Form I-186 or I-586 with the new biometric, machine-readable cards (Laser Visa) (DSP-150).

The BCC has a photo and machine-readable biometric information. Beginning October 1, 2002, the old BCC will no longer be a valid entry document.

Effective October 1, 2002, those persons seeking admission to the United States must possess one of the following:

- A valid biometric, machine readable, B1-B2 visa/BCC (DSP-150);
- A B1/B2 visa and BCC combination document issued by the Department of State before 1998, where the visa is still valid, along with a valid passport; or
- Other valid visa and passport.

The Department of State has been accepting applications for the new document since April 1, 1998. Persons must call a toll free number in Mexico (listed below) to arrange for an appointment at a U.S. consulate. At their scheduled appointment, consular staff in Mexico will photograph and fingerprint the applicants. Upon approval, the Department of State will issue the new biometric card (Laser Visa) to the applicant.

The posts that are accepting biometric BCC applications are located in Mexico City, Ciudad Juarez, Guadalajara, Hermosillo, Merida, Matamoros, Monterrey, Nogales,

Nuevo Laredo, Tijuana, and at the Tijuana and the Mexicali Temporary Processing Facilities.

In Mexico, visa information is available by calling 01-900-849-4949. In addition, visa information is available at no charge on the U.S. Embassy homepage at www.usembassy-mexico.gov.

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