

## Presidential Proclamation and National Interest Exceptions

National Interest Exceptions for Travel to the United States during COVID-19 restrictions

U.S. travel restrictions remain in place for travelers from Greece and the rest of the Schengen Area, regardless if you have a valid U.S. visa, ESTA or are fully vaccinated. In most cases, travel by non-U.S. citizens from Greece to the United States is only possible if you qualify and are approved for a National Interest Exception (NIE), or you qualify under immediate family exemptions.

**Tourism & leisure travel remains suspended! Such purposes of travel generally will NOT qualify for a National Interest Exception.**

The fact that the Greek government and other EU countries have lifted most restrictions for travelers from the United States does not change this policy, as this was not a reciprocal decision.

We cannot predict how long these restrictions will remain in place. [Presidential Proclamation 10143](#), which suspended travel from several countries including Greece, remains in effect until terminated by the President.

### Eligible Travelers:

While routine nonimmigrant visa services remain suspended, the U.S. Embassy Athens Consular Section continues to provide emergency and mission critical visa services to applicants exempted from COVID-19 related Presidential Proclamations. For more information on the Presidential Proclamations, see the [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) website.

National Interest Exceptions to the proclamations fall into the following categories: **students, academics, public health professionals, government officials, crew members, those needing emergency medical treatment, humanitarian exceptions, and others whose travel is in the**

**U.S. national interest for vital support to critical infrastructure, significant economic activity, or national security reasons.**

Most travel purposes that fall under the B1/B2 visa category and ESTA will likely **not qualify** for a National Interest Exception. This includes, but not limited to: tourism; vacations; visiting family or friends; visiting a fiancée or partner; attending a wedding or graduation ceremony; routine business meetings, attending an annual professional conference; maintaining a rental or investment property; etc.

A student with a valid F or M visa and a valid I-20 form may travel to the United States without an NIE or further action by the Embassy. Diplomats and Government employees traveling on A or G visas also do not require NIEs. All other travelers that already have valid visas or ESTA authorization must receive approval for an NIE prior to travel.

Athletes must request an NIE from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). We are no longer authorized to consider sports-related NIEs.

Some travelers may qualify for [family exemptions](#) and do not require an NIE, such as legally married spouses of U.S. citizens or Lawful Permanent Resident (Green Card holders).

### **Instructions for requesting a National Interest Exception**

*\* NIE applicants must be legal residents and physically present in Greece. All others, please contact your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate General.*

**SUBMIT YOUR NIE REQUEST AT LEAST 10 BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE TRAVEL!**

**Step 1:** Send an email to [AthensUSConsul@state.gov](mailto:AthensUSConsul@state.gov)

with the **subject line** “NIE mm-dd-yyyy,” replacing the letters with the month, day and year of your intended travel date. For example, “NIE 12-25-2021” if you are traveling on December 25, 2021. Your e-mail **MUST** contain all the following:

- A scanned copy of each traveler's visa or ESTA authorization;
- A scanned copy of each traveler's passport biographic data page;
- Purpose of travel (and any supporting documents);
- A copy of your flight itinerary, or proposed travel dates.

Incomplete NIE requests will be ignored and further delay your application.

**Step 2:** Please allow up to 10 business days for Consular Officers to review your documents and qualifications. U.S. Consular Section Athens is processing hundreds of NIE requests per day with limited resources. We appreciate your patience during this process. Please do not send us multiple applications or repeated requests for updates, as this only further slows down our ability to process NIEs in a timely fashion.

**We will only consider expedited NIE requests in life & death matters.**

**Step 3:** Travelers will be notified by email if they receive approval for a National Interest Exception. Do not attempt to check in to your flight online or travel before you receive email notification of your NIE approval. The NIE will be issued electronically and visible to relevant government agencies and airlines.

### **NIE VALIDITY EXTENDED TO ONE YEAR, MULTIPLE ENTRIES**

Effective July 5, 2021, all NIEs will be valid for 12 months and multiple entries for the same purpose of travel. This is also retroactive for NIEs issued within the past 12 months.

For example: if you were previously issued an NIE on November 1, 2020, you may continue to travel to the United States until October 31, 2021 without any further action or notification required to this Embassy. However, the purpose of travel must be for the same reason as originally requested. If you require travel for a different purpose, a new NIE will be required.

## **Travelers without Valid Visas**

If you believe that you fall into any of the above categories, need to travel immediately, and require a visa, please follow the guidance provided at

<https://gr.usembassy.gov/visas/nonimmigrant-visas/>

## **Mandatory COVID Testing and Quarantine Requirements for Travel**

All airline passengers to the United States ages two years and older must provide a negative COVID-19 viral test taken within three calendar days of travel – even if you have already been fully vaccinated. Alternatively, travelers may provide documentation from a licensed health care provider of having recovered from COVID-19 in the 90 days preceding travel. Check the [CDC website](#) for additional information and [Frequently Asked Questions](#). The CDC Control and Prevention testing requirement also includes testing and self-quarantine guidelines you must follow after your arrival in the United States.

## **FAMILY-BASED EXEMPTIONS**

Certain travelers are exempt from COVID travel restrictions including:

- Legally married spouses of U.S. Citizens (USC);
- Legally married spouses of Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs, commonly known as “Green Card” holders);
- Under-21, unmarried child of a USC or LPR;
- Parent or guardian of an under-21, unmarried USC or LPR;
- Under-21 unmarried sibling of an under-21 unmarried USC or LPR.

*(Unmarried partners, couples with civil partnership (“Σύμφωνο Συμβίωσης”) fiancées, adult children, grandparents and other extended family do not qualify for a family exemption.)*

These travelers do not require NIEs or any notification to this Embassy. If you meet the above qualifications, you may proceed directly to the airport and bring supporting documentation that

proves your relationship to the U.S. Citizen or LPR relative, such as marriage certificates and/or birth certificates.

***DISCLAIMER:*** Admission to the United States remains subject to a determination by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers upon arrival at a U.S. Port of Entry. A valid visa, ESTA or NIE is not a guarantee of admission

## U.S. Visa and Travel FAQs

Home Home / Visas / U.S. Visa and Travel FAQs

***Important:*** Although some international travel is allowed by the Greek government, **U.S. government travel restrictions remain in place for travel from Greece to the United States.** Please see below for more details.

*Thank you for your patience as we work to resume visa services as soon as resources and U.S. and Greek regulations and conditions allow. **We will resume routine visa services as soon as possible but are unable to provide a specific date at this time.** If the service you need is not available, or if your travel plans are further in the future, keep checking this page as this is where we will share any updates. **We can't provide personalized answers by email, social media, or telephone about topics that are covered here.***

Updated: July 13, 2021

Please carefully review this page for important information about U.S. travel restrictions and U.S. visa services in Greece.

U.S. travel restrictions remain in place. It is vital that you familiarize yourself with the current U.S. travel restrictions by reading any presidential proclamation in effect. **We cannot assist you with interpreting the regulations beyond the guidance provided on this website.**

If any Presidential Proclamation applies to you and you don't qualify for an exception specifically listed in the proclamation, you can only travel to the U.S. if you obtain an individual national interest exception before you travel. This applies if you already have a valid visa or ESTA, or if you need to apply for a visa or ESTA. Keep reading for details.

**If you need to apply for a U.S. visa, unavoidable backlogs caused by the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on our staffing and resources, and based on our undertaking health and safety measures in line with Greek and U.S. guidance mean that visa application procedures are subject to delay.** We have not resumed routine visa services and appointment availability is extremely limited. Being exempt from the travel restrictions does not guarantee an expedited appointment and our appointment service provider will be best placed to provide any further details about future interview appointment availability.

SECTION 1: Presidential Proclamation & U.S. Travel Restrictions

**FAQ 1) What does the Presidential Proclamation mean? Can I travel to the United States? What if I have a negative COVID test?**

**Entry of foreign nationals who were physically present within the following list of countries within 14 days prior to their entry or attempted entry into the United States is suspended,** per Presidential Proclamations 9984, 9992, 9993, 9996 and the subsequent proclamations issued May 24, 2020, and January 25, 2021:

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, excluding overseas territories outside of Europe.
- The Republic of Ireland.
- The 26 countries that comprise the Schengen Area (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, **Greece**, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland).
- The Federative Republic of Brazil.
- The Islamic Republic of Iran.
- The People’s Republic of China, not including the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau.
- The Republic of South Africa.

[Click here to read the most recent Presidential Proclamation in full for detailed information.](#)

The travel restriction does **not** apply to:

- U.S. citizens.
- Legal permanent residents (LPRs).
- Most immediate family members of U.S. citizens.
- Other individuals who are identified in the proclamation.

For information on current COVID testing requirements for travel to the United States from Greece please see the CDC website. The Presidential Proclamation continues to apply to travelers from Greece even with a negative COVID test.

If the travel restrictions do not apply to you, we recommend that you carry documentation demonstrating why you are exempt and a printed copy of the proclamation when you travel. See FAQ 1.4 below for more U.S. travel guidance.

*If the travel restrictions apply to you and you do not qualify for one of the exceptions listed in the proclamation, or if you are unsure if the travel restrictions apply to you after reading the proclamation and this page in full, see FAQ 1.6 below for information about how to apply for national interest consideration.*

*The final decision on admission to the United States is made by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the U.S. Port of Entry. No assurances can be given in advance.*

## **FAQ 2) I'm not sure if the Presidential Proclamation applies to me. Can you help?**

It is vital that you read the proclamation in full to find out if it applies to you. You can find further details on proclamations in effect and exceptions here ([travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)). We are unable to interpret the proclamation for you by email, telephone, or social media beyond the information on this website. The below information is provided for guidance only.

### **I will be studying in the United States. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**

If you hold a valid F-1 or M-1 student visa and you wish to travel to the United States to undertake or resume your studies or Optional Practical Training (OPT), you do not require a national interest exception in order to travel to the United States. This applies even if you were issued with a national interest exception in the past. This also applies to F-2 and M-2 visa holders traveling with or to join an F-1 or M-1 student. Please check FAQ 1.4 below for important information about traveling to the United States. Please note, we are unable to provide an official letter confirming that you are excepted from a travel restriction.

If you need to apply for a F or M student visa urgently, please see FAQ 2.3 for information about how to request an expedited appointment.

### **I have a valid fiancé(e) or immigrant visa. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**

On April 8, 2021, the Secretary of State determined that travel on an immigrant or fiancé(e) visa is in the national interest for purposes of granting exceptions under the geographic COVID proclamations. Individuals with VALID K-1 and immigrant visas are no longer subject to regional Presidential Proclamations and may travel to the U.S. using their valid visa. All fiancé(e) and immigrant visa holders are still subject to DHS admissibility determinations and to the Centers for Disease Control's requirement for proof of negative COVID19 test no more than 3 days before travel into the U.S.

If you are not currently in possession of a valid K or immigrant visa, please see Section 3 for information.

### **My spouse is a U.S. citizen or LPR. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**

This particular Presidential Proclamation does not apply to "any alien who is the spouse of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident."

### **My child is a U.S. citizen or LPR. Am I exempt from the proclamation as their parent?**

This particular Presidential Proclamation does not apply to "any alien who is the parent or legal guardian of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident." Children must be unmarried and under the age of 21.

### **My parent is a U.S. citizen or LPR. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**



This particular Presidential Proclamation does not apply to “any alien who is the child, foster child, or ward of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, or who is a prospective adoptee seeking to enter the United States pursuant to the IR-4 or IH-4 visa classifications.”

Please note, the exemption in the Proclamation applies to minor children only.

**My brother or sister is a U.S. citizen or LPR. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**

This particular Presidential Proclamation does not apply to “any alien who is the sibling of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, provided that both are unmarried and under the age of 21.”

**My partner/civil partner is a U.S. citizen or LPR. Are they considered a spouse?**

The Department of State’s definition of spouse is “Legally married husband or wife. A co-habiting partner does not qualify as a spouse for immigration purposes. A common-law husband or wife may or may not qualify as a spouse for immigration purposes, depending on the laws of the country where the relationship occurs.” This also applies to couples with a civil partnership contracted in Greece, which is not considered legally equal to marriage for immigration purposes.

**I have another relative in the United States. Am I exempt from the proclamation?**

If your specific relationship isn’t listed in the Presidential Proclamation, then you do not qualify for an automatic exception.

**I have an immigrant visa. Am I an LPR?**

It is not possible to apply for a Permanent Resident Card (commonly known as a “Green Card”) from outside the United States. When an immigrant visa holder is admitted at a U.S. Port of Entry, their passport is stamped with the words “Processed for I-551 temporary evidence of lawful residence.” If you have an immigrant visa but you have not been previously admitted to the United States using that visa then you are considered an immigrant visa holder, not an LPR.

**I want to transit another country to get to the United States, or transit the U.S. to get to another country. Does the proclamation apply?**

The proclamation suspends travel to the U.S. for any individual who has been physically present in the Greece or another listed country within 14 days prior to their arrival in the United States. Unless you plan to stay in a country that is not impacted by any of these proclamations for 14 days before traveling onward to the United States, the proclamation will continue to apply.

Transiting a country covered by the proclamation (including the UK), even without exiting the airport, counts as physical presence within that country and triggers the application of the proclamation.

The proclamation also applies to traveling through a U.S. airport to get to another country.

**I qualify for an exception listed in the proclamation. Does this mean I can travel without a visa or ESTA?**

Qualifying for an exception to the travel restriction listed in the proclamation does not remove the need for the appropriate immigration status or documentation.

U.S. citizens are required to enter and exit the United States with a valid U.S. passport, even if they are a dual citizen.

If you are an LPR, you should typically be prepared to show your Permanent Resident Card ('Green Card'), or a valid I-551 stamp in your passport if you were first admitted to the U.S. as an LPR within the last 12 months and you have not yet received your Permanent Resident Card. If your Permanent Resident Card is lost, stolen or missing, please see FAQ 4.2 below.

If you are not a U.S. citizen or LPR, you will need the appropriate valid visa or ESTA for your purpose of travel. If you need to apply for a visa, see SECTION 2 below.

*If the proclamation does not apply to you, we recommend that you carry documentation demonstrating why you are exempt and a printed copy of the proclamation when you travel. FAQ 1.4 below for more U.S. travel guidance.*

*If the proclamation applies to you and you do not qualify for one of the exceptions listed in the proclamation, or if you are unsure if the proclamation applies to you after reading the proclamation and this page in full, see FAQ 1.6 below for information about national interest consideration.*

*Admission to the United States is a matter for U.S. CBP officials. No assurances can be given in advance.*

**FAQ 3) Can I travel through a country not covered by the Presidential Proclamation?/Can I transit the U.S. to get to another country?**

Travel to the United States from a country that is not covered by the Presidential Proclamation may be possible, but we advise you to verify whether the country to which you intend to travel has implemented travel or other restrictions before you make travel arrangements. One possible source of such information is [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) which contains links to the websites of other countries' immigration authorities.

**We are not able to suggest countries through which you may travel, comment on your proposed travel itinerary, or provide information about travel regulations that apply to other countries.**

Please bear in mind:

- The proclamation suspends travel to the U.S. for any individual who has been physically present in Greece or another listed country within 14 days prior to their arrival in the United States. Unless you plan to stay in a country that is not impacted by any of these proclamations for 14 days before traveling onward to the United States, the proclamation will continue to apply.
- Transiting a country covered by the proclamation (including Greece), even without exiting the airport, counts as physical presence within that country and triggers the application of the proclamation.
- The proclamation also applies to traveling through a U.S. airport to get to another country.
- For information on current COVID testing requirements for travel to the United States from the Greece please see the CDC website.

**FAQ 4) I qualify to travel to the United States. What do I need to know about traveling? Will I need to quarantine?**

*Qualifying for an exception to the travel restriction listed in the Presidential Proclamation does not remove the need for the appropriate immigration status or documentation. Depending on your circumstances, you will need a valid U.S. passport, Permanent Resident Card/I-551 stamp, ESTA or visa appropriate for your purpose of travel. See Question 1.2 above for more information.*

Contact your airline for the latest information about your travel plans and any restrictions.

If your ESTA was cancelled but you believe that you fall under one of the exceptions identified in the Presidential Proclamation, refer to the Travel Proclamation Help on the ESTA website for guidance.

**Please note that the U.S. Embassy cannot provide an official letter stating that you are excepted from a travel restriction.**

If you travel, please follow the steps below:

- Do not attempt to check in for your flight online if you have an ESTA registration.
- Arrive early for your flight.
- Carry as many original documents as you have available that you believe demonstrate why you have been excepted from a travel restriction, such as a Permanent Resident Card (commonly known as a Green Card), a marriage certificate, or a birth certificate. We are unable to provide guidance about your documents or whether copies will be considered sufficient as such questions are a matter for CBP when you travel.
- You may also wish to carry a printed copy of the Presidential Proclamation itself.

- Your status will be reviewed in consultation with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials. Please note that smaller airports may not have CBP officials on site.
- If applicable in your case, your ESTA will be reinstated in order to allow you to board.

### **Do I need a negative COVID test result to travel to the United States?**

Travelers from Greece must test negative for the coronavirus no more than three days before boarding flights bound for the United States. For more information on testing requirements please see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website.

### **Will I have to quarantine in the United States?**

It is important that you check quarantine regulations for the state you are visiting. You can find the most-up to date information on the CDC website and the state's health department website. Please note you will still be required to quarantine as required by CDC and local guidelines even if you qualify for an automatic exception to the current Presidential Proclamations or you have received a national interest exception in order to travel directly to the United States.

The Visit USA website has useful links to state, city, hotel, and airline social distancing information.

### **FAQ 5) I have a visa. Is it valid for travel?/My passport containing a valid visa has been lost or stolen. What should I do?/Is the visa in my expired or damaged passport still valid?**

Visa validity relates to the time during which the holder may travel to the United States to apply for admission to the United States for a reason consistent with the type of visa they hold. Please check the expiration date on your visa, and see our website for information about each visa category. If your visa is marked as 'indefinite,' it is no longer valid for travel.

If the passport containing your valid visa has expired, is lost or stolen, or is damaged, or your name has changed, please click here for important information.

*Important: While the U.S. travel restrictions referred to in FAQ 1.1 and 1.2 on this website remains in effect, you must either qualify for an exception listed in the proclamation or apply for and obtain a national interest exception even if you hold a valid visa.*

### **Important information about traveling to the United States**

For information on current COVID testing requirements for travel to the United States from Greece please see the CDC website. Please see FAQ 1.4 above for more information about traveling to the United States at this time.

**A valid visa or ESTA does not guarantee entry to the United States. Admission is a matter for CBP officials at the Port of Entry and all travelers are subject to questioning. No assurances can be given in advance.**

**FAQ 6) I am NOT exempt from the Presidential Proclamation but I need to apply for a visa or travel with a valid visa or valid ESTA/I want to request national interest consideration/I've been told I need a 212(f) waiver. What should I do?**

If you are applying for a visa, you will be assessed for a National Interest Exception (NIE) as part of the visa application process and do not need to request an NIE separately.

If you already have a valid visa or an ESTA and do not fall under one of the exemptions to the Presidential Proclamation but you have an urgent or humanitarian need for travel, such as for critical medical treatment, or you think you may qualify for another possible exception, please follow the steps below:

**Step 1:** Send an email to [AthensUSConsul@state.gov](mailto:AthensUSConsul@state.gov)

with the **subject line "NIE mm-dd-yyyy,"** replacing the letters with the month, day and year of your intended travel date. For example, "NIE 08-25-2021" if you are traveling on August 25, 2021. Your e-mail **MUST** contain all the following:

- A scanned copy of each traveler's visa or ESTA authorization;
- A scanned copy of each traveler's passport biographic data page;
- Purpose of travel (and any supporting documents);
- A copy of your flight itinerary, or proposed travel dates.

Incomplete NIE requests will be ignored and further delay your application.

**Please only submit your request if your intended travel is within 60 days. We will not be able to respond to requests that are further in the future.**

**Step 2:** Please allow up to 10 business days for Consular Officers to review your documents and qualifications. U.S. Consular Section Athens is processing hundreds of NIE requests per day with limited resources. We appreciate your patience during this process. Please do not send us

multiple applications or repeated requests for updates, as this only further slows down our ability to process NIEs in a timely fashion.

**We will only consider expedited NIE requests in life & death matters.**

**Step 3:** Travelers will be notified by email if they receive approval for a National Interest Exception. Do not attempt to check in to your flight online or travel before you receive email notification of your NIE approval. The NIE will be issued electronically and visible to relevant government agencies and airlines.

Please note, all National Interest Exceptions (NIE) are now valid for 12 months and multiple entries as long as you are traveling for the same purpose for which you originally received an NIE. If you have received a previous NIE in the past 12 months, it will remain valid until one year after its original approval date. You do not need to apply for a new NIE until your original exception expires. The determination of your eligibility for admission to the United States will be made by U.S. Custom and Border Protection (CBP) officials. We are unable to reissue a new approval letter.

**FAQ 7) Can I be exempted from the Presidential Proclamation if I provide a negative COVID-19 test result?/Can I be exempted if I have been vaccinated?**

The Presidential Proclamation does not include an exception on the basis of negative test results or vaccination status.

Please read the proclamation in full for details of possible exemptions.

**FAQ 8) I'm in the United States. If I have to leave, will I be able to return?**

As you are not currently in Greece, we cannot offer guidance as to whether you would fall under an exception to the Presidential Proclamation if you were to seek to reenter the United States at a future date. Please review the Presidential Proclamation for detailed information.

Before departing the United States, we would strongly advise you to consider the necessity of traveling to Greece. National Interest consideration should only be requested if you are relatively certain you may qualify for one of the exceptions listed in the Proclamation. You will

need to wait until you are in Greece to apply for any national interest consideration. An exception is not guaranteed and if you do not qualify this may result in a significant delay in being able to return to the United States.

If you do travel to Greece and wish to return to the United States, you may contact us after entering Greece by following the instruction in FAQ 1.6 above. Please contact us no more than 60 days before the date of your planned travel back to the United States, and include information about why you departed the U.S.

Please note, all National Interest Exceptions (NIE) are now valid for 12 months and multiple entries as long as you are traveling for the same purpose for which you originally received an NIE. If you have received a previous NIE in the past 12 months, it will remain valid until one year after its original approval date. You do not need to apply for a new NIE until your original exception expires. The determination of your eligibility for admission to the United States will be made by U.S. Custom and Border Protection (CBP) officials. We are unable to reissue a new approval letter.

Please visit the Greek government's websites ([travel.gov.gr](http://travel.gov.gr), [visitgreece.gr](http://visitgreece.gr)) for current information about traveling to and within Greece. Contact the Greek government directly if you have further questions.

**FAQ 1.9) I have received a national interest exception. What if I can't travel before the approval expires?/ I received a national interest exception and traveled to the U.S. Can I apply for another exception to return to the United States?**

If you hold a valid F-1 or M-1 student visa and you wish to travel to the United States to undertake or resume your studies or Optional Practical Training (OPT), you do not require a national interest exception in order to travel to the United States. **This applies even if you were issued with a national interest exception in the past.** This also applies to F-2 and M-2 visa holders traveling with or to join an F-1 or M-1 student. Please check FAQ 1.4 above for important information about traveling to the United States. Please note, we are unable to provide an official letter confirming that you are excepted from a travel restriction.

If you were issued with a national interest exception for travel using an ESTA or a visa other than an F-1 or M-1 student visa, all National Interest Exceptions (NIE) are now valid for 12 months and multiple entries as long as you are traveling for the same purpose for which you originally received an NIE. If you have received a previous NIE in the past 12 months, it will remain valid until one year after its original approval date. You do not need to apply for a new NIE until your original exception expires. The determination of your eligibility for admission to the United States will be made by U.S. Custom and Border Protection (CBP) officials.

The U.S. Embassy cannot provide an official letter stating that you are excepted from a travel restriction or reissue your approval letter. You should check the date of your NIE on your original approval email. If you obtained an NIE through your visa issuance and your visa indicates you are not subject to the Presidential Proclamations, your approval date will be from the date of your visa interview.

Please note, if you have a valid visa or ESTA, the determination of your eligibility for admission to the United States will be made by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the Port of Entry. No assurances regarding admission can be given in advance as all travelers are required to establish their eligibility for admission and are subject to questioning.

Information about the status of ESTA registrations at this time is provided through the only official ESTA website. If your ESTA was cancelled but you fall under one of the exceptions identified in the Presidential Proclamation, please refer to the Travel Proclamation Help on the ESTA website for guidance.

If you travel, please follow the steps below:

- Do not attempt to check in for your flight online if you have an ESTA registration.
- Arrive early for your flight.
- Carry any documentation that you believe demonstrates why you have been excepted from a travel restriction, such as a Permanent Resident card (commonly known as a Green Card), a marriage certificate, or a birth certificate, so that it is available if it is requested for review.
- You may also wish to carry a copy of the Presidential Proclamation itself.
- Your status will be reviewed in consultation with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials. Please note that smaller airports may not have CBP officials on site.
- If applicable in your case, your ESTA will be reinstated in order to allow you to board.

A valid NIE does not except you from observing U.S. government regulations related to COVID-19, including quarantine regulations and mandatory covid testing. If you have questions about these regulations, please review both the CDC website and the website of the Department of Health for the state to which you are traveling.

We are not able to extend NIE's further than the 12 month validity. If you do not travel before your NIE expires, you will need to wait until your NIE expires and then reapply. Please note that, due to a high volume of requests, we may not be able to process your additional application in time for your desired travel. Therefore we strongly encourage you to travel before the expiration date if at all possible.

**FAQ 10) My previous request for a National Interest Exception was approved. Why has my most recent application been denied?**



Requests for a National Interest Exceptions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with guidance from the Department of State. You may review information provided on [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) for the latest updates on National Interest Exceptions. The Secretary of State recently rescinded previous national interest determinations regarding certain categories of travelers eligible for exceptions under Presidential Proclamation 10143 as related to Greece and the Schengen Area.