# Canada Implements Leniency Period for Electronic Travel Authorization until Fall 2016 Publications

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As previously mentioned, on April 1, 2015, Citizenship and Immigration Canada published regulations implementing its Electronic Travel Authorization ("eTA") program. The eTA program was modeled after the U.S. Electronic System for Travel Authorization, which is a mandatory registration required for foreign travelers who wish to enter the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. Once implemented, it will require most visa-exempt foreign nationals who travel to Canada without a temporary resident visa ("TRV") to obtain an eTA.

Under the eTA program, applicants will pay a $7.00 CAD processing fee electronically in connection with their online eTA application. Once issued, an eTA will be valid for five years from the day on which it is issued or until the applicant's passport or travel document expires, whichever comes first. The regulations also provide an officer with the ability to cancel an eTA that was issued to a foreign national if the officer determines that the foreign national is inadmissible or if the foreign national becomes subject to a declaration made by the Minister under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

The regulations initially required eTAs to be mandatory as of March 15, 2016. Fortunately, the new Liberal Government has decided to delay the enforcement of the eTA requirement until Fall 2016 (no exact date end date has been announced) by implementing a "leniency period."

During the leniency period, visa-exempt foreign nationals who do not have an eTA will still be permitted to enter Canada as long as they have appropriate travel documents, such as a valid passport. Nevertheless, visa-exempt foreign nationals are encouraged to obtain an eTA as soon as possible.

Of course, even after the leniency period has ended, not everyone will require an eTA. For example, United States citizens are exempt from the eTA requirement. Also, as the eTA

requirement is intended to apply to visa-exempt applicants, a foreign national who already holds a TRV is also not required to obtain an eTA.  In addition, in order to reduce the duplication of information to be provided by visa-exempt foreign nationals, if a visa-exempt applicant applies for a work permit or study permit, they will not need to also obtain an eTA.  A complete list of eTA exemptions appears in my previous article.