

SENECA NATION ETC FACT SHEET
Information for Applicants & Potential Applicants

This document provides information about the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) and Enhanced Seneca Nation photo identification cards.

WHTI is a federal rule that regulates which documents U.S. citizens can use when they travel in the Western Hemisphere. Specifically, WHTI requires U.S. and Canadian travelers to present a passport or other document that denotes identity and citizenship when entering the U.S. It is a result of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA). The goal of WHTI is to facilitate entry while strengthening U.S. border security. Standard documents enable the Department of Homeland Security to quickly and reliably identify a traveler. WHTI went into effect **June 1, 2009** for land and sea travel into the U.S., specifying that only WHTI approved documents can be used for return to the United States.

The Seneca Nation now issues a WHTI-Compliant Enhanced Tribal Identification Card (ETC) to applicants who can prove Nation citizenship and *recognized* U.S. or Canadian citizenship, meaning those individuals who can present one of the following: a valid/unexpired U.S. or Canadian passport, original or certified copy of a birth certificate denoting a birthplace in the U.S. or Canada, Consular Report of birth abroad or certificate of birth (U.S.), a naturalization certificate or certificate of citizenship, OR a certificate of retention of Canadian citizenship or certificate of registration of birth abroad. An ETC can be used **instead of a passport or EDL** to return to the U.S. from Canada, Mexico, and some countries in the Caribbean by land or sea. An ETC is **not acceptable for air travel** between these countries.

There is an additional fee for an ETC, but the fee is much less than the fee for a U.S. passport or NYS enhanced driver's license (EDL). Because the applicant is required to show proofs of identity, Nation citizenship and *recognized* U.S. or Canada citizenship, all applications must be made *in-person* at the Nation's ETC Office located within the Clerk's Office at either the Allegany or Cattaraugus locations. **You cannot apply by mail, telephone or internet.**

1. When/How can I apply for an ETC? How long do I have to wait? Can I also get a regular tribal ID card? What forms and proofs are required?

You can pick up an application for an ETC at any time, however private, in-person interviews are only conducted around the second week of every month and an appointment must be made to submit the application and undergo an interview. Please arrange for childcare, as necessary. Minors applying for an ETC may be accompanied by an adult during the interview process. Cards are produced around the third Wednesday of each month. ETCs are then available for in-person pick-

4. If an ETC is lost or stolen, what is the cost to replace it?

The cost to replace a lost or stolen ETC is **\$45.00**.

5. What are the advantages of an ETC?

An ETC can be used **instead of a passport or NYS EDL** to return to the U.S. from Canada, Mexico, and some countries in the Caribbean at land/sea border entries. An ETC also **speeds up border crossings** (permissible use in the “Ready Lane”, a dedicated primary vehicle lane for travelers entering the U.S. at certain land border ports of entry, including the Peace Bridge and Rainbow Bridge. Travelers who obtain and travel with an RFID-enabled travel document may receive the benefits of using a Ready Lane to expedite the inspection process while crossing the border - check with your local crossing on hours of operation), **costs less than a passport or EDL, and fits in your wallet.**

Cruises - can be used to return to the U.S. when port is in/out of U.S. and the cruise is solely in the western hemisphere (Caribbean) but you may need a passport to enter into any of those countries. Contact your travel agent, your cruise line or the specific countries of destination to verify travel document requirements.

An ETC is **not acceptable for air travel between these countries.**

6. Can a child under age 16 or elders get an ETC?

Yes. A parent can show his or her proofs that are required for an ETC, complete the application and forms, undergo the interview/attend the interview with the minor, and sign the name of the child if the child is too young to sign.

7. Is an ETC acceptable for domestic air travel within the U.S.?

Currently, yes. For **domestic air travel** within the U.S., **an ETC or Native American tribal photo ID is acceptable as proof of identity to board a domestic flight.** However, this is subject to change based on Federal laws and regulations.

10. Is a person required to get an ETC?

No. The ETC is offered as **an option** to eligible Nation citizens who are *recognized U.S. or Canadian citizens*, meaning those individuals who can present one of the following: a valid/unexpired U.S. or Canadian passport, original or certified copy of a birth certificate denoting a birthplace in the U.S. or Canada, Consular Report of birth abroad or certificate of birth (U.S.), a naturalization certificate or certificate of citizenship, OR a certificate of retention of Canadian citizenship or certificate of registration of birth abroad. Nation ID cards that are not enhanced **remain available and valid**.

OTHER ETC FAQs:

Who is eligible for an ETC?

Only an applicant who can provide **two (2) proofs of identity, Nation citizenship and recognized U.S. or Canadian citizenship**, meaning those individuals who can present one of the following: a valid/unexpired U.S. or Canadian passport, original or certified copy of a birth certificate denoting a birthplace in the U.S. or Canada, Consular Report of birth abroad or certificate of birth (U.S.), a naturalization certificate or certificate of citizenship, OR a certificate of retention of Canadian citizenship or certificate of registration of birth abroad, is **eligible** for a Seneca Nation ETC.

For how long is an ETC valid?

An ETC is valid for a maximum of **5 years**.

What if my name or address changes or is different than what is on my original ETC?

If your name or address has changed, you must pick up a name/address change, make an appointment to submit proof of the name/address change and pay the appropriate fee. Acceptable proof of name change includes a marriage or divorce certificate, court-ordered name change documents, or valid identification. You will be required to **fill out a form in-person** at the Clerk's office and pay the **replacement fee** to obtain a new ETC. Once the new card is available for pick-up, you must return your old card.

How do I get a replacement if one of the documents required to apply for an ETC is missing?

Information is available on the Internet about how to apply to replace a Social Security card, U.S. passport, NYS birth certificate, other state birth certificate, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, and U.S. citizenship and naturalization documents.

*See also “How to Get a Copy of your Birth Certificate” *available in the Clerk’s Office.*

What countries, territories and islands are considered part of “the Caribbean” under WHTI?

Puerto Rico and the **U.S. Virgin Islands** (including St. Crois, St. John and St. Thomas) are **U.S. possessions**. In addition, the U.S. State Department website has a list of the 17 countries, territories and islands that are **not** U.S. possessions but that are also part of “the Caribbean” under WHTI.

How can I re-enter the U.S. if my ETC expires or is lost or stolen while I am in Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean?

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has procedures in place for emergency situations and an individual can be referred for a secondary inspection in order to establish identity and citizenship. When U.S. citizenship is determined, the traveler will not be refused re-entry to the United States.

What if I entered Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean by land or sea with my ETC, but I have to fly home for an emergency?

Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance to help you travel home. Get the addresses and phone numbers for the Embassy and Consulate offices in that country from the Department of State website before you travel.

The U.S. Embassies and Consulates are closed on weekends and holidays. If a phone number is provided for the Embassy or Consulate after-hours duty officer when you call, contact the duty officer.

How to Get a Copy of your Birth Certificate

Don't call the hospital where the birth took place. Instead, "*start with the vital statistics office in the birth state,*" says Sandra Smith of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>, a website run by the NCHS, to get the phone number and address of your state's office. Or check the government pages of the phone book.

What you need to get it: As many vital statistics—name, gender, parents' names, place of birth, and birth date—as possible. Some states also require a photo ID. Replacement fees range from \$5 to \$30.

How long it takes: In-person requests could yield the certificate within minutes. By mail you can expect to wait about four weeks, or two weeks if you pay an additional fee for expedited service. Some states offer overnight service, too. There may be longer waits in late summer, when parents are requesting birth certificates for children starting school.

New York (excluding New York City) Birth Certificates:

Cost of copy: \$30.00

Address: Certification Unit
Vital Records Section/2nd floor
800 North Pearl Street
Menands, NY 12204

Remarks: State office has records since 1880. For records before 1914 in Albany, Buffalo, and Yonkers, or before 1880 in any other city, write to Registrar of Vital Statistics in city where event occurred. For the rest of the State, except New York City, write to State office.

Personal check or money order should be made payable to **New York State Department of Health**. Payment of mail order copies submitted from foreign countries must be made by a check drawn on a United States bank or by an international money order. To verify current fees, the telephone number is 1-855-322-1022. This will be a recorded message. Information on how to obtain certified copies is also available via the New York State Department of Health website at http://www.health.ny.gov/vital_records/

For all types of State and local issued copies, the applicant is required to provide government issued photo identification.