

PRESS RELEASE

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INS Reminds Certain Non-Immigrants of 18 Countries of New Registration Requirement

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reminds male citizens and nationals of 18 countries of the new requirement to register with INS. This registration is part of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), which is INS' first step towards developing a comprehensive entry-exit program by 2005.

Non-immigrant visitors who are citizens or nationals of **Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan or Syria** who were admitted to the United States as non-immigrants on or before September 10, 2002, and who plan to stay in the United States until at least December 16, 2002, must register with their local INS office by December 16, 2002.

Non-immigrant visitors who are citizens or nationals of **Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, or Yemen** who were present in the United States as non-immigrants before October 1, 2002 and who plan to stay in the United States until at least January 10, 2003, must register with their local INS office by January 10, 2003. This is not an exclusive list--temporary visitors from other countries will be asked to register in the coming months.

This registration will enroll certain temporary foreign visitors who entered before NSEERS' implementation at the ports of entry on September 11, 2002. This requirement only applies to males 16 years or older. The registration process requires the visitor to speak with an INS officer about their stay and activities in the United States, provide fingerprints, and have their photo taken. Most are students, individuals in the U.S. on business travel, or individuals visiting family members. The requirement to register with INS does NOT apply to U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents (green card holders), refugees, asylum applicants, asylum grantees, and diplomats or others admitted under "A" or "G" visas.

NSEERS promotes several important national security objectives. It allows INS to run the fingerprints of aliens who may present elevated national security concerns against a database of wanted criminals and known terrorists. NSEERS also enables INS to instantly determine when such an alien has overstayed his visa. NSEERS also gives INS the ability to verify that an alien in the United States on a temporary visa is doing what he said he would be doing and living where he said he would live.

Non-immigrant males 16 years or older from these 18 countries who meet the criteria listed above should register at the nearest IINS office as soon as possible. Failure to do so is a criminal violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Willful failure to register will also render an alien deportable.

The list of designated INS offices where temporary visitors can register is available on the INS website at www.ins.usdoj.gov.

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