

Can I travel to Jamaica on an expired passport?

Can I enter Jamaica on my US permanent resident card? My passport has expired and I am about to take a trip to the island.

Prior to the introduction of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative by the United States (US) government in 2007, US citizens and permanent residents could travel to Jamaica on several different documents.

The new rule, which is aimed at protecting the American border, requires that persons travelling to and from the US must have a valid passport in order to do so. However, this does not affect holders of US permanent resident cards as they can re-enter the US on that document.

As a Jamaican, you are able to enter the island on an expired passport but you will not be able to leave on the same document. It is advisable, therefore, that you aim to update your passport at the nearest Jamaican consular office before your flight, or you may chose to renew it in Jamaica.

The standard turnaround time for processing local applications for passport submitted at the head office located at 25C Constant Spring Road, Kingston 10, is seven working days, though you may acquire the document in two or four days through our next-day or three-day express services.

The processing time for applications submitted through our office situated at Overton Plaza, Montego Bay, is 14 working days. Applications submitted through our overseas missions take 20 working days.

Why is it necessary for children to fill out the immigration/customs form at the airport?

The gathering of immigration data is a requirement under the Alien

Regulation of 1946 and the Immigration Restriction (Commonwealth Citizens) Regulations of 1945. It is a necessary part of the operation of any international port of entry for a country and is relevant to the operation of the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) in protecting the nation's borders.

The card captures the arrival and departure record of passengers, including the flight number and/or the name of the vessel on which an individual is travelling. The card also records pertinent information on the traveller such as their name, nationality, occupation, date of birth and passport number.

Each person travelling in or out of the island must fill out an immigration card, regardless of their age or whether they are travelling in a family or by him or herself.

Why am I asked to remove my dark glasses while at immigration?

As stated above, the PICA is responsible for protecting the country's border. As such, it is important that we remain vigilant at all times in carrying out this function.

We must do as much as possible to guard against fraud by ensuring that no traveller passes through immigration while using someone else's document. We must ensure that the individual that appears before us at immigration is indeed the individual represented in the passport. Proper identification of the individual is, therefore, necessary, and, as such, he or she must remove their sunglasses at immigration.

Why is it necessary to give the immigration authorities an address for where I will be staying in Jamaica?

PICA is the entity responsible for border management. When persons enter the island, it is necessary, therefore, to collect certain data so that the agency can successfully carry out its mandate. Information such as a traveller's purpose of visit, length of stay and address while on the island are critical.

The information is also helpful if there is ever a need for the authorities to make contact with the visitor. For example, the nation's health authorities may have concerns regarding the health of a particular passenger and would need to make urgent contact with the traveller to resolve the matter.