

FAQ for Non-U.S. Athletes Traveling to the United States

As we welcome athletes, coaches, and delegations from around the world, our goal is to ensure every member of the sporting community feels informed, prepared, and supported when traveling to the United States. The following FAQs provide clear, practical guidance to help you navigate entry requirements, understand what to expect upon arrival, and ensure a smooth and successful experience throughout your stay.

1. Can I be detained when entering the United States?

All travelers to the United States are subject to inspection by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the port of entry.

- The vast majority of travelers with proper documentation are admitted without issue
- Additional screening may occur in some cases
- Detention is uncommon and typically occurs only when there are immigration, documentation, or legal concerns

2. What documents do I need to enter the U.S.?

You should travel with:

- A valid passport (not expired, with sufficient validity per U.S. rules)
- A valid U.S. visa (if required) or ESTA approval (for Visa Waiver Program travelers)
- Official event documentation (invitation letter, accreditation, competition details)
- Proof of return or onward travel
- Contact details for your team leader or host organization

3. What happens at the airport/ border when I arrive?

Upon arrival:

- You will go through passport control and a brief interview with a CBP officer
- You may be asked about the purpose of your trip, where you are staying, and how long you will remain
- Some travelers may be referred to secondary screening for additional questions

This is a normal part of the entry process and does not mean there is a problem.

4. What should I do to avoid issues at airport/ border?

Do:

- Ensure all documents are accurate and consistent
- Answer questions clearly and truthfully
- Carry printed copies of key documents
- Know basic details of your trip (event name, location, hotel, duration)

Do Not:

- Provide false or misleading information
- Travel with incorrect or expired documents
- Carry prohibited or restricted items
- Enter under a visa category that does not match your purpose of travel

5. What if I am selected for additional screening?

- Remain calm and cooperative
- This process may take additional time and involve more detailed questions

- You may request to contact your team leader or your country's embassy/consulate

6. Can I be stopped or arrested while in the United States?

While in the United States, visitors are expected to follow all applicable laws.

- Law enforcement interactions with international visitors are uncommon in the context of accredited sporting events
- Arrest or detention within the U.S. generally occurs only if there is a suspected violation of the law

To help avoid issues:

Do:

- Carry a copy of your passport and visa (or ESTA), with the original stored securely
- Keep your event accreditation or proof of participation accessible
- Be prepared to clearly explain why you are in the United States (e.g., participating in an international sporting event)
- Follow all local laws and regulations

Do Not:

- Engage in activities outside the scope of your visa or accreditation
- Ignore instructions from law enforcement or officials

7. What should I do if I am approached by law enforcement?

- Remain calm and respectful
- Follow instructions provided
- You may ask to contact your **team leader** or your **embassy/consulate**
- Having identification and event documentation readily available can help quickly clarify your status

8. Who should I contact if I have concerns while traveling?

If you encounter any issues or feel uncertain:

- **First:** Your Team Leader or Delegation Official
- **Second:** Your country's **embassy or consulate** in the United States
- **Additionally:** Event organizers or your National Governing Body (NGB)

It is recommended to have these contact details saved and printed before travel.

10. Can my embassy help me if there is a problem?

Yes. Embassies and consulates can:

- Provide guidance and support if needed
- Help you understand local processes
- Assist with communication if challenges arise