



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

# News Release

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## **CBP launches SENTRI program improvements** 5-year membership extension and new online application system announced

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced today that cross-border motorists wishing to apply for SENTRI privileges are now able to do so through a new, online application system. In addition, membership in the SENTRI program is being extended from two to five years, effective immediately.

SENTRI, or Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection, is a popular program where applicants voluntarily undergo a background check, in-person interview and fingerprinting and pay a \$129 fee to cover administrative expenses. Applicants who do not meet the eligibility requirements listed under the SENTRI section at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) are not entitled to a reimbursement of this fee. Approved members have access to a dedicated commuter lane that allows faster processing at ports of entry with SENTRI lanes.

Extending enrollment to five years matches the enrollment period for all CBP trusted traveler programs, and the new online application system will ensure more expeditious processing for new applicants, as well as those seeking to renew membership. Current members will automatically be extended based on their enrollment date, to equal five years. For example, transition to the five year membership will happen automatically for current members, and will be reflected in their account in the online enrollment system, which will be available November 1.

“The SENTRI program represents the dual nature of our mission: securing the borders while facilitating legitimate travel,” said CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham, who announced the changes during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new SENTRI lane in Laredo, Texas today. “CBP is committed to utilizing cutting-edge technologies to support our mission, and the online enrollment system is an example of CBP leveraging a widely used technology—the Internet—to help streamline the SENTRI application process. This provides real benefits to both CBP officers and border community residents eligible to participate in the program.”

Online registration will allow new applicants and those renewing their privilege to quickly transmit information electronically from their homes or offices without having to complete paper applications. The new system will no longer require initial application appointments and paper applications at SENTRI facilities. CBP will continue scheduling new appointments for **first-time**

**applicants**, and will accept paper applications during the transition to the online application. Individuals who already have scheduled an appointment to deliver their SENTRI application can choose to keep that appointment, or simply apply online.

Key benefits of the new online application system include expediting the entire application and vetting process, and streamlining the processing time for new applicants and renewals. In the future, an online payment function will also be included as part of the online application.

Under the new system, a person will submit an online application at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) by clicking on the "SENTRI" section under the "Frequent Travel Programs" tab. Once the applicant is notified that they are conditionally approved through an on-line account that they will set up through the online system, the SENTRI applicant will need to schedule only one appointment at a local enrollment center to be interviewed, provide fingerprints, have their vehicle inspected, obtain their SENTRI card and allow a special radio frequency identification decal to be installed on the windshield.

The SENTRI program was first implemented at the Otay Mesa passenger port of entry in California in 1995. In 1996, the SENTRI project received the Hammer Award from the Office of the Vice President in recognition for developing the world's first automated, secure inspection system in advance of the expected completion date. In 1997, SENTRI was nominated for a Computerworld Smithsonian Award, an annual award that recognizes the most creative and innovative uses of information technology benefiting society. The program was also a top-25 finalist of the "Innovations in American Government" award, among the most prestigious of public service awards that honors federal, state and local government programs that invent new ways to resolve public policy challenges.

It has grown to include 15 lanes at eight locations along the U.S./Mexico border. Over 100,000 travelers from both sides of the border currently are registered in the vehicle SENTRI program. A list of Frequently Asked Questions on the new online system is also available at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov).

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*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of the nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*