

# **Less Chaos Expected As New Travel Ban Takes Effect**

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A scaled-back version of President Donald Trump's travel ban took effect yesterday evening, stripped of provisions that brought protests and chaos at airports worldwide in January yet still likely to generate a new round of court fights.

The new rules, the product of months of legal wrangling, aren't so much an outright ban as a tightening of already-tough visa policies affecting citizens from six Muslim-majority countries. Refugees are covered, too.

Administration officials predicted that implementation, beginning at 8 p.m. EDT, would be orderly. Customs and Border Protection spokesman Dan Hetlage said his agency expected "business as usual at our ports

of entry".

Yet amid vows from immigration and refugee advocates to challenge the new requirements, the administration sometimes struggled to explain how the new requirements would make the United States safer.

Under the temporary rules, citizens from Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Iran and Yemen who already have visas will be allowed into the United States. But people from those countries who need new visas will now have to prove a close family relationship or an existing relationship with an entity like a school or business in the US

It's unclear to what degree the new rules will affect travel. Few people in most of the countries have the means for leisure travel, and those that do already face intensive screenings before being issued visas.

Still, human rights groups on Thursday girded for new legal battles. The American Civil Liberties Union, one of the groups challenging the ban, called the new criteria "extremely restrictive", "arbitrary" in their exclusions and designed to "disparage and condemn Muslims".

Much of the confusion in January, when Trump's first ban took effect, resulted from travelers with previously approved visas being kept off flights or barred entry on arrival in the United States.

Immigration officials were instructed on Thursday not to block anyone with valid travel documents and otherwise eligible to visit the United States.

Karen Tumlin, legal director of the National Immigration Law Center, said the rules "would slam the door shut on so many who have waited for months or years to be reunited with their families".

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