§ 1323. Unlawful bringing of aliens into United States

(a) Persons liable

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, including any transportation company, or the owner, master, commanding officer, agent, charterer, or consignee of any vessel or aircraft, to bring to the United States from any place outside thereof (other than from foreign contiguous territory) any alien who does not have a valid passport and an unexpired visa, if a visa was required under this chapter or regulations issued thereunder.

(2) It is unlawful for an owner, agent, master, commanding officer, person in charge, purser, or consignee of a vessel or aircraft who is bringing an alien (except an alien crewmember) to the United States to take any consideration to be kept or returned contingent on whether an alien is admitted to, or ordered removed from, the United States.

(b) Evidence

If it appears to the satisfaction of the Attorney General that any alien has been so brought, such person, transportation company, or the master, commanding officer, agent, owner, charterer, or consignee of any such vessel or aircraft, shall pay to the Commissioner a fine of $3,000 for each alien so brought and, except in the case of any such alien who is admitted, or permitted to land temporarily, in addition, an amount equal to that paid by such alien for his transportation from the initial point of departure, indicated in his ticket, to the port of arrival, such latter fine to be delivered by the Commissioner to the alien on whose account the assessment is made. No vessel or aircraft shall be granted clearance pending the determination of the liability to the payment of such fine or while such fine remains unpaid, except that clearance may be granted prior to the determination of such question upon the deposit of an amount sufficient to cover such fine, or of a bond with sufficient surety to secure the payment thereof approved by the Commissioner.

(c) Remission or refund

Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, such fine shall not be remitted or refunded, unless it appears to the satisfaction of the Attorney General that such person, and the owner, master, commanding officer, agent, charterer, and consignee of the vessel or aircraft, prior to the departure of the vessel or aircraft from the last port outside the United States, did not know, and could not have ascertained by the exercise of reasonable diligence, that the individual transported was an alien and that a valid passport or visa was required.


(e) Reduction, refund, or waiver

A fine under this section may be reduced, refunded, or waived under such regulations as the Attorney General shall prescribe in cases in which—

(1) the carrier demonstrates that it had screened all passengers on the vessel or aircraft in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Attorney General, or

(2) circumstances exist that the Attorney General determines would justify such reduction, refund, or waiver.

References in Text
This chapter, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), was in the original, “this Act”, meaning act June 27, 1952, ch. 477, 66 Stat. 163, known as the Immigration and Nationality Act, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1101 of this title and Tables.

Amendments
1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104–208, § 308(c)(3), designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).
Pub. L. 104–208, § 671(b)(6), substituted “remains” for “remain”.
Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 104–208, § 371(b)(8), substituted “immigration judges” for “special inquiry officers”.
Pub. L. 104–208, § 308(e)(13), struck out subsec. (d) which read as follows: “The owner, charterer, agent, consignee, commanding officer, or master of any vessel or aircraft arriving at the United States from any place outside the United States who fails to deport any alien stowaway on the vessel or aircraft on which such stowaway arrived or on another vessel or aircraft at the expense of the vessel or aircraft on which such stowaway arrived when required to do so by an immigration officer, shall pay to the Commissioner a fine of $3,000 for each alien stowaway, in respect of whom any such failure occurs. Pending final determination of liability for such fine, no such vessel or aircraft shall be granted clearance, except that clearance may be granted upon the deposit of an amount sufficient to cover such fine, or of a bond with sufficient surety to secure the payment thereof approved by the Commissioner. The provisions of section 1225 of this title for detention of aliens for examination before immigration judges and the right of appeal provided for in section 1226 of this title shall not apply to aliens who arrive as stowaways and no such alien shall be permitted to land in the United States, except temporarily for medical treatment, or pursuant to such regulations as the Attorney General may prescribe for the ultimate departure or removal or deportation of such alien from the United States.”

Pub. L. 103–416, § 209(a)(1), as amended by Pub. L. 104–208, § 671(b)(7), substituted “a fine of $3,000” for “the sum of $3,000”.
Pub. L. 103–416, § 209(a)(2), (4), in first sentence substituted “an amount equal to” for “a sum equal to” and “such latter fine” for “such latter sum”, and in second sentence substituted “such fine or while such fine” for “such sums or while such sums” and “cover such fine” for “cover such sums”.
Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 103–416, § 209(a)(4), (5), substituted “Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, such fine” for “Such sums”.
Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 103–416, § 216, amended first sentence generally. Prior to amendment, first sentence read as follows: “The owner, charterer, agent, consignee, commanding officer, or master of any vessel or aircraft arriving at the United States from any place outside thereof who fails to detain on board or at such other place as may be designated by an immigration officer any alien stowaway until such stowaway has been inspected by an immigration officer, or who fails to detain such stowaway on board or at such other designated place after inspection if ordered to do so by an immigration officer, or who fails to deport such stowaway on the vessel or aircraft on which he arrived or on another vessel or aircraft at the expense of the vessel or aircraft on which he arrived when required to do so by an immigration officer, shall pay to the Commissioner the sum of $3,000 for each alien stowaway, in respect of whom any such failure occurs.”
Pub. L. 103–416, § 209(a)(1), which directed that subsec. (d) be amended by substituting “a fine of $3,000” for “the sum of $3000”, was executed in the first sentence by making the substitution for “the sum of $3,000”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.
Pub. L. 103–416, § 209(a)(3), in second sentence substituted “an amount” for “a sum” before “sufficient to cover such fine”.
Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 101–649, § 543(a)(10)(A), substituted “Commissioner the sum of $3,000” for “collector of customs of the customs district in which the port of arrival is located the sum of $1,000”.

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Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 101–649, § 201(b)(2), inserted “valid passport or” before “visa was required”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 101–649, § 543(a)(10)(B), substituted “Commissioner the sum of $3,000” for “collector of customs of the customs district in which the port of arrival is located the sum of $1,000” in first sentence and “Commissioner” for “collector of customs” in second sentence.

Effective Date of 1996 Amendment

Amendment by section 308(c)(3), (e)(13) of Pub. L. 104–208 effective, with certain transitional provisions, on the first day of the first month beginning more than 180 days after Sept. 30, 1996, see section 309 of Pub. L. 104–208, set out as a note under section 1101 of this title.


Effective Date of 1994 Amendment

Section 209(b) of Pub. L. 103–416, as amended by Pub. L. 104–208, div. C, title VI, § 671(b)(8), Sept. 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 3009–722, provided that: “The amendments made by this section [amending this section] shall apply with respect to aliens brought to the United States more than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 25, 1994].”


Effective Date of 1991 Amendment


Effective Date of 1990 Amendment

Amendment by section 543(a)(10) of Pub. L. 101–649 applicable to actions taken after Nov. 29, 1990, see section 543(c) of Pub. L. 101–649, set out as a note under section 1221 of this title.

Abolition of Immigration and Naturalization Service and Transfer of Functions

For abolition of Immigration and Naturalization Service, transfer of functions, and treatment of related references, see note set out under section 1551 of this title.