

Virginia Port Authority

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News Release

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TWIC Enrollment Begins at The Port of Virginia; Two Locations Open

NORFOLK – Port workers, longshoremen, trucker drivers and others needing unescorted access to the marine terminals owned by the Virginia Port Authority began enrolling on Friday, Feb. 29, in the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Worker Identification Credential [TWIC] program.

The goal of this federal program is to ensure that any individual who has unescorted access to secure areas of port facilities and vessels has received a thorough background check and is not a security threat. Individuals who apply for a TWIC will have their name checked against the terrorism, residency [immigration] and criminal databases.

“The Port of Virginia is one of the fastest growing ports in the United States. Inherent in our task is to ensure that the people coming on and off of our terminals have the proper credentials and security screening to access our facilities,” said Jerry A. Bridges, the VPA's executive director. “We welcome TWIC and the added layer of security it brings to our terminals and the industry overall.”

The start of enrollment in Virginia marks the halfway point for the deployment of TWIC enrollment centers since the program began on Oct. 16, 2007. Currently, 120,000 people have enrolled for a TWIC. Nationwide, more than 1 million workers with unescorted access to secure areas will apply for TWIC by the end of 2008.

“The start of enrollment is one more step in our effort to prevent persons who are a threat from gaining access to secure areas of port facilities,” said Maurine Fanguy, TWIC program director for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). “We appreciate the support of our partners with the Virginia Port Authority for helping to make one of the world’s most advanced interoperable biometric systems a reality.”

The Port of Virginia is 78th port to begin enrollment and in Hampton Roads there are two enrollment centers:

* 814 Greenbrier Circle, Suite F
Chesapeake, 23320
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

* 11815 Fountain Way, Suite 300, Room 359
Newport News, 23606
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Workers at The Port of Virginia are able to pre-enroll for TWIC online at www.tsa.gov/twic or the Coast Guard’s homeport site, <http://homeport.uscg.mil>. Pre-enrolling speeds up the process by allowing workers to provide biographic information and schedule a time to complete the application process in person. This eliminates waiting at enrollment centers and reduces the time it takes to enroll each individual.

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The Virginia Port Authority (VPA) is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, reporting to the state Secretary of Transportation. The VPA owns and operates four general cargo facilities on behalf of the state: Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Newport News Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County. The terminals are operated by Virginia International Terminals, Inc. (VIT) the non-stock, non-profit operating company. The VPA, through terminal earnings generated by VIT, is operationally self-sufficient. The VPA and correlating maritime industry is responsible for 343,000 jobs, \$41 billion in total revenues throughout the Commonwealth.