Travel Handout

Travel Documents
F and J students with valid status should be prepared to present the following documents to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials when seeking to re-enter the U.S. after a temporary absence:

- **I-20 or DS-2019 with Valid Travel Signature**: A travel signature is generally valid for re-entry to the U.S. within 1 year of the signature date or until the end date on the I-20 or DS-2019, whichever occurs first. When traveling during OPT, the travel signature is only valid for re-entry to the U.S. within 6 months of the signature date.

- **Valid Passport**: Must be valid 6 months beyond your date of re-entry to the U.S. (exceptions) Passports may be renewed at your country’s embassy or consulate within the U.S.

- **Valid U.S. Visa**: Student visa must be valid at time of re-entry (Citizens of Canada do not require a visa.)

  *Exception: Automatic Visa Revalidation [8 CFR 214.1(b)(3)]: F and J non-immigrants can usually revalidate an expired visa automatically when returning to the U.S after a visit of less than 30 days to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands except Cuba. If you intend to use automatic visa revalidation, travel with your printed I-94.

- **Current Financial Support Documents**: Funding documentation for one year of expenses as noted on your I-20 OR the duration of your J program as noted on your DS-2019 (e.g., bank statement, financial guarantee letter, scholarship/offer letter, affidavit of support)

- **I-901 SEVIS Fee Receipt**: To print a payment confirmation, click on “Check Status” on the I-901 Fee webpage.

- **Unofficial Transcript and/or Verification of Enrollment Showing Full-Time Status**: Print a free unofficial transcript and Enrollment Verification through Buff Portal.

**Travel During OPT Authorization**
- **Valid Employment Authorization Document** (EAD/OPT Card) AND
- **Job Offer Letter for Employment in Major Field of Study**

**Travel to Third Country Destinations**
Depending on the country you are traveling to and/or through, you may require a transit visa (to travel through an intermediary country on your way to your final destination) or a tourist visa to enter your final destination. Please consult the appropriate embassy or foreign consular office to determine if an additional visa is necessary.

**Renewing Your Student Visa**
Please review the ISSS Visa Renewal Information for Students and Scholars handout.

**Transfer Of SEVIS Record/ Attending A New School After Travel**
To initiate the transfer of your SEVIS record to another school, complete the SEVIS Record Transfer Form. Once the SEVIS record transfer has occurred, contact your new school and request the I-20 or DS-2019 for your new degree program be mailed to your residence abroad. You must re-enter the U.S. with the immigration document from the new school you will attend.

- Additional information regarding SEVIS Transfers

**F-2 / J-2 Dependent Travel**
Dependents who are maintaining valid status may travel with or without the F-1 /J-1 primary and may remain in the U.S. without the F-1/ J-1 primary as long as the primary maintains status and will return after a temporary absence of less than five months using the same SEVIS ID number. When seeking re-entry to the U.S., dependents must present: their I-20/DS-2019 with a valid travel signature, valid passport, *valid visa, and may be asked to provide proof of F-1/J-1’s status (e.g., copies of primary’s documents as noted above).

* Exceptions: Canadians; individuals who qualify for automatic visa revalidation
Reviewing and Printing Your I-94 Arrival Record

Review your I-94 arrival record every time you re-enter the U.S. to confirm that your entry was recorded properly as Customs and Border Protection sometimes makes mistakes that require correction.

Access the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) I-94 website.

- Enter information as it appears on the visa you utilized to enter the U.S. or passport (Canadian citizens)
  - When entering your first (given) name, do not include middle names, nicknames, or titles.
- If you are unable to access your I-94 using your visa information:
  - Try entering your name as it appears on your passport biographic page
  - Try entering your name as it appears in the passport Machine Readable Zone
  - Try entering your name as it appears on your airline ticket/itinerary
  - Try entering your date of birth a day before and after your actual birth date
  - Try entering your date of birth a year before and after your actual birth date

Review your I-94 and make sure your arrival was recorded properly.

If you are unable to retrieve your I-94 or the information on your I-94 is incorrect or incomplete:
Obtain an I-94 correction with Customs and Border Protection.

Keep your I-94 printouts to document your maintenance of status. You do not have to turn I-94s in when exiting the U.S. Exception: To prove eligibility for automatic visa revalidation, travel with your I-94.

Additional Travel Resources: ICE Travel FAQ; Visa Renewal; Printing a Copy of Your I-94

Frequently Asked Travel Questions

Q: Do I need my original I-20 or DS-2019 or can I use a copy?
  - You must present your most recent, original I-20 or DS-2019 for your F/J program at the port of entry

Q: I am outside the U.S. and I forgot my I-20/DS-2019 or the signature is more than a year old! What do I do?
  - Complete the I-20/DS-2019 Document Reprint Request Form (via DocuSign).
    - Students with F-1 Status and Dependents with F-2 Status:
      - ISSS will reprint and email you a new I-20 with a new travel signature. Print the I-20, sign it on p.1. and carry it with you when you travel to the United States.
      - An electronic or digital travel signature is valid for the same duration as an ink signature.
Exchange Visitors with J-1 or J-2 Status:

- ISSS will reprint and mail you a new DS-2019 with a new travel signature. Sign the DS-2019 on p.1. and carry it with you when you travel to the United States.
- You will be responsible for setting up an eShipGlobal account as instructed on the mailing authorization form and paying for the cost of the mailing.

- If you do not obtain the document, you may be provisionally admitted to the U.S. for 30 days with a Form I-515A. You will have 30 days to mail in the I-515A with the requested documents. If you receive an I-515A, please consult ISSS immediately.

Q: Can I re-enter the U.S. after I have completed my F-1 or J-1 program using my F-1 or J-1 visa?

- F-1 and J-1 students cannot re-enter the U.S. during their grace period using their F-1 or J-1 visa.