Dear International Student,

We hope you are staying safe and well amid the ongoing health crisis. As we continue to navigate the unprecedented events of the past year, we want to make sure that you have the most current travel information and feel confident in what you need for re-entering the U.S. Due to the uncertain nature of global events, we at ISSS strongly recommend that students plan to return to the U.S. only if necessary and have all the necessary documents prior to re-entry.

Please refer to the COVID-19 FAQ on our website for more information. You can also contact us at isss@usfca.edu.

Documents Needed for Travel

Get a Travel Signature by Submitting a Request for an I-20 Reprint: To obtain a travel signature, request your document on MyISSS. Complete the document request form and submit it to the ISSS office. Please allow 3-5 days to process requests. Make sure you plan accordingly so you have your I-20/DS-2019 with a current travel signature from within the last year.

Transcripts showing you have been a full-time student and are enrolled for the current semester/quarter.

If you need to renew your visa because it is expiring you will want to make your visa appointment well in advance and in time to complete the process before your visa expires. Other information about the visa application process can be found here.

Enrollment verification requested from the USF One Stop Office

Proof of finances, which can be a bank statement or letter showing that you have enough funds to cover your expenses for the upcoming semester/quarter.

Proof of health insurance, which should be valid for the duration of your stay in the U.S.

A valid passport that will not expire until after the intended period of stay.

If your student visa (or visa you are studying on) will expire before you plan to return to the U.S., you need to renew it. The visa renewal application is much like the initial visa application except that it will require you to apply in person and sit for an interview. Please check for visa processing times and book your appointment well in advance.

If your student visa will expire on or after the day you attempt to re-enter the U.S., you need to renew it. The visa renewal application is much like the initial visa application except that it will require you to apply in person and sit for an interview. Please check for visa processing times and book your appointment well in advance.

Other information about the visa application process can be found here.

Custom and Border Protection (CBP) Search Procedures:

What CBP can search: This includes turning on and asking you to log in to your email, going through your files and documents, searching your phone, checking your Facebook, and running a fingerprint check.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Search Protocols: CBP is allowed to search your electronic devices and papers, and to ask you to decrypt your passwords and codes. CBP can search any item you are bringing into the U.S. This includes looking and asking for your phone in your luggage and your bag. CBP can search your phone and ask for your password and ask you to turn on your phone. CBP can search your email and ask you to log in to your email.

If you are in one of the countries on the list below, you may need to travel to a nearby country that is offering flights. The conditions are dynamic and changing by the day and students will have to explore options to travel and possibly travel to a nearby country that is offering flights. The conditions are dynamic and changing by the day and students will have to explore options to travel and possibly travel to a nearby country that is offering flights. Please see the CBP information sheet found on the ISSS COVID-19 page which is kept up-to-date.

COVID-19 FAQ

When you arrive in the U.S. from any international destination, you may encounter stricter inspection procedures. CBP is legally allowed to search any item you are bringing into the U.S. This includes turning on and asking you to log in to your email, going through your files and documents, searching your phone, checking your Facebook, and running a fingerprint check.

When planning for your return to the U.S. you will want to consider flight, travel, and entry restrictions.

We do not know when the travel restrictions will be lifted. Students who have gone home will not be able to return until travel restrictions are removed and they can get home. Keep in mind that it is always best to be polite and tell the truth if you are questioned by CBP. CBP information sheet found on the ISSS COVID-19 page which is kept up-to-date.

FAQ on Reopening Visas

In some cases, a student can request an expedited visa appointment if there is not enough time to get a new visa. You should contact your nearest visa-issuing Embassy or Consulate and request an expedited visa appointment. You will need to provide supporting documentation that your student visa will expire before you plan to return to the U.S. or that you are completing a practicum/internship before you plan to return to the U.S.

Adviser Appointments and Workshops

Adviser appointments and workshops are still being offered remotely. Please check our website to see which advisers are available and which workshops are available. Advisers and workshops are subject to change without notice. Check the website for the most current information.

We do encourage that when the Adviser’s offices will be closed. Students should still go to their Adviser to submit any materials. They will then check these documents and let you know what you need to get your visa appointment before you can come back to the U.S. If your Adviser does not know when the Adviser’s office will be closed, please check the Adviser’s weekly update.

We will keep all our resources and updates available on our website and email lists. If you have any questions, please make sure to contact your Adviser at their email address.

Wish you all the best.

Warmly,
International Student and Scholar Services

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Visit the USCIS webpage for reference, currently include a prohibition on entry to travelers originating in or transiting China, Iran, UK, Ireland, and the 26 countries of the Schengen region.

Required Documents for Travel:

1. Valid passport
2. Visa
3. I-20/DS-2019
4. Proof of health insurance
5. Proof of finances

Required Documents for Travel to the U.S.:

1. Valid passport
2. Visa
3. I-20/DS-2019
4. Proof of health insurance
5. Proof of finances

TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

If you are requesting an immigration document or letter from our office, remember that we need time to process your request. Our office is not able to process requests as quickly as students may need. Please refer to the important reminders for travel documents.

What is the processing time for immigration documents?

The processing time for immigration documents can vary depending on the type of document and the urgency of the request. Some documents may require an expedited process if there is not enough time to get a new visa. You should contact your nearest visa-issuing Embassy or Consulate and request an expedited visa appointment. You will need to provide supporting documentation that your student visa will expire before you plan to return to the U.S. or that you are completing a practicum/internship before you plan to return to the U.S.

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