



WEEKLY UPDATE – Sept. 6

## Safety Reminders

Our office wants to make sure that your educational journey in the U.S. is safe and healthy, allowing you the space to learn and grow. That's why this week we're focusing on some important safety reminders for international students. As always, please **reach out to our office** if you have any questions or concerns.

### Tips for Recognizing Fraud and Scams

International students and visitors can be targets of crimes because they are less familiar with the area. These incidents are random, and with some knowledge and awareness, can often be avoided. A scam is when a person or persons try to get you to give money under false pretenses (a lie). It can also be called fraud. The most common scams include someone claiming to be from:

- A U.S. law enforcement agency (police, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, etc.)
- The IRS (U.S. tax department)
- A company offering a job
- A person offering an apartment or housing
- Someone on social media who you do not know (including WeChat, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

If you ever have any questions or concerns about communication you receive, get the caller's name and contact details, then call or email ISSS. We can assist students in identifying potential scams and responding to any legitimate communication from a U.S. government official.

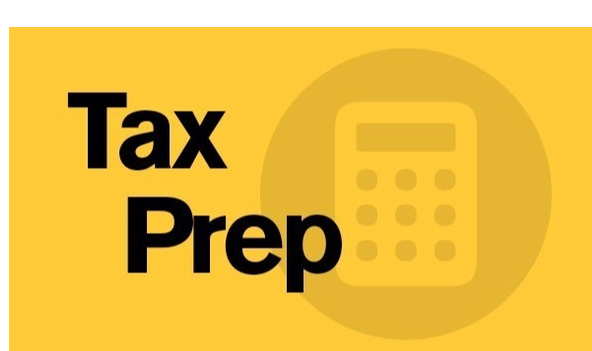
[Learn more about safety and scams on the ISSS website »](#)

### Safety During Fire Season

It is common in California for there to be wildfires in the fall (September–November) when the ground and plants are dry and before the rainy season begins. During this time there may also be emergency power outages, where the power company shuts off power to prevent the spread of wildfires. Taking the following steps will help you be prepared for a wildfire related power outage.

- **Sign-up for alerts:** For those in Northern California, sign up with PG&E to get an alert notification for a planned power outage in your neighborhood. If you are a PG&E account holder (pay a bill to PG&E), **log into your account to sign up for alerts**. If you do not have a PG&E account, you can **sign up for an alert based on your zip code**. You can also **check the status of power** in your neighborhood and view the power outage map.
- **Prepare for a power outage:** Power outages can last a few hours or a few days. Make sure you have one or more flashlights for a power outage. You will also want food that does not require refrigeration. One way to keep your fridge cold is to freeze ice packs or gallon-size plastic jugs of water. When your power goes out you can put these frozen items in your fridge to keep it cool. Extra batteries, or a solar power pack, are also good to have on hand. Read more about **how to prepare for a power outage**.
- **Conserve power:** It is important during this time to **conserve energy**. This article will tell you **why the power company plans an outage** and what you can do to help save energy and prevent the need for an outage.

ISSS encourages students to have an emergency plan and be prepared in case of a disaster. Being prepared can help you feel calmer during a power outage and if there is an incident, such as the current pandemic, where you may not be able to go out or perform your routine activities. **Use this California resource to help think through your plan »**



### Introduction to Taxes

Sprintax is offering a free introductory workshop to international students regarding U.S. taxes. The event will take place **Sept. 15 at 9 a.m. (PT)**. The workshop will provide useful tax information like what to expect during employment or receipt of U.S. income, information about tax obligations for nonresidents in the U.S., and tips for tax-filing season 2021. The workshop is free to join and open to both new international populations or existing folks who want to brush up on their tax responsibilities. Please **email ISSS** in order to sign up and attend.



### A Conversation with Author Ijeoma Oluo

Join the USF community for a conversation with Ijeoma Oluo (ee-joh-mah oh-loo-oh), author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, *So You Want to Talk About Race*. Her work on race has been featured in *The Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, among many other publications. She was named to the 2021 *TIME* 100 Next list and received the 2018 Feminist Humanist Award and the 2020 Harvard Humanist of the Year Award from the American Humanist Association. This event will take place on **Sept. 7 at 11:45 a.m. (PT)**. **Learn more and register »**

## ISSS OFFICE RESOURCES

### Requesting a Document from ISSS?

If you are requesting an immigration document or letter from our office, remember that we request **ten business days** to process requests. Make sure you plan accordingly so you have enough time to receive your document before you need it. **You can also make some document requests through online submission.**

### Adviser Appointments and Workshops

**Appointments can be made online.** Please visit the **ISSS website** to schedule an appointment. Appointments are still booked in 30-minute increments.

### Connect with ISSS through Facebook »

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