



WEEKLY UPDATE – Sept. 26

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 the 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 »](#)

Public Safety

At USF, **the Department of Public Safety** ensures a safe learning, working, and living environment at the University of San Francisco. Their office provides information on **crime prevention and tips for staying safe**. Public Safety suggests keeping phones and valuables out of sight, and avoiding wearing headphones when walking around. Being aware and vigilant allows you to pick up on subtle signals that warn you to be cautious and be able to react quickly. Stay safe and trust your instincts! [Learn more about ways to stay safe on their 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. [Check out PG&E's PSPS non-English resources »](#)
- **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 them 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 page 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.
- **Review USF's Air Quality & Wildfire Policy:** Based on the events and review of processes following the 2018 Camp Fire, USF developed detailed protocols that have been implemented as of the fall of 2021. Campus Resilience monitors all area wildfires and wildfire smoke that may impact the Hilltop campus and campuses at all other locations. USF will use Air Quality Index (AQI) used by the Environmental Protection Agency for reporting and forecasting. [Learn more »](#)

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, where you may not be able to go out or perform your routine activities, a plan can help you navigate it and protect yourself.



Cafe International (Time Change)

Cafe International is a community space for international students to make friends and learn to live in the multicultural USF campus. **These events will now take place on Tuesdays from 5–6 p.m. on the following dates: Oct. 4, Oct. 25, Nov. 1, and Nov. 15.** Come and enjoy a stress-free coffee break and chat about food, music, pop culture, and anything and everything to help you recharge. [Contact the Cultural Centers for more info »](#)

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. All ISSS requests should be submitted through the **MyISSS student portal** (select the home icon, site home and then requests on the left hand menu). You can view our **MyISSS Student Handbook** for assistance with your submission.

Adviser Appointments and Workshops

Appointments can be made online. Please visit the **ISSS website** to schedule an appointment. Appointments are still booked in 15-minute increments. To schedule a workshop, select workshops from the first menu option in our scheduler. Students must complete an OPT workshop before applying for OPT.

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