

# Illinois Institute of Technology

## **International Center**

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## **H-1 TRAVEL AND VISA INFORMATION**

09/11

**For all travel you should carry a valid passport, Original I-797 Approval Notice, I-94 card issued for H-1B, and a recent paystub or current letter of employment.**

### **Travel Procedures to Canada and Mexico.**

A valid U.S. entry visa is not required if you travel to Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days. If a person in H-1 B status enters the U.S. from either of these countries after an absence from the U.S. not exceeding 30 days, the entry visa is considered to be automatically extended to the date of reentry PROVIDED THE ENTRY VISA HAS NOT BEEN CANCELED. This is called “**Automatic Visa Revalidation**”. To use this procedure, **do not surrender your valid I-94 card to Immigration officials upon departure from the United States.**

This automatic visa revalidation is not valid for people who travel from Canada or Mexico to any other country (ex: China) and return to the U.S. via Canada or Mexico.

**Special Note: Citizens of the following countries are not eligible to use “Automatic Visa Revalidation”: Iran, Syria, Sudan, and Cuba. This list is subject to change if a country is designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. For more information go to [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info\\_1299.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1299.html).**

\*\*Certain individuals require an entry visa before entering Canada or Mexico. Please contact the appropriate consulate for information regarding this matter.

### **Travel Procedures to All Other Countries**

For travel to any other country you should have a valid, unexpired H-1 B visa in your passport. If you do not, you must either follow the instructions for renewal, or apply for a visa at the U.S. consulate or embassy abroad. Please follow the procedures for visa application/renewal outlined in this handout. Be sure that you have all of the entry documents required by the country that you are intending to visit.

### **US VISIT (Entry system)**

This is a system that will collect biographic information on all foreign nationals entering the US. This system may add minor delays upon your return to the US so please plan accordingly when booking your flight and possible connections. For more information on the US VISIT system, please go to [http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content\\_multi\\_image/content\\_multi\\_image\\_0006.xml](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content_multi_image/content_multi_image_0006.xml).

## Special Registration Requirements for Travel

Effective April 28, 2011, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), through a notice in the Federal Register (FR), eliminated the requirement that nationals from the following countries register in the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS): Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Eritrea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Upon publication of the notice 76 FR 23830 (April 28, 2011), DHS removed all countries designated for participation in NSEERS. The regulation remains in place; however, DHS does not currently designate any country, nor does it require any foreign national to participate in the system. Nonimmigrant aliens previously required by NSEERS to submit to special registration procedures and depart from specified ports are relieved of these obligations.

Notice 76 FR 23830 is online in its entirety at the following website:  
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2011/pdf/2011-10305.pdf>.

## Obtaining or Renewing an H-1B Visa in your Home Country

To apply for an H-1 visa abroad, please carry your original I-797 H-1 B approval notice, and a current letter of employment from your department. You should also carry your certified Labor Condition Application (LCA) which you received from the International Center at the time of initial orientation, and copies of your educational credentials. The documents required may vary from by country so please inquire at the U.S. Consulate in your home country.

Please let the International Center know that you are planning to travel **at least one week in advance** so that we can give you your original I-797 approval notice. Once you return, please bring the original back to our office for safekeeping.

To obtain general information about visa services and DS-156 visa application form please visit the Department of State websites at [usembassy.state.gov](http://usembassy.state.gov).

## Obtaining or Renewing an H-1B Visa in Canada or Mexico

If you want to apply to obtain or renew your H-1B visa in Canada or Mexico rather than in your home country, you must call for an appointment 2-3 weeks in advance. The U.S. Embassy or Consulate will send you information regarding your appointment and will inform you about which documents you must bring to your interview. You must call from a private telephone line.

**You may schedule an appointment with a US Consulate in Canada online at [www.nvars.com](http://www.nvars.com) using a major credit card or by calling 1-900-443-3131.**

**You may schedule an appointment with a US Consulate in Mexico online at [www.visa-usa.com.mx](http://www.visa-usa.com.mx) using a major credit card.**

Please be aware that there is no guarantee that you will get a new or renewed H-1B visa. A decision will be made at the time of the interview. **Special Note:** If you apply for a visa in Canada or Mexico and are DENIED the visa, you will not be able to re-enter the United States under “Automatic Visa Revalidation.”

If you have previously violated your immigration status you may not be eligible for a visa from a country other than your home country. If you have any questions regarding this issue please make an appointment to talk to an advisor at the International Center.