

Illinois Institute of Technology

International Center

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H-1 TRAVEL AND VISA INFORMATION

01/08

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 a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean Islands excluding Cuba) for less than 30 days. If a person in H-1 B status enters the U.S. from either of these territories 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 a contiguous territory (ex: Canada) to a non-contiguous country (ex: Germany) and return to the U.S. via a contiguous territory.

Special Note: Citizens of the following countries are NOT eligible for Automatic Visa Revalidation: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, North Korea and Cuba. Also the automatic visa revalidation provision excludes aliens who applied for a U.S. entry visa in Canada or Mexico and whose visa application was denied.

**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.

Special Registration Requirements for Travel

If, at the time of entry to the U.S., you were designated by the immigration officer to be a subject of special registration procedures, you will have to notify the immigration about your departure and make sure to meet with an inspecting officer at a U.S. through a designated port of departure. For more information on special registration requirements and the list of designated ports of departure please go to <http://www.ice.gov/pi/specialregistration/index.htm>.

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.

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 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 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.