

# Illinois Institute of Technology

**International Center**  
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## **TRAVEL INFORMATION** **For F1 Students and** **Dependents**

01/08

### **Travel Documents**

**F-1 Student Travel:** To re-enter the United States you must have:

- a valid passport (valid for at least 6 months at the time of re-entry to the U.S.)
- a valid F-1 entry visa stamp (see “Exceptions” on the back)
- a properly signed and valid Form I-20\*
- Recommended: Carry proof of your current registration at IIT

#### **F-1 Travel on OPT**

- a valid passport (valid for at least 6 months at the time of re-entry to the U.S.)
- a valid F-1 entry visa stamp (see “Exceptions” on the back)
- a properly signed and valid I-20 (signature must be less than 6 months old on OPT)\*
- your current EAD
- Proof of employment in the U.S. (job offer letter, most recent pay stub)

\*To obtain a travel signature on your I-20, please bring it to the International Center **one week in advance**. The travel signature is valid for 12 months; however, we strongly advise that you obtain a new signature if the previous travel signature is more than 6 months old.

**F-2 Dependent Travel:** To re-enter the United States you must have:

- a valid passport
- a valid F-2 entry visa stamp (see “Exceptions” below)
- a properly signed and valid Form I-20 for dependents

#### **Special Note for Students and Dependents Who Changed Immigration Status from within the U.S.:**

In addition to the items mentioned above, please also carry with you your I-797 Approval Notice. (This is the official notice that you received from the US CIS when your change of status was approved.)

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

This is described as a check-in 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**

If, at the time of entry to the U.S., you were designated by Immigration to be a subject of special registration procedures, you will have to notify Immigration about your travel and leave the 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/Renewing F-1/F-2 Visa Stamps

If the F-1 or F-2 entry visa stamp in your or your dependent(s)' passport has expired or is otherwise invalid, or if you or your dependents applied for a change of status within the U.S., you must apply for a new entry visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate while you are outside the U.S.

When you're applying for a visa you should be prepared to show evidence of the financial resources indicated on your Form I-20. Evidence has to be dated less than 6 months old, and it can be in the form of bank statements, a letter from an employer, a letter of financial aid or scholarship, etc.

**Warning:** If you need a new entry visa stamp and you travel outside the United States, you should be aware that you are never guaranteed a new entry visa to return, especially if you apply at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate in a country other than your home country. Also, please be aware that visa-processing times have lengthened due to the events of September 11, 2001. Please be prepared for delays up to 30 days. If you have difficulty obtaining a visa, you should contact an advisor at the International Center who will make every effort to assist you.

### Visa Exceptions:

- Citizens of Canada are not required to have entry visas to enter the United States from Canada. However, a citizen from Mexico is required to have a valid F-1 entry visa in his/her passport for entry to the U.S.
- Travel to Canada, Mexico or adjacent islands for 30 days or less:

If a person in F-1 or F-2 status enters the United States from Canada, Mexico or adjacent islands after an absence not exceeding 30 days, the expired entry visa stamp in your passport is considered to be extended automatically to the date of re-entry (provided the entry visa stamp has not been cancelled). This procedure is known as "**Automatic Visa Revalidation.**" When traveling to any of these territories, you must also have in your possession a valid I-94 card. **The I-94 card is not to be surrendered to immigration officials upon departure from the United States.**

**Special Note: Citizens of the following countries are not eligible to use "Automatic Visa Revalidation": Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, North Korea and Cuba.**

**List of Adjacent Islands:** Saint Pierre, Miquelon, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, the Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Martinique, and other British, French, and the Netherlands territories or possession in or bordering the Caribbean Sea, except Cuba.

### Third Country Visas:

If you travel to a country other than your home country, you may need an entry visa for that country. Please check the following website for Consulate information: [www.embassy.org/embassies](http://www.embassy.org/embassies).

### Applying for a U.S. Entry Visa in Canada or Mexico:

**NOTE:** Effective April 1, 2002, students from any country who, while in Canada, Mexico or adjacent islands, take the risk of applying for a new visa or an extension of the previous F-1 visa, must now **have the visa granted** in order to return to the U.S. Students who are refused the visa **may no longer be able** to come back to the U.S. through the automatic visa revalidation provision.

If you choose to apply for a visa at a U.S. Consulate in Canada, please be aware that you are required to make an appointment in advance. You may do so on line at [www.nvars.com](http://www.nvars.com) (\$20 Canadian which will be charged to a major credit card) or by calling 1-900-443-3131 (There will be a \$1.65 U.S. charge per minute).

If you choose to apply for a visa at a U.S. Consulate in Mexico, please be aware that you are required to make an appointment in advance. You may do so online at [www.visa-usa.com.mx](http://www.visa-usa.com.mx) (you must purchase a PIN for \$10 US which will be charged to a major credit card).

**If you have any questions concerning travel outside of the United States, please contact the International Center at 312-567-3680.**