

RENEWING YOUR VISA

UPDATE: If you need to leave the U.S. with an expired visa and will be renewing in your home country, please be aware that you may experience heightened scrutiny/vetting or delay in renewal. Please schedule your request for renewal appointment as EARLY as possible. Please note that this information is subject to change at any time.

Students may stay in the U.S. on an expired F-1/J-1 visa as long as they are maintaining their status by having a valid I-20 or DS-2019 and a valid I-94 record. However, if you are traveling outside of the U.S., you must have a valid, non-expired visa to re-enter.

VISAS CANNOT BE RENEWED WITHIN THE U.S. AND IT IS ALWAYS RECOMMENDED TO RENEW YOUR VISA IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY.

After you have made a visa interview appointment at the nearest Embassy or Consulate in your home country, **you should review their website or contact them for detailed requirements.** Visa applicants are advised to apply as early as possible for their visas to ensure a smooth renewal. If you need to check wait times for a U.S. Embassy or Consulate, you can go here: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/wait-times.html/>

DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO APPLY:

- Valid passport and I-94 (can be printed here: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html>)
- Most current, valid, I-20 or DS-2019 with a **travel endorsement (signature on the 2nd page of your I-20 or 1st page of your DS-2019)**
- Proof of funds (current bank statements, scholarships, GTA/GRA, sponsorship, etc.)

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS:

- Proof of full-time enrollment or transcripts (copy or official)
- Proof of ties to your home country
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
- Enrollment verification letter
- NOTE: When attending a face to face interview, give simple but truthful answers. Never give false information to the officer.

FOR DEPENDENTS: You will need all of the Required Documents and we encourage the Recommended Documents plus:

- If dependents are applying/renewing without the presence of the F-1 or J-1, they will need to bring copies of the student's documents (passport photo page, visa, I-20, etc.)
- Proof of relationship (marriage certificate for spouse, birth certificates for children) with English translation

CURRENTLY ON OPT: You will need all of the Required Documents and we encourage the Recommended Documents plus:

- Valid EAD card
- Offer letter of employment
- I-797 Approval Notice
- Letter from employer stating that you are currently employed and will need to return to the U.S. to continue

APPLYING FOR VISA RENEWAL AT A U.S. EMBASSY OR CONSULATE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME COUNTRY

PLEASE REMEMBER: Not all Embassies accept third party (meaning applying to renew your visa in an Embassy or Consulate that is NOT in your home country) visa applicants. Always contact the Embassy or Consulate prior to leaving the U.S. Please note that citizens of countries designated as state sponsors of terrorism are ineligible to apply at an Embassy or Consulate at a U.S. border.

Students who have applied for a visa renewal in a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico and Caribbean Islands) and are awaiting a decision (visa has not been issued) may not re-enter the U.S. using **automatic visa revalidation**. If the visa application is denied, students **cannot** re-enter the U.S. until they obtain a new visa from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in their **home country**.

AUTOMATIC REVALIDATION: TRAVEL TO CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY

"Automatic Revalidation of Visa" means that for eligible F and J visa holders a valid U.S. visa is not required to travel to a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands) for **less than 30 days**. Under this rule, if a student in F or J status enters the United States from the contiguous territories after an absence from the U.S. for **less than 30 days**, the entry visa is considered to be automatically extended to the date of re-entry. Automatic Revalidation **does not** apply to:

- Students whose visa has been cancelled by the consulate office.
- Students who have applied for a new visa while in Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands excluding Cuba. Applicants for a new U.S. visa while in one of these countries must wait for a decision before being eligible to re-enter the U.S. If the visa application is denied, you **cannot re-enter** the U.S. until a new visa is obtained from a U.S. consulate or embassy in your **home country**.