



Office of International Students and Scholars Services (OISS)

Travel and Re-entry to the U.S.

The U.S. government uses the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to manage information about international students in the United States. If you travel out of the U.S. while you are in F-1 status, you will need the following documents to re-enter the United States.

- SEVIS Form I-20 with a valid travel signature on page 2 of the Form I-20.
 - Degree-seeking students: Travel signatures are valid for 12 months from the date of issue. The travel signature must be valid when you re-enter the U.S. If you don't have a valid signature on page two, please submit a [Travel Signature Request Form](#).
 - Students on approved post-completion OPT: Travel signatures are valid for only 6 months from the date of issue. The travel signature must be valid when you re-enter the U.S. If you don't have a valid signature on page two, please submit a [Travel Signature Request Form](#).
- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa stamp (unless you are re-entering from Canada, Mexico or adjacent islands after a trip of less than 30 days).
- If you are a student in a period of post-completion OPT, you will also need to have:
 - Employment Authorization Document (i.e. "EAD card")
 - Evidence of employment in your field of study (an offer letter should suffice)

Automatic Revalidation

After initial entry to the U.S., nonimmigrants who have an expired visa in their passport may re-enter the U.S. without obtaining a new visa if their travel was solely to the contiguous countries of Canada and Mexico. F and J visa holders may also be able to benefit from Automatic Revalidation after travel to the Caribbean Islands (excluding Cuba). Travel must be for a period of fewer than 30 days. This procedure is known as Automatic Revalidation of the U.S. visa. To take advantage of Automatic Revalidation, travelers must have, in addition to the documents for re-entry stated above, a copy of their [electronic I-94 record](#).

If you are a citizen of Cuba, Iran, Sudan, or Syria, you are not eligible for automatic revalidation of your expired non-immigrant visa. You are also not eligible in the following cases:

- If you have applied for a new visa while out of the country, you may not re-enter the U.S. until the new visa is issued, even if your old visa is still valid.
- Is in possession of an F student visa or J exchange visitor visa and has traveled to Cuba

Depending on your country of citizenship, you may be required to have an entry visa for Canada, Mexico or any of the other Caribbean nations in order to enter those countries. Your U.S. visa does not automatically grant entry into these other contiguous countries. Do your research before travelling overseas.

You can find more information on Automatic Revalidation on the [U.S. Department of State website](#).