



**March 9, 2022**

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### **SPRING BREAK TRAVEL ADVISORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

With spring break on the horizon, we understand some of you may be considering either domestic or international travel. As always, we would like to advise all our students to be careful and alert during any travel – domestic and international – and be prepared to face extra scrutiny at visa issuing posts and at ports of entry. As always, follow all rules and regulations to [maintain your legal status in the U.S.](#) Visit the ISSS [Travel and Visa Information](#) page for information and detailed recommendations for travel.

In light of the COVID pandemic, it is essential to remain aware of current travel restrictions - not only in the U.S. but also in the country to which you are traveling. Matters can be complicated further if you must apply for a new F-1 visa stamp during your travel; consulates may be offering limited services or could close. If this happens, you may not be able to return to the U.S. for an undetermined amount of time.

Students graduating in May 2022 should also be aware that you must be physically present in the U.S. in order to apply for work authorization after graduation, called [Optional Practical Training](#). If you are not in the U.S. at the time of submitting your application, you cannot apply for OPT.

Before finalizing your travel plans, please review the following:

- [Universitywide COVID-19 Information](#)
- State of New Jersey's [travel recommendations](#)
- Additional information about travel recommendations is available on the ISSS website: [COVID-19 Related International Student FAQ](#)

- [CDC Frequently Asked Questions](#) for information about testing requirements for international travel.
- [CDC website](#) for COVID-19 travel recommendations by destination.

### **TRAVEL INSTRUCTIONS FOR F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS WHO PLAN TO TRAVEL**

All F-1 and J-1 students (and their F-2 and J-2 dependents) should obtain a travel signature from ISSS on their I-20 or DS-2019 form. The signature is valid for 12 months (6 months for students on OPT) and confirms that the I-20 or DS-2019 owner is in valid legal status and eligible to return to the U.S. to resume their programs. If you decide to travel internationally, please follow the instructions on the ISSS website for details of the [Travel Signature Request Procedure](#).

Remember, you need a valid travel signature when you return to the U.S., not when you are leaving. In case you are outside the U.S. and need a travel signature before you re-enter, please follow the instructions on the ISSS website to request a signature on your document.

#### **Traveling outside the U.S.**

When traveling outside the United States, F-1 and J-1 visa holders must have in their possession the following documentation to ensure their ability to re-enter the U.S. and resume their activities:

- Passport valid at least six months beyond re-entry date
- Valid U.S. visa in the appropriate classification, e.g., F-1, J-1
- Valid immigration document for the status being sought: I-20 or DS-2019 with travel signature from Rutgers Global - ISSS. The travel signature is valid for 12 months.

Please check the validity dates of your I-20/DS-2019. If you are on Rutgers' visa sponsorship and you need an extension of your I-20 or DS-2019, please follow instructions on our website for an [Extension of Program](#).

For more information and recommendations for international travel, visit the ISSS website page on [Preparing for International Travel](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about traveling during spring break, please [contact an ISSS adviser](#).

#### **APPLYING FOR CPT**

All students applying for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must complete the Off-Campus Employment Workshop on [Canvas](#). F-1 students who plan to engage in CPT during the summer break should plan to submit a [CPT application](#) as soon as possible.

If you have questions about CPT, please take advantage of our Off-Campus Chat Sessions. A calendar of remaining Chat Sessions for the spring semester can be found on our [Practical Training](#) webpage.

#### **APPLYING FOR OPT**

While the USCIS deadline for post-completion OPT applications is 60 days following degree completion, it can take 4-5 months for USCIS to process the applications. All students applying for post-completion OPT must complete the Post-Completion OPT Workshop on [Canvas](#). F-1

students who will be graduating in May and who plan to apply for post-completion OPT should plan to submit an [OPT application](#) as soon as possible.

**Online OPT Application Alert:** Do not submit an OPT application online from outside of the U.S. and/or without a **SIGNED OPT recommendation I-20**. Once you pay the online application fee, the I-765 is considered filed immediately and will result in a denial if you applied from outside the U.S. or without the OPT I-20.

If you have questions about your OPT application, we encourage you to utilize the following resources:

- [Off-Campus Employment Chat Sessions](#): Available twice a month and open for students to drop in and discuss their CPT/OPT questions with an International Student Adviser (ISA)
- [Remote Advising Appointments](#): Note that appointment availability is displayed up to 7 days in advance and no less than 12 hours from the time of booking. If you do not see any available appointments, please check again on the following day for new availability.
- Communicate with our advisers by email ([ISSS-students@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:ISSS-students@global.rutgers.edu))

### FINAL SEMESTER?

Are you finishing your degree requirements this semester? If so, congratulations! Be sure to review our [Graduating Students](#) page for important guidance on your next steps. Please note that we do not recommend traveling outside the U.S. if you have already completed your degree requirements and plan to re-enter the U.S. in your current status. If you have questions about traveling during your grace period, please visit our [advising services](#) page and consult with an international student adviser.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Our international students are a big part of what makes the Rutgers community so special. And we want to hear from you! There are a variety of ways to share your culture and traditions with the community—at events, on video, and in a podcast.

Please [take this short survey](#) and let us know if you'd be willing to share about your culture with the community. We will be in touch with you directly if you express interest in these opportunities.

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**Global Spring Festival | Tuesday, March 22nd from 7-8:30 p.m. | College Avenue Student Center MPR**

Come see how various countries around the world celebrate the arrival of spring. Participate in activities such as egg decorating and mask making, listen to world music, watch Brazilian samba dancers, stop by our spring photo booth, and sample some spring-inspired desserts. Feel free to RSVP on our Get Involved page - <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/event/7963238>

**Friendship Friday: Art Class with Wes | Friday, March 25th from 4-5 p.m. | Collaborative Learning Center (LSC)**

Join Rutgers Global and the Zimmerli Art Museum for an hour-long, still life sketch lesson with artist Wes Sherman. Bring a pencil or other writing instrument and some paper.

**Afternoon Yoga | Friday, April 8th at 12:15 p.m. | Busch Student Center MPR**

As a part of the Graduate Student De-Stress and Appreciation Week, join Rutgers Global and the Graduate Student Association for an afternoon of restorative yoga. Whether or not you have prior experience, yoga is here to help you destress. This family friendly event welcomes graduate students, along with their spouses and children, to be part of the experience! Light refreshments will be provided.

**Rutgers Got Talent! | Tuesday, April 26th from 7-8:30 p.m. | College Ave Student Center MPR**

Got a talent that you want to share? Whatever your talent is, don't hesitate to audition for a spot in this year's Rutgers Got Talent show! The entry period begins on Thursday, March 10th and ends on Monday, April 4th at 11:59 p.m. EST. Learn more about the submission details [here](#). Winners will be announced on April 26th. Come watch the semi-finalists and vote for the winner!

For other programs and events hosted by Rutgers Global, see our [event calendar](#).

Have a safe and happy Spring Break!

Sincerely,

Rutgers Global – International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

<https://global.rutgers.edu/>

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This periodic update from the Rutgers Global – International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office provides you with important information regarding your legal status, upcoming programs, and useful resources. Previous updates can be found on our [Email Notices page](#).

These notices are automatically sent to all nonimmigrant students enrolled at Rutgers–New Brunswick and Rutgers–Biomedical and Health Sciences. Most messages, however, apply only to F-1 and J-1 students. We label most messages to facilitate your identification of which messages may apply to you personally. All F-1 and J-1 students on Rutgers' visa sponsorships are required to know the information that is provided in these notices and to follow reminders and instructions that apply to their own situations.

This is NOT a subscription email list. These notices are sent periodically to an automatically-generated list. If you are a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S and should not be receiving these notices, please contact ISSS:

**New Brunswick**

848-932-7015

[iss-students@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-students@global.rutgers.edu)

**RBHS**

973-972-6138

[iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu](mailto:iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu)