



March 10, 2023

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REMINDERS FOR F-1 AND J-1 STUDENTS WHO PLAN TO TRAVEL DURING SPRING BREAK

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 when they have plans to travel internationally. 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 the [RGlobal portal](#) (under Workshops on the left-hand menu). F-1 students who plan to engage in CPT during the summer break should plan to submit a [CPT application](#) as soon as possible.

Please note that summer CPT must begin after the end of the spring semester, and summer CPT must end before the start of the fall semester. Please refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for details.

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

All students applying for post-completion OPT must first complete the Post-Completion OPT Workshop on the [RGlobal portal](#) (under Workshops on the left-hand menu). 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)

PREMIUM PROCESSING FOR OPT APPLICATIONS

USCIS [announced on March 6](#) that premium processing is now available for OPT applications, including STEM OPT. Premium processing is a way for you to pay extra money to USCIS so that they will expedite processing your application. Previously, premium processing was not possible for students applying for OPT.

If applicants pay \$1500 to request premium processing of their OPT or STEM OPT application (this is separate and in addition to the \$410 application fee for OPT itself), USCIS will review the application within 30 calendar days for a Form I-765 for F-1 students seeking OPT or STEM OPT extensions. Please keep in mind that this does not mean the application will automatically be approved within 30 calendar days. This means that the application will be reviewed, and USCIS will take one of the following actions on the application within 30 calendar days:

- issue an approval notice
- issue a denial notice
- issue a notice of intent to deny
- issue a request for evidence
- open an investigation for fraud or misrepresentation

Premium processing for STEM OPT applications in most cases would NOT be necessary. If you apply for STEM OPT and USCIS receives your STEM OPT application before your current OPT expires, you can continue to work while your STEM OPT application is pending for whichever comes first of these two possibilities:

- 180 days after your post-completion OPT expires, or
- Until a final decision is made on your application.

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.

If you would like to invite any family members to come to the US on a tourist visa for your graduation ceremony, you do not need a letter of invitation from the ISSS. Please visit our [Inviting Relatives Other Than Visa Dependents As Visitors](#) page for more information.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Beyond OPT | Wednesday, March 22nd from 5-6:30pm | Academic Building Room 2400

Interested in working in the US after graduation? Attend this in-person session presented by the immigration law firm, Klasko Immigration Law Partners, LLP. Please click [here](#) for more

information. To register, visit go.rutgers.edu/beyondopt. Attendees will have a chance to win a pair of tickets to the [One to World Twilight Cruise Around Manhattan](#) on April 28!

Corn: The A-Maize-ing Global Food Staple | Thursday, March 23rd from 6pm-7:30pm | College Avenue Student Center MPR

Join Rutgers Global, the Rutgers Graduate Student Association, and the Nutritional Sciences GSO for an evening featuring corn. Guest speaker, Dr. Mark Robson, will briefly discuss the global importance of this crop before international dishes made with corn are sampled. Please [use this link to RSVP on getINVOLVED](#) if you plan to attend.

Friendship Friday: Movie Night | Friday, March 24th from 4-5 p.m. | Red Lion Cafe, College Ave Student Center

Grab your popcorn and join us for a movie night! The Princess Bride, a beloved classic movie with a cult following, will be screened this week. This film has it all: comedy, romance, sword fights, pirates, a giant, R.O.U.S.s, and a six-fingered man. Come watch this entertaining little movie and learn the origin of some of its most memorable lines such as, “As you wish,” “Have fun storming the castle!”, “My name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die.” and “Inconceivable!”

Mental Health Workshop Series: Relationship Management and Tea Ceremony | Monday, March 27th from 5-6:30 pm | Rutgers Global ISSS

Join us for a free interactive workshop series with a CAPS counselor and Rutgers Global Staff to learn about ways to support yourself and your loved ones. [REGISTER HERE](#) to RSVP--limited seats available!

Let’s Talk and Let’s Tele Talk | Mondays 1-3pm | Rutgers Global ISSS

As a Community-Based Counseling Service, CAPS continues to offer Let’s Talk in-person or by phone. Conversations with CAPS counselors are private and confidential. In-person or telehealth appointments are available with a CAPS counselor at the ISSS office on Mondays, 1pm-3pm. To schedule an appointment, call 848-932-7884 and choose option 2. For more information, visit [Community-Based Counseling](#).

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/>

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

RBHS

973-972-6138

iss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu