



**NOVEMBER 11, 2021**

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**SEVP UPDATE: USE OF ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES AND TRANSMISSION FOR THE FORM I-20**

As of November 1, 2021, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has made permanent its policy allowing DSOs to electronically sign and send the Form I-20. The full guidance can be found [here](#).

Please note that although ISSS Advisers are now allowed to electronically sign and transmit the Form I-20, upon receipt of your I-20, **you are still required to print and sign the document** to present at any required visa interview and upon arrival at a U.S. port of entry. Please make sure to always carry a printed copy of your I-20 as showing the document in electronic version to a government official is still not acceptable.

Moreover, please be advised that SEVP implemented this permanent policy in coordination with its government partners within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of State and U.S. Social Security Administration. If a student encounters an issue with a government partner accepting an electronically signed Form I-20 or has questions about this guidance, please contact the SEVP Response Center (SRC) via email at [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) or via phone at 703-603- 3400 or 800-892-4829. The SRC is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except federal holidays.

This new guidance does not apply to J-1 students, as SEVP still requires that the form DS-2019 be printed and signed with an original signature by the ARO (Alternate Responsible Officer).

Please [contact an ISSS advisor](#) if you encounter any issues with a government partner accepting an electronically signed Form I-20 or have questions about this guidance.

### **WHO NEEDS A NEW I-20/DS-2019 FOR SPRING 2022?**

- Continuing students with active SEVIS records - if you need a new travel signature, complete the [Travel Signature Request E-Form](#) on the RGlobal Portal.
- Students who started remotely in the fall and were issued I-20s/DS-2019s with a fall start date - we will adjust your I-20/DS-2019 start date to the next semester. All Fall 2021 I-20s and DS-2019s will be updated by the end of November. You will receive an email when your new document is available.
- You will need a current I-20/DS-2019 to apply for a visa at a US Embassy or Consulate. I-20s can be signed and emailed. If you are attending Rutgers in J-1 status, we will make special arrangements to mail your DS-2019 to you.

### **NEW COVID VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AIR TRAVEL TO THE U.S. REPLACE GEOGRAPHIC TRAVEL BAN RESTRICTIONS**

On November 8, 2021, the new proclamation issued by the White House, titled "[A Proclamation on Advancing the Safe Resumption of Global Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)," went into effect. The Proclamation has:

- Revoked the current geographic travel ban restrictions which suspended travel from China, Iran, South Africa, Schengen Area, United Kingdom, Ireland, India, and Brazil; and
- Replaced the travel bans with a vaccination requirement that will apply to international air travelers from any part of the world, requiring that all nonimmigrants traveling to the U.S. by air establish that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Additionally, as per CDC requirements, all air passengers ages 2 or older, regardless of citizenship or vaccination status, must also show a negative result of a COVID-19 viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the United States.

For additional information on proof of vaccination, accepted vaccines, exceptions, and other requirements, please refer to the following resources:

- Rutgers Global Alerts - <https://global.rutgers.edu/all-alerts>
- CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/proof-of-vaccination.html>
- NAFSA - <https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/covid-vaccine-and-test-requirements-us-entry-0>
- NJ Department of Health - <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/travel.shtml>

For detailed information on travel by sea/land, please refer to the [Department of Homeland Security's website](#).

For more information about the new proclamation, please visit our [Global Alerts](#) page.

## TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

Please note that the situation regarding domestic and international travel is changing daily. We would like to advise all our students to be careful and alert during any travel 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 US](#). Visit the [Travel and Visa Information](#) page on the Rutgers Global website for information and detailed recommendations for travel.

The US government has implemented certain [travel and visa policies](#) that students should be aware of prior to making any travel plans. Also, many countries are imposing immigration restrictions during the pandemic. For further information, please review travel advisories available from the [U.S. State Department](#), the [CDC](#), and the country/countries outside of the US which you want to travel from or to, or even transit through.

## ISSUANCE OF "TRAVEL/VISA SUPPORT LETTERS" FROM RUTGERS GLOBAL - ISSS

Should you make the decision to enter the US for the spring semester, you may carry with you this [Travel/Visa Support letter](#) to help facilitate the application for a visa should you need one, and for your entry into the US.

If you are applying for an F-1 or J-1 visa, or if you are traveling to the US for the spring semester, please download this letter and present it with your I-20 or DS-2019 when you are applying for a visa and/or at a US Port of Entry. Please note that this support letter does not guarantee that you will be issued a visa or be permitted entry into the United States. This letter is only meant to provide additional documentation and institutional support indicating that you intend to enroll in a course of study which is a combination of online and in-person requirements.

If you need to confirm your specific enrollment or degree program details, you can print your [Rutgers unofficial transcript](#) or request an official [Enrollment Verification Letter](#).

## OBTAIN A TRAVEL SIGNATURE ON AN I-20 OR DS-2019 BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

If you are planning to travel internationally during the upcoming holidays, please exercise caution and review the [Travel and Visa Information webpage](#) for further detailed travel guidance, resources, and tips. The travel signature on the I-20 or DS-2019 is valid for 12 months (6 months for students on OPT) and confirms that the student is in valid legal status and eligible to return to the United States to resume their programs.

## APPLYING FOR A TRAVEL SIGNATURE

1. Visit the [Travel Signature Request Procedure](#) page on our website.  
Check your I-20 or DS-2019 to see when it was last signed for travel. If you have received a travel signature within 12 months of your anticipated return to the United States, you do not need a new signature at this time. Visit the travel signature page on our website for guidance on whether you need a new travel signature on your I-20 or DS-2019.
2. Complete the [Travel Signature Request E-Form](#) on the RGlobal Portal.
3. **Your document will be ready within 5 business days.** We will email you an I-20 that has been digitally signed for travel. The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has confirmed permanent acceptability of electronically-issued I-20s. J-1 students will

require an original DS-2019 and will need to complete the [Document Mailing Request E-Form](#) on the RGlobal Portal. Be sure to safely keep all your previous I-20s/DS-2019s.

4. **Report International Travel.** Now more than ever, it is important for ISSS to understand the current location and international travel of our students to best assist you in maintaining your F-1/J-1 status. Any time you have international travel planned (departing and/or entering the US), we ask that you report this to us via the **International Travel Plans e-form** in the [RGlobal portal](#) (found under Travel & Location Information). This e-form is for informative purposes only, so you may submit it with recent international travel plans as needed in advance, at the time of travel, or after. It is separate from the existing [Travel Signature Request E-form](#) referenced above in Step 2.

### **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK 2021**

Throughout the week of November 15-19, please join us for a series of events celebrating the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide! For more information, visit <https://global.rutgers.edu/international-education-week-rutgers>.

### **UPCOMING OFFICE CLOSURES**

Please be advised that Rutgers Global - ISSS will be closed and virtual advising services will be unavailable on the following dates:

**Thursday, Nov. 25 - Friday, Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Recess**

**Friday, Dec. 24 - Friday, Dec. 31: Winter Break**

Sincerely,

Rutgers Global – International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

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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)