

TRAVEL GUIDANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

LAST UPDATED 3/19/2020

This FAQ is for general information purposes only and is subject to change. Please discuss your individual circumstances with [Lauren Seo](#), Senior International Student Advisor (email: Lauren.Seo@woodbury.edu, phone: 818-252-5265) if you plan to travel or in advance of any change in the terms of your approved program or practical trainings.

GENERAL

On March 2, 2020, the U.S. President imposed [travel restrictions](#) for immigrants and non-immigrants who have been in China or Iran during the 14 days prior to attempted entry to the United States. While this is expected to be a temporary measure, it is unknown how long this restriction will be in place and if it will be extended to include other countries.

On March 11, President Trump signed a [proclamation](#) that restricts travel to the United States from foreign nationals who have recently been in the Schengen Area (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland). This does not apply to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents.

On March 14, President Trump signed a [proclamation](#) that restricts travel to the United States from foreign nationals who have recently been in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This does not apply to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents.

International travelers are facing tighter restrictions at airports as the number of countries denying entry to passengers who have recently visited China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Japan and other countries with reported cases of coronavirus increases.

To minimize risk, International Student Services provides the following travel guidelines for international students:

1. We strongly encourage you to think carefully about the risks of traveling internationally while the COVID-19 situation continues to develop. We recommend that you continue to monitor the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and [U.S. Department of State](#) for COVID-19 updates and travel guidance. CDC currently advises against non-essential travel to the following CDC Level 3 regions: China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea.
2. There are currently no restrictions on domestic travel within the U.S. or [U.S. territories](#); however, restrictions could be implemented at any time.
3. Aside from any risk from coronavirus itself, travel restrictions/disruptions are significant. Flight cancellations, quarantines, and border closures have been implemented by several countries on short notice. It is also possible that U.S. borders might close to re-entry from some areas, making it challenging to return.
4. Per [recent guidance](#) from the CDC, all international travelers arriving from regions with CDC Level 3 travel warnings will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days.
5. Follow the [Coronavirus Updates](#) on the Woodbury University website.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does the coronavirus travel restriction apply to foreign nationals?

The U.S. President has issued two COVID-19-related proclamations to limit travel to the U.S.:

- Effective on February 2, 2020, [Proclamation 9984](#) suspended entry into the U.S. of all aliens (immigrants, nonimmigrants, and other non U.S. citizens) who were physically present within China, excluding Hong Kong and Macau, during the 14-day period prior to their entry or attempted entry into the U.S.
- Effective on March 2, 2020, a [Presidential Proclamation](#) suspended entry into the U.S. of all aliens (immigrants, nonimmigrants, and other non U.S. citizens) who were physically present within Iran during the 14-day period prior to their entry or attempted entry into the U.S.
- Effective on March 11, 2020, a [Presidential Proclamation](#) suspended entry into the U.S. of all aliens (immigrants, nonimmigrants, and other non U.S. citizens) who were physically present within the Schengen area during the 14-day period prior to their entry or attempted entry into the U.S.
- Effective on March 14, 2020, a [Presidential Proclamation](#) suspended entry into the U.S. of all aliens (immigrants, nonimmigrants, and other non U.S. citizens) who were physically present within the United Kingdom and Ireland during the 14-day period prior to their entry or attempted entry into the U.S.

However, the travel restriction does **not** suspend entry to any alien who is:

1. a lawful permanent resident of the U.S.;
2. a spouse of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident;
3. a parent or legal guardian of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, provided that the U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident is unmarried and under the age of 21;
4. a sibling of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, provided that both are unmarried and under the age of 21;
5. a child, foster child, or ward of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, or who is a prospective adoptee seeking to enter the U.S. pursuant to the IR-4 or IH-4 visa classifications;
6. an alien traveling at the invitation of the U.S. Government for a purpose related to containment or mitigation of the virus;
7. C (transit) or D (air or sea crewmember) nonimmigrants;
8. seeking entry into or transiting the U.S. pursuant to an A-1, A-2, C-2, C-3 (as a foreign government official or immediate family member of an official), G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, NATO-1 through NATO-4, or NATO-6 visa;
9. any alien whose travel falls within the scope of section 11 of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement;
10. an alien whose entry would not pose a significant risk of introducing, transmitting, or spreading the virus, as determined by the CDC Director, or his designee;
11. an alien whose entry is deemed important to U.S. law enforcement officials, as determined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or their respective designees based on a recommendation of the Attorney General or his designee; or
12. an alien whose entry would be in the national interest, as determined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or their designees.

However, all these individuals should expect to be screened and/or quarantined upon arrival.

If I am able to travel to the U.S. even if I have been in China or Iran in the last 14 days, must I enter at a specific airport?

Yes, the [Department of Homeland Security](#) issued [notices of arrival restrictions](#) on February 2, 2020, and March 2, 2020, directing all inbound flights to the U.S. from China and Iran to be re-routed through one of the following airports:

1. John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), New York
2. Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD), Illinois
3. San Francisco International Airport (SFO), California
4. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), Washington
5. Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL), Hawaii
6. Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), California
7. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL), Georgia
8. Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD), Virginia
9. Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR), New Jersey
10. Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), Texas
11. Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW), Michigan

What if I need to travel internationally while the restrictions are in place?

CDC has issued several [travel advisories](#) concerning coronavirus (COVID-19) as follows:

Countries that have a [Level 3 Travel- Avoid Nonessential Travel Health Notice](#) (widespread, ongoing transmission):

- China
- Europe (Schengen Area): Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City
- Iran
- Ireland
- Malaysia
- South Korea
- United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland

You are strongly encouraged to reconsider any nonessential international travel plans, including Spring Break plans. A decision to cancel traveling should be based on [advice](#) and [situation reports](#) from the World Health Organization, [advisories](#) from the U.S. State Department, and [notices](#) from CDC. You can search for official updates on the country where you intend to travel on the CDC's Travel Health Notice [page](#) and monitor airline service and immigration policy updates to consider alternative plans, if warranted.

If you are not able to cancel your travel plans and are not considered to be at high risk for severe illness, please keep in mind that there is a possibility you may get stuck in a foreign country. This may be due to a country's restriction on where individuals can visit or whether anyone is allowed to enter from affected areas.

If you do decide to still travel to an impacted area:

- Thoroughly wipe down surfaces you come into contact with
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid sick people
- Transit quickly through airports
- Purchase a medical insurance policy for your trip
- Build redundancy into your plans and add time for delays
- Create a detailed itinerary of where you will be and when and give it to someone you trust
- Bring a 30 day supply of your medication including the original prescription should you need a refill
- Pack extra batteries, communication devices, food/water, eyeglasses, financial tools, lodging, airfare, passport, proof of health insurance, etc.,
- Bring work or school materials in case you get stuck
- Ensure you have all required documents for reentry to the U.S. (passport, valid visa, an I-20 with a valid travel signature, and EAD-*for students on OPT/STEM OPT extension only*).
- Expect possible secondary inspection upon reentry to the U.S., as well as possible delays for health screenings in third countries, all requiring extra time and delaying travel.

I am a current WU student who is currently in China or Iran and cannot return for classes due to the travel restrictions. What does that mean for me?

There are very limited options for international students with F-1 visas to keep their SEVIS status active while outside the U.S. during an academic term (Fall and Spring)

You should contact your faculty advisor and/or academic advisor to discuss whether any academic contingency plans are feasible while you are abroad. In some cases, it is possible to take classes online while abroad to avoid disruptions and delays, if available.

Another option may include obtaining a leave of absence (LOA). If you plan to request for an LOA, contact the [Lauren Seo](#), Senior International Student Advisor (email: Lauren.Seo@woodbury.edu, phone: 818-252-5265) immediately to discuss the immigration implications and procedures. The Department of Homeland Security has yet to make any exceptions for students who cannot return to the U.S. because of the current travel restrictions.

What if I am currently in the U.S. but am self-quarantined at home?

You may submit a request to [Lauren Seo](#), Senior International Student Advisor (email: Lauren.Seo@woodbury.edu, phone: 818-252-5265) for consideration of a reduced course load for medical reasons. This is an exception to the normal full-time enrollment requirements for students who are unable to maintain their full-time studies for a medical reason. Currently, there is no new regulatory relief under U.S. immigration law or regulations in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

My I-20 is expiring soon and I do not want to return to my home country at this time. What are my options?

You have three options:

1. Remain in the U.S. and apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT).
2. Remain in the U.S. until the 60-day grace period after graduation.

Final semester at WU	Last day of 60-day grace period
Spring 2020	July 14, 2020
Summer 2020	October 15, 2020
Fall 2020	February 13, 2021

3. Transfer to a new program at WU or to another school in the U.S. and transfer your SEVIS record.

My visa is expiring, and I am unable to travel to my home country at this time. What should I do?

You may stay in the U.S. on an expired F-1 visa as long as you maintain the immigration status by having a valid I-20 and meeting enrollment requirements. A valid visa stamp is only needed at the time of entry into the U.S., with very limited exception.

Please contact the Senior International Student Advisor via email at lauren.seo@woodbury.edu or call 818-252-5265 if you have questions regarding your visa or immigration status.

I am completing my degree program this spring but will continue my studies in a new degree program at WU or after transferring to another U.S. university in the fall. Must I leave the country?

Generally no, but discuss your specific situation with the Senior International Services Advisor. International students on an F-1 visa are generally permitted to remain in the U.S. during the *transfer pending* period, including the summer between completion of one program and the start of a new program, if the following criteria are met:

- The student must maintain status at the current school.
- The student has been admitted to the transfer-in school/program.
- A new program must begin at the next available term or session, which must be no more than 5 months from the end of the program at the current school.
- The student must be eligible for an I-20 at the transfer-in school/program.

I have to travel to my home country and I do not have the option to remain in the U.S. over the summer. What does that mean for me?

You should avoid travel to China, South Korea, Italy, Iran or any other regions with CDC Level 3 travel warnings, if at all possible unless you are willing to accept the travel restrictions above. Finding a flight to one of these regions may be challenging, based on current restrictions and limited airline operations. If you are able to get to one of these regions, understand that you will likely be subject to the travel restrictions and may not be able to return to the U.S. as planned. If/when the travel restrictions are lifted, there could be difficulty obtaining a flight to return to the U.S. Additionally, if you need a new visa from the U.S. Embassy/Consulate, there could be a backlog which could increase the time it takes to get a visa.

What if my program has ended and I am currently in my grace period?

Unfortunately, there is no regulatory relief available to students in this situation, and such individuals are expected to depart the U.S. by the end of the grace period. Discuss your limited options with the International Student Advisor immediately, which may include:

- Gaining admission to a new degree program at WU or another U.S. school and transferring your I-20;
- Requesting a change of status with USCIS, applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT);
- If available, seeking admission to another country other than your home country; OR
- Returning to your home country.

How would a temporary move to online classes impact international students with F-1 visas whose instruction must occur in person?

WU adheres to the guidance from the Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which is a unit within the Department of Homeland Security that oversees the F-1 international student visa program. Due to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation, SEVP recently issued guidance to universities that allows for increased flexibility to ensure international students can continue their academic progress. Universities can implement temporary adjustments such as moving to online instruction without negatively impacting the immigration status of enrolled international students.

SUPPORT

We recognize that the situation with COVID-19 may be stressful for members of our community, especially those with family and friends in other areas of the world. The Woodbury University community is here to support you. International students can find resources at woodbury.edu/student-life/living/safety-security or get in contact with the Senior International Student Advisor at Lauren.Seo@woodbury.edu or 818-252-5265, or email HelpDeskCampusSecurity@woodbury.edu

RESOURCES

Woodbury University Coronavirus Updates
<https://woodbury.edu/student-life/living/safety-security/>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travel
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

U.S. Department of State COVID-19 Country Specific Information
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html>

NAFSA Coronavirus Critical Resources
<https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/coronavirus-critical-resources>

County of Los Angeles County Public Health
<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

State of California-California Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response
<https://covid19.ca.gov/>