



April 23, 2021

[FALL 2021 - UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES](#)

[WHO NEEDS A NEW I-20/DS-2019 FOR FALL 2021?](#)

[TRAVEL AND VISA CONSIDERATIONS](#)

[OPTION TO FILE FORM I-765 ONLINE](#)

[REMINDERS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS, OPT, AND FINAL SEMESTER](#)

FALL 2021 - UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Over the last month, [President Holloway](#), [Chancellor Molloy](#), and [Chancellor Strom](#) have sent out messages about preparations for a full return to campus in the Fall 2021 semester. The [Fall Return to the Banks](#) plans include an update in the Rutgers Immunization Requirements for Students to include a USFDA approved COVID-19 vaccine. We recognize that international students may have many questions about this requirement, and the [COVID-related FAQs for International Students on F-1 and J-1 visas](#) have been recently updated to address some of these concerns. Please refer to our COVID-related FAQs frequently, as additional information will be provided on any revisions to this policy and as details are finalized.

For the latest university wide COVID-19 information visit <http://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/>.

At this stage, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not yet provided updated guidance regarding online instruction beyond Spring 2021. We are hopeful that the guidance from Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 will continue for Fall 2021. We continue to monitor the situation closely and we will provide updates as they become available.

Refer to the current DHS guidance.

- [Guidance from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program](#) (SEVP) issued in March 2020
- [Clarification on the March 2020 guidance](#) (issued in July 2020)
- [ICE FAQs](#) (updated on August 7, 2020)

We understand students need to finalize their schedules for the fall and make decisions regarding registration, visa, travel and much more. As we receive news on any updates about institutional or government policies, and how they may affect your plans, we will notify international students via email, our [Alerts page](#), and the [COVID-related FAQs](#).

WHO NEEDS A NEW I-20/DS-2019 FOR FALL 2021?

- 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 Spring 2021 and were issued I-20s/DS-2019s with a Spring 2021 start date - we will adjust your I-20/DS-2019 start date to the next semester. All Spring 2021 I-20s and DS-2019s will be updated by the end of April. 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 mailed electronically. If you are attending Rutgers in J-1 status, we will make special arrangements to mail your DS-2019 to you.

TRAVEL AND VISA 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 restrictions](#) that students should be aware of prior to making any travel plans. There are several geographic-based COVID-19 Presidential Proclamations in effect that restrict nonimmigrant visa issuance and travel to the U.S. ISSS has prepared the following FAQs based on the travel restrictions that are effective as of 4/13/2021: [FAQs on Geographic COVID-19 Presidential Proclamations](#).

Also, many countries are imposing immigration restrictions to contain the virus. 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.

STATUS OF VISA OPERATIONS

Check the [Department of State website](#) for the status of operations at the embassy where you intend to apply for a visa. Please also be aware that [global travel conditions remain highly impacted](#) and could change rapidly, and visa applicants could face serious delays. Students should continue to monitor the news, airline travel information, and the [Rutgers Global](#) website for additional changes or updates.

We understand that some students may have visa appointments scheduled. If you have a valid I-20/DS-2019 (either an updated document issued for students who started in Fall 2020 or Spring 2021 from overseas, or an I-20/DS-2019 with a valid travel signature for continuing students) and need to apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa, please be aware that there is no guarantee that the visa will be approved or that you will be able to use the I-20/DS-2019 to enter the US even if your visa is approved.

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 signature is valid for 12 months and confirms that the I-20 or DS-2019 owner is in valid legal status and eligible to return to the United States to resume their programs.

OPTION TO FILE FORM I-765 ONLINE

On April 12, 2021, USCIS posted a notice that [F-1 Students Seeking Optional Practical Training Can Now File Form I-765 Online](#). However, as this process is very new, our office is not yet able to advise on how to file your application online. Students can continue to file in the traditional method of mailing materials to USCIS, as they state on their [website](#) this is still acceptable. Applying online would be your choice and without specific advising or review from ISSS .

Please be assured that Rutgers Global ISSS is actively engaged in seeking in-depth information from USCIS about this new process. Once we have more details, we will share them with our students. Please keep an eye on your email and also on the [OPT tutorial](#) for updates.

REMINDERS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS, OPT, AND FINAL SEMESTER

EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

As F-1/J-1 students, it is your responsibility to know the rules and laws governing your legal status, including the regulations regarding off-campus internships or any off-campus employment. You don't need to wait until you have a job interview to find out what those rules are.

All our employment workshops are now offered online through [Canvas](#). If you are unable to access the Rutgers Global - ISSS Canvas page, you will need to first submit the [Online Workshop Access e-form via the RGlobal portal](#). Review the [CPT](#) and [OPT](#) webpages for important information about how to complete the workshops, and consider joining an upcoming Off-Campus Employment Chat session with an adviser and your peers (dates and times posted on the [Advising Services webpage](#)). More information about employment for international students can be found on the [Employment webpage](#).

Remember that all on-campus employment must also be reported to ISSS. Please refer to our webpage on [On-Campus Employment](#) for information about steps for F-1 and J-1 students to report on-campus employment. The [On-Campus Employment workshop](#) may also be accessed through [Canvas](#).

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.

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 14 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 advisors by email (iss-students@global.rutgers.edu)

On February 26, 2021, USCIS announced flexibilities for some international students in F-1 status who are affected by delayed receipt notices for their OPT or STEM OPT applications. These accommodations apply only to applications received on or after October 1, 2020, through May 1, 2021, inclusive. The main points of the announcement can be found on the [Rutgers Global Alerts page](#).

FINAL SEMESTER

Are you finishing your degree requirements this semester? If so, congratulations! Be sure to review the [Graduating Students](#) webpage for important guidance on your next steps.

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