



Rutgers Global FAQs on Geographic COVID-19 Proclamations Affecting Entry from Certain Countries (Updated 4/13/2021)

There are several geographic-based COVID-19 Presidential Proclamations in effect that restrict nonimmigrant visa issuance and travel to the U.S. We have updated these FAQs based on the travel restrictions that are effective as of 4/13/2021.

Q: Which Presidential Proclamations still remain in effect that restrict visa issuance and travel to the U.S.?

The following Presidential Proclamations still remain in effect and restrict visa issuance and travel to the U.S.:

- [Proclamation 10143 of January 25, 2021](#) (Restrictions on Travel from Schengen Area, United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil and South Africa)
- [Proclamation 9984 of January 31, 2020](#) (China Travel Proclamation - Extended by Proclamation 10143)
- [Proclamation 9992 of February 29, 2020](#) (Iran Travel Proclamation - Extended by Proclamation 10143)

These Presidential Proclamations limit travel to the United States by individuals who were physically present in the following countries during the 14-day period prior to their planned entry or attempted entry to the United States:

- Brazil
- China
- Iran
- Ireland
- 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)
- United Kingdom
- South Africa

Q: I already have a valid nonimmigrant visa. Does that make me exempt from these Proclamations?

No, if you were present in one of the affected countries during the 14-day period prior to your planned entry to the U.S., you may not be allowed to enter the U.S. even if you have a valid nonimmigrant visa.

You may need to first obtain advance clearance from a U.S. consular post or present other proof to the airline or port of entry. Please be sure to check the appropriate consular webpage and contact your airline prior to entry to confirm the local requirements.

Exception: The Department of State has [provided separate guidance](#) for students traveling from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland with valid F-1 and M-1 visas. According to the Department of State, “Students traveling from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland with valid F-1 and M-1 visas do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual NIE to travel.” Be sure to check the appropriate consular webpage prior to traveling as guidance is subject to change without notice.

Q: What are the exceptions to these geographic travel restrictions?

These geographic travel restrictions do **not** apply to U.S. citizens or any foreign national who is:

1. a lawful permanent resident of the United States
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 United States pursuant to the IR-4 or IH-4 visa classifications;
6. an alien traveling at the invitation of the United States 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 United States 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. 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;
10. an alien whose entry would further important United States law enforcement objectives, 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
11. 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.
12. a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and spouses and children of members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Please be sure to check the appropriate consular webpage and contact your airline prior to entry to confirm the local requirements for showing that you meet one of these exceptions. You may be required to first obtain clearance from a U.S. consular post.

Q: Who qualifies for a National Interest Exception?

Individuals who are subject to a geographic travel restriction may be able to receive a national interest exception (NIE) to allow travel to the United States. NIEs are issued at the discretion of each consular post. Please refer to the appropriate consular webpage for the specific criteria that are being applied at your consular post.

The Department of State has [provided additional guidance](#) for certain travelers from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland. According to the Department of State, “Students traveling from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland with valid F-1 and M-1 visas do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual NIE to travel. Students seeking to apply for new F-1 or M-1 visas should check the status of visa services at the nearest embassy or consulate; those

applicants who are found to be otherwise qualified for an F-1 or M-1 visa will automatically be considered for an NIE to travel.” Be sure to check the appropriate consular webpage prior to traveling as guidance is subject to change without notice.

J-1 students should contact the nearest US embassy or consulate to initiate an exception request.

Q: How do I apply for a National Interest Exception (NIE)?

Each consular post has implemented its own protocols for the issuance of National Interest Exceptions (NIEs). Most require additional documentation. Please refer to the appropriate consular webpage to confirm the local procedures and required documentation.

Because timeframes for NIE processing vary by consular post (with many taking several weeks), please consider applying as early as possible.

Q: How long is the National Interest Exception (NIE) valid?

If granted, the National Interest Exception (NIE) is only valid for 30 days from date of issuance. You must enter the U.S. within those 30 days.

Q: Can I reuse the National Interest Exception (NIE)?

No, the National Interest Exception (NIE) is only valid for one (1) entry. If you need to travel again to an affected country in the future, you will need to apply for a new NIE.

Rutgers Global note: Individual circumstances can vary, as can the interpretations of consular officials and immigration inspectors. This page should not be construed as legal advice. Individuals who need advice on whether the proclamation applies to them or their families in order to make decisions on traveling to or from the United States should be encouraged to contact our office for further guidance pertaining to your specific situation.

Travel Resources

Please refer to the following resources. Note that the situation is changing daily and you should monitor the latest travel advisories carefully before making any travel plans.

[Travel Bans and Restrictions on US Visas and Entry](#) [External – NAFSA]

[Immigration Executive Actions Under Trump Administration](#) [External – NAFSA]

[COVID-19 Country Specific Information from the US Department of State](#) [External – Department of State]

[CDC \(Centers for Disease Control\) for International and US Travel](#) [External – CDC]

[Rutgers Global Travel Updates and Advisories](#)