Visas and Travel for Students from China, India, Iran, Brazil, South Africa, the Schengen Area, the United Kingdom, and Ireland

This information is based on our current understanding of the information recently posted by the U.S. Department of State. If the State Department issues any clarifications, this announcement will be updated.

On April 26, 2021, the Department of State announced that F-1 and J-1 students travelling from China, Iran, Brazil, or South Africa can now travel directly to the United States provided that their academic programs begin August 1, 2021 or later, even though Presidential Proclamations 9984 (China), 9992 (Iran), and 10143 (Brazil and South Africa) restricting travel remain in effect. On April 30, 2021, the Department of State announced that a similar exception would apply to students travelling from India, even though a Presidential Proclamation restricting entry to the U.S. has been in effect since May 4, 2021. Updated announcements were posted to the Department of State website on the following dates:

- May 12, 2021
- May 27, 2021
- June 1, 2021

Students travelling from these countries who need to apply for an F-1 visa can follow the normal visa application process. Students from these areas who are applying for a J-1 visa or planning to travel using their current J-1 visa should contact the nearest embassy or consulate to initiate a national interest exception (NIE) request.

New students:

- If your I-20 or DS-2019 has a start date before August 1, 2021, you will not be able to enter the U.S. if you have been in China, India, Iran, Brazil, or South Africa during the preceding 14-day period. You would need to spend at least 14 days in a country that is not subject to travel restrictions before entering the U.S.
- If your I-20 or DS-2019 has a start date on or after August 1, 2021, you will be able to enter the U.S. up to 30 days before your program start date.
Continuing students:

- You will be able to enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the beginning of the Fall Term (August 30, 2021).
- You will not be able to enter earlier unless you have spent at least 14 days before your entry date in a country that is not subject to travel restrictions.

F-1 and J-1 students from the Schengen Area [8], the United Kingdom, and Ireland

As has been the case since July 22, 2020, new and continuing F-1 and J-1 students from the Schengen Area [8], the United Kingdom, and Ireland can travel to the U.S. [9] even though Presidential Proclamation 10143 [3] restricting entry remains in effect. There are no date based restrictions on when they can enter, although as always, new students cannot enter the U.S. more than thirty days before the program start date on their Form I-20 or DS-2019. Students from the Schengen Area, the UK, and Ireland who need to apply for an F-1 visa can follow the normal visa application process. Students from those areas who are applying for a J-1 visa should contact the nearest embassy or consulate to initiate a national interest exception (NIE) request.

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