

ISSS Current Messages on Federal Immigration Changes

Updated October 1, 2025



Current Information

ISSS is carefully monitoring any immigration changes, and we are working with national resources to understand more about what is taking place and how best to support international students and scholars. Important information and updates will be shared with international students and scholars through the Weekly Update and Scholar Update newsletters. The most recent key updates that are still valid are shared here.

Please note: The information shared here is focused on international students (primarily those with F or J status on the Twin Cities campus) and international scholars (those with J-1, H-1B, E-3, or TN status).

Federal Government Shutdown

Posted on October 1, 2025:

The U.S. federal government shutdown at midnight on October 1. Those who are new to the United States, including international students and scholars, may not be familiar with a government shutdown. When the U.S. Congress cannot agree on the government's budget, all nonessential government functions must end until an agreement can be reached. ISSS monitors these situations and will keep the University community informed about updates as they become available, or will contact individuals if a specific case is impacted. Read more about [what a shutdown could mean](#) for UMN international students, scholars, and staff.

Proposed Rule to Eliminate Duration of Status

Updated on September 24, 2025:

On August 28, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security published a [proposed rule](#) that would change the way F and J visa holders (including almost all international students and scholars at the University of Minnesota) are admitted to the United States. This proposed rule would limit a student or scholar's admission and approved immigration status to a fixed period of time, and would require any request to extend a student or scholar's immigration status to be reviewed and approved not only by an ISSS advisor, but also by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This is a significant change that would require new fees, procedures, and understanding of important immigration documents.

ISSS staff and colleagues from across the Twin Cities and other campuses are closely monitoring the situation and keeping abreast of updates through professional organizations and other sources. A

working group has been assembled to analyze the proposal and anticipate impacts to the University community.

For more details on the proposal and its anticipated impacts, review the [Current Information on Proposal to End Duration of Status](#), which will be updated as new information is available.

USCIS Visits Related to OPT Applications

Posted September 23, 2025:

ISSS is aware that several international students and recent graduates have been contacted or visited by USCIS to ask for information related to applications for Optional Practical Training (OPT) or a STEM OPT extension. If you were contacted by USCIS, please [contact ISSS](#) through email or by making an appointment with an advisor. ISSS is gathering more information about the visits and will share updates as appropriate. If you receive a visit, please be aware that the USCIS officers should be able to introduce themselves with a name and title and show you their badge, and they will not ask for money.

H-1B Presidential Proclamation

Updated on October 1, 2025:

On September 19, the White House issued a [Presidential Proclamation](#) that restricts the entry of H-1B visa holders into the U.S., unless the H-1B petition is accompanied by a \$100,000 payment. Since then, various government agencies (including the [White House](#), [USCIS](#), [CBP](#), and the [State Department](#)) have issued statements and guidance that provide clarification on several key points.

There are aspects of the rule that are not yet understood. **Here is what we understand about the proclamation at this time:**

- University employment is **not** exempt from the proclamation at this time
- The proclamation does not apply to employees who have an approved H-1B petition (I-797 Approval Notice) that was filed before 9/21/2025
- The proclamation does not apply to employees whose H-1B petition is pending but was submitted to USCIS before 9/21/2025
- The proclamation does not apply to future H-1B petitions that are submitted to USCIS in connection with an H-1B extension/renewal
- The proclamation should not prevent employees from traveling abroad with a valid H-1B visa or from obtaining an H-1B visa while abroad, as long as they have an I-797 Approval Notice for an H-1B petition that was submitted to USCIS before 9/21/2025
- This is an employer fee, not an employee fee

We are still waiting for clarification on the following:

- The impact of the proclamation on employers filing an in-country change of status to H-1B, for whom the H-1B petition was submitted to USCIS on or after 9/21/2025
- The impact of the proclamation on employees who are outside the U.S., for whom an H-1B petition was submitted to USCIS on or after 9/21/2025
- What national interest exception criteria DHS will consider
- Possible outcomes of litigation, if it occurs

Application of the rule may change as additional information becomes available or as a result of other developments. ISSS continues working to understand the implications of this proclamation and will provide updated information as it is available.

Social Media Vetting

Updated on September 5, 2025:

It's important to know that there are several points at which U.S. government agencies may screen non-citizen visa holders for actions that may be seen as conflicting with U.S. interests. Recent updates from government agencies outline policies that call for more frequent and in-depth screening than in the past.

- [USCIS updated their policy guidance](#) on August 19 to expand the types of benefit requests that receive social media vetting, including review for "anti-American" or "antisemitic" activity, and to provide wider discretionary authority to USCIS officers to deny applications based on their findings. Benefit requests that require USCIS review include applications for F-1 OPT, changes of status, reinstatement of F-1 status, H-1B petitions, adjustment of status to permanent resident, and others.
- The [Department of State announced](#) in June an expansion of social media vetting for all F, M, and J visa applicants.

In addition to the potential for impact on individual immigration benefits, these changes could lead to longer processing times at both USCIS and at consulates and embassies abroad. We encourage international students, scholars, and employees to plan ahead and start visa and benefit applications as early as possible.

Changes to U.S. Visa Policies

August 4, 2025:

The Department of State has recently announced or implemented changes that impact how visas for international students and scholars are issued. For more information, review the [ISSS website](#).

- The Department of State updated visa reciprocity for an unknown number of countries in mid-July and will now issue short-term, limited entry visas for citizens of approximately 54 countries. *This change does not apply to visas that have already been issued.* If you have a valid visa that has been issued for a longer period of time or for more entries than the new information, you can continue to use it.
- Effective September 2, the Department of State is limiting the eligibility for visa interview waivers.
- The federal budget bill passed in July added a new visa integrity fee that will be implemented at an unknown date in the future.

Travel Ban

Posted on June 6, 2025:

On June 4, the White House issued a [Presidential Proclamation](#) announcing a ban on entry to the U.S. for citizens of 12 countries: Afghanistan, Chad, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea,

Haiti, Iran, Libya, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen. Visas, including F and J visas, will be restricted for citizens from 7 additional countries: Burundi, Cuba, Laos, Sierra Leone, Togo, Turkmenistan, and Venezuela. The travel bans go into effect on June 9 at 12:01 a.m. Eastern.

It is important to note:

- This proclamation only applies to individuals traveling to the U.S.
- It does not apply to international students and scholars and their dependents who are already in the U.S. and maintaining status.
- There is an exemption for individuals who have a valid visa as of June 9 when the travel restrictions go into effect; however, citizens of the impacted countries who are in the U.S. and maintaining a valid status are *strongly advised not to travel internationally*.
- It is possible that there will be further review or changes to the countries and conditions that are affected by visa issuance and travel restrictions to the U.S.

ISSS has reached out directly to students and scholars who are citizens of the countries listed in the travel ban. If you are a citizen of one of the countries and you are currently outside of the U.S., please contact us at ISSS@umn.edu so that we can support you.

ISSS will continue to monitor the situation and share information as it is available.

OPT Reporting Requirements

May 16, 2025: ISSS is aware that some alumni on OPT who are over their unemployment limits have received emails from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) reminding them to report their employment and if alumni fail to do so, their SEVIS records will be terminated. ISSS is conducting additional outreach to those who appear to be unemployed and are close to their unemployment limits. All alumni on OPT are encouraged to review their reporting requirements during [OPT](#) and [STEM OPT](#).

DHS Registration Requirement (For Dependent Children)

There is a long-standing requirement that foreign nationals must register with the U.S. federal government. For most international students and scholars, this registration process, which includes fingerprinting, happens as part of obtaining a visa and entering the U.S. For international students and scholars, the proof that you registered is your [I-94](#).

On March 12, the Department of Homeland Security announced details of a new process to comply with the registration requirements for individuals who have not already registered (or in some cases, for individuals who must re-register). There are some conflicting opinions from law firms and professional organizations about who is required to go through the new registration process and what the deadlines are for doing so.

- There is a clear consensus that individuals on an F, J, or H visa who entered the U.S. after their fourteenth birthday and obtained an I-94 upon entry do not need to re-register.
- ***If you have non-U.S. citizen children who entered the U.S. before their fourteenth birthday, you may need to take additional steps to register them again within 30 days of turning age fourteen, using the new USCIS Form G-325R.***

Learn more on the [DHS Registration Requirement](#) page on ISSS's website.

Message of Support from Leadership

- On April 18, Shashank Priya, Vice President for Research and Innovation; Raj Singh, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education; and Scott Lanyon, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, sent a message, [Supporting Our International Community: Updates and Resources](#), to all international students and scholars systemwide.

April 7 Update

- The University's Student Legal Service has added additional [Know Your Rights](#) resources to its website with information about immigrant rights, what to do if ICE visits, and making a plan. SLS also lists the advice and representation services it can provide in the [Immigration section here](#).
- If you receive an email from a U.S. embassy or consulate or other source that states that your visa has been revoked, please contact ISSS as soon as you can.
- We are hearing that there is an increase in scams related to the termination of student visas and SEVIS records. If you receive a message like this, you should contact ISSS as soon as you can. Learn more about scams.

March 28 Update

- All international students and scholars received messages from [President Cunningham](#) and [ISSS](#) regarding a University of Minnesota student being detained.

Ongoing Advice Related to Potential Immigration Changes

During this time of uncertainty and potential immigration changes, ISSS recommends the following tips and advice:

- Carry color photocopies (print or electronic) of your current immigration documents at all times, even when within the United States; [review "Know Your Rights" information](#) in case you are asked for your immigration documents (Note that Student Legal Service added additional "Know Your Rights" information in early April. Check out their updated website if you haven't already.)
- Consider international travel plans carefully as re-entry requirements could change while you are traveling
- If you do travel internationally for University purposes, remember that you must [register your international travel](#)
- Monitor your University email and read the ISSS Weekly Update regularly; refer to verified news sources for additional information
- If you are unsure of how Executive Orders may impact you, reach out to an ISSS adviser or an immigration attorney for assistance (ISSS also offers [guidance on finding an attorney](#))
- Apply early and in a timely manner for USCIS-adjudicated benefits, such as Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- Report any Request for Evidence (RFE) you receive from USCIS to an ISSS adviser (RFE is a request for additional documentation)
- Take care of your well-being and [mental health](#)

