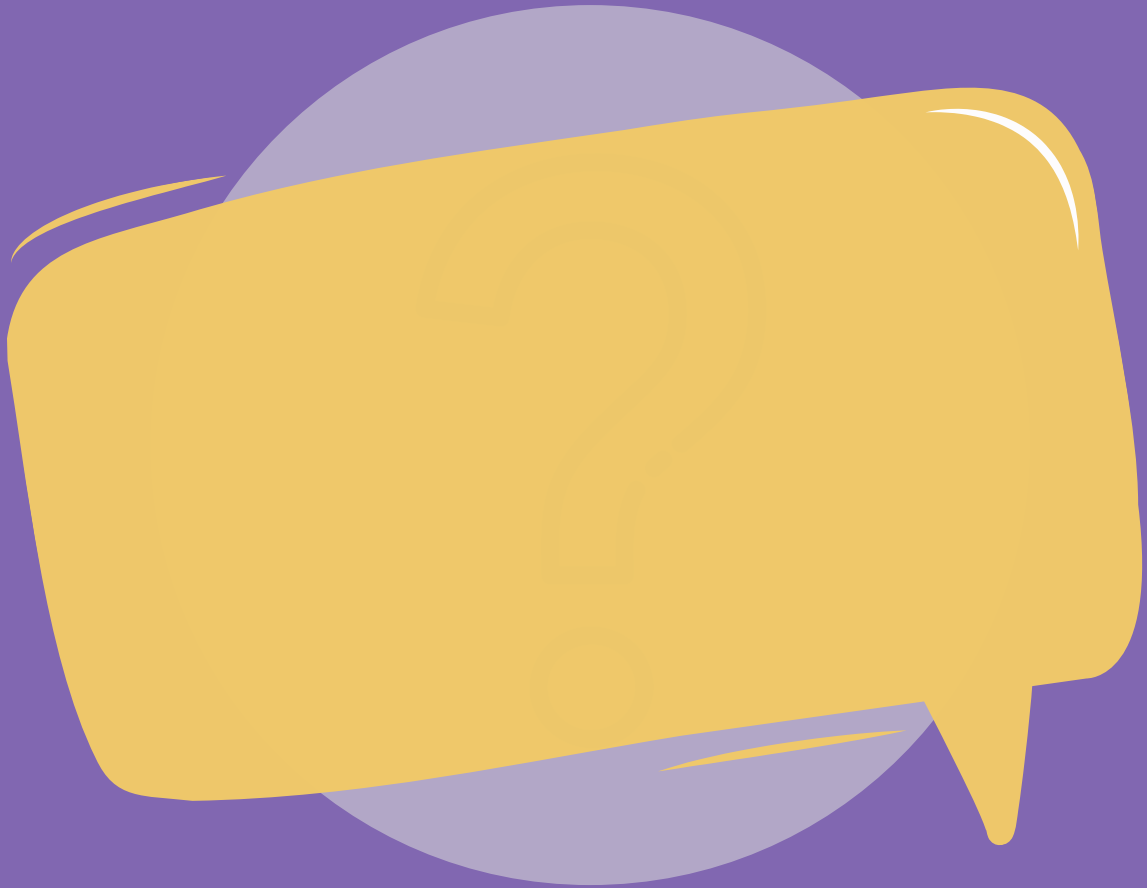




Department of  
International Student  
and Scholar Services



# FAQ

REGARDING COVID-19

## How does CCNY switching to online remote learning affect my immigration status?

The Student and Visitor Exchange Program (SEVP) has confirmed that "If a school closes temporarily but offers online instruction or another alternative learning procedure, nonimmigrant students should participate in online or other alternate learning procedures and remain in active status in SEVIS." Furthermore, SEVP confirmed that international students may take full-time courses online either from within the US or from abroad.

This means that to maintain your immigration status you need to:

- Participate in online learning
- Continue to be enrolled full-time
- Make normal progress toward your degree

Regardless of where you are participating in online classes, your immigration status will remain active.

## Can I receive a signed I-20 while the campus is closed due to COVID-19?

Yes, due to COVID-19, DSOs will electronically send Forms I-20 to student email addresses listed in SEVIS. In the case of minor students, the email address may belong to their parent or legal guardian.

## My visa will expire soon/has already expired. If I leave the U.S. can I come back to the U.S. with my expired visa?

No, if you leave the U.S. and your visa expires by the time you want to return to the U.S. you must renew your visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate before you can return to the country. However, as of March 20, 2020, U.S. visa issuance has been suspended indefinitely due to COVID-19.

## If I am forced to leave my current residence (on-campus/off-campus) for another U.S. address, how can I notify the department?

During this time you will still need to report any change of residential address in the U.S. to the federal government, within 10 days. Please contact OISSS within 10 days via email at [OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu) with the subject line: Reporting Change of Address

## My visa will expire soon but I am currently unable to return to my home country. What can I do?

Unlike your passport, your visa CAN expire while you are in the U.S. as long as your passport, I-94, and I-20 are valid. As long as your status is still valid and you continue to follow all immigration regulations, you can continue to remain in the U.S. even if your visa has expired.

## If I travel outside the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic, will I be able to return?

It is impossible to predict if and when further restrictions will be put in place by the U.S. Administration for travelers returning from high-risk countries.

You need to check the travel and visa restrictions that may be in place at the time you are planning to travel as this is still an emerging issue and the situation is consistently changing. If you are currently outside the U.S. or plan to travel outside the U.S., we recommend that you continue to monitor travel updates by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).



Have more questions?  
Please e-mail us at  
[oisss@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:oisss@ccny.cuny.edu)

## I was conducting on-campus work before the pandemic, as an international student am I allowed to work remotely?

Yes, F-1's who have been authorized on-campus employment should email OISSS and indicate their SEVIS number and EMPL and whether they are working remotely if so, they should provide a brief description of work, the number of hours they will work a week and name of the student's supervisor. If they are not working, they should also indicate that. Please contact OISSS via email at [OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu) with the subject:

*F-1 certified On-Campus employment Spring '20.*

## I want to apply to OPT. Can I do this from outside the U.S.?

You cannot submit your OPT application from aboard. **You must be physically in the U.S.** at the time you submit your Optional Practical Training (OPT) application. OISSS will continue to process OPT applications as soon as we receive your submitted request. If you have not applied for OPT yet, but plan to do so, we strongly encourage you to contact us by email with any questions or concerns.

While we are no longer having in-person advising, we will still be holding online advising sessions. You can email your OPT application materials to OISSS and we will notify you if revisions should be made and how to proceed with the process. If you have not yet, please review the OISSS OPT instruction manual sent to you by the department, there you can find most of the instructions on how to proceed with the OPT process.

## How can I contact an advisor?

Due to COVID-19 and the closure of on-campus functions DSOs will electronically interact with students through phone at (212) 650-8106 and email at [OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu) and the department is arranging methods to meet through video conferences.

## Can I travel after submitting my OPT application but before receiving my EAD card?

There is a higher risk associated with travel and return while your OPT is pending after the program completion date of your OPT EAD. If there are any problems with your application, you may not be able to respond to USCIS promptly, which could delay the processing of your EAD. If your OPT application is denied while outside the U.S., you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. in F-1 status and will not be able to reapply.

If you choose to travel with the OPT Pending, please carry the following:

- Valid F-1 visa
- Passport valid for at least more 6 months
- OPT Requested I-20 with the travel signature
- I-797A Notice of Action

## I am a J-1 student who's had my campus research functions hindered, what should I do?

J-1 students should contact OISSS and let the department know if they are still in the U.S. and how they are conducting the research remotely. They need to include the SEVIS number, address where they are working remotely from, name supervisor, a brief explanation of the work they are doing and the number of hours per week spent conducting research. Please contact OISSS via email at [OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:OISSS@ccny.cuny.edu) with the subject line: *J-1 Scholar conducting research remotely.*

## Can I apply for CPT from outside the U.S.?

Yes, if you qualify for CPT, you are still able to apply for CPT remotely. However, please beware of the current travel restrictions in place at the time of your return to the U.S. and how that will affect your participation at your internship.

**CCNY**