

Maintaining Status

While studying in the United States, it is important to maintain your F or M student status.

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While studying in the United States, it is important to maintain your F or M student status. Your status relates to the purpose, or reason for why you want to come to the United States. The U.S. Department of State issues you your visa based on your intended purpose.

If the Department of State issues you an F or M student visa, this means that you are coming to the United States to study. You should not take any action that detracts from that purpose. Maintaining your status means:

F-1 and M-1 students share the same primary purpose for coming to the United States however, F-1 students enroll in more traditional academic programs, while M-1 students enroll in vocational programs. Because these two types of programs are different in nature, the types of benefits an international student may be eligible for and how long they may remain in the country depend on whether they are an F-1 or M-1 student. Learn more about these specific differences by reviewing the [F&M Student Status: Know the Difference infographic](#).

Below are actions to take in order to properly maintain your status.

Arrival

When arriving to the United States, both F and M students must:

Education

While studying in the United States, both F and M students must:

- Attend all your classes, and maintain normal academic progress. If school is too difficult, speak with your DSO immediately.
- Maintain a full course of study each term. If you cannot study full time, contact your DSO immediately. You may be eligible for a [reduced course load](#) in limited circumstances.
- Speak to your DSO before dropping a class.

- Talk to your DSO about requesting a possible program extension if you do not think you will complete your program of study by the end date listed on your Form I-20. An extension must be requested before your program end date.

Annual Vacation for F-1 Students

F-1 students must complete at least one full academic year at an SEVP-certified school to be eligible for annual vacation. Additionally, students must intend to register for classes in the academic term following their annual vacation.

SEVP-certified schools should have clear and consistent policies regarding annual vacation and comply with the requirements laid out in [SEVP Policy Guidance for Adjudicators 1408-01: Academic Year](#).

Please note that during an annual vacation, students can take as many, as few or no courses as they want. SEVP considers all study during an annual vacation incident to status.

Work and Practical Training for F-1 Students

An F student may only work when authorized by a DSO in some cases, and [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#) in others. If you choose to work without authorization, you will be forced to leave the United States immediately, and you may not be able to re-enter the United States at a later date.

F students are eligible for curricular practical training (CPT) at either the undergraduate or the graduate level during the program of study. CPT employment must be an integral part of an established curriculum and the position must directly relate to your major area of study. Your DSO can give you the school's policy on this option.

F students are also eligible for optional practical training during or following the program of study. OPT is a form of temporary employment that directly relates to your program of study.

For more information about employment and training options available for F-students, visit the [Working in the United States page](#) and talk with your DSO.

Practical Training for M-1 Students

M-1 students are not eligible for employment during their program of study, but may obtain authorization for practical training employment. You may participate in practical training employment after the completion of your vocational program.

If you want to participate in practical training employment in the United States, talk with your DSO about your options. Practical training employment requires your DSO's recommendation and authorization from USCIS.

If you choose to work without authorization, you will be forced to leave the United States immediately. You may not be able to re-enter the United States at a later date.

Upon Program Completion

F and M students must take action to maintain legal status or depart the United States after completing your program of study.

Once you complete your program of study and any authorized period of practical training, F students have 60 days after completion of your program (the program end date on your Form I-20) to leave the United States. If you wish to extend your stay in the United States, talk with your DSO to learn more about doing one of the following:

M students have 30 days after completion of their program (the program end date on your Form I-20) to leave the United States. The latest date you may remain in the United States is the "admit until" date on your [Form I-94, "Arrival/Departure Record,"](#) unless you filed for an extension with USCIS.

Talk with your DSO First

If you are an F or M student studying in the United States, your DSO should be the first person you talk with if you have any questions regarding the legal requirements of your stay in the United States. Your DSO can assist in answering your questions or help you find someone who can help.

F-1 students should speak with their DSO if you are planning to do any of the following:

- Change your major, program, or degree level.
- Change your education level.
- Transfer to a new school or take a leave of absence.
- Take a break from school.
- Travel outside the United States.
- Move to a new address.
- Request a program extension.

M-1 students should speak with their DSO if they are planning to do any of the following:

Both F and M students may contact SEVP by email at sevp@ice.dhs.gov if your DSO is unable to assist you or if you would prefer to ask someone else.

In your email, please describe your situation and include any questions you have. SEVP provides responses on a first-come, first-served basis. Answer times may vary depending on the current number of inquiries.

F-1 Visa Information

Summary of Requirements

The section below contains actions that you are responsible for as a student at UMass Dartmouth on an F-1 visa. To make the information clear, we have simplified it. For more detailed information: visit [F-1 Visa Regulations Details](#)

Important

The most important thing for you to know is that you should contact the International Student & Scholar Center if you are unsure about **any** of the regulations or procedures that affect your F-1 status.

Things you must *always* do as an international student

- **Register full-time** every semester according to your academic program/degree level; no more than **one on-line** course is allowed each semester to meet full-time requirements; if you have only one course to complete your program, it cannot be an on-line course.
- **Get passing grades** in your courses according to your academic program/degree level; **make progress** towards completing your program or degree; grades of W or WF **do not** count towards full-time enrollment.
- Keep your passport current; preferably, at least 6 months into the future.
- Keep your I-20 paperwork current; this means full-time enrollment in a program of study or an approved post-study program such as Optional Practical Training (OPT).
- Accept **only** ISSC-authorized off-campus employment, and at a maximum of 20 hours a week while enrolled in classes.
- **You are legally required to report all US address changes within 10 days of moving. Failure to do so could jeopardize your status:**

- Immediately update your COIN account with **any** address change – or within 10 days at the latest, even in the summer.
- If you have a pending application with USCIS please follow instructions on [USCIS Change of Address Information page](#)
- Tell us immediately if you change your name.
- Maintain a permanent address outside the U.S.
- Obey all U.S. laws.
- Notify us if you have dependents accompanying or joining you.
- Read all ISSC communications and check your UMD account. Such communications and emails may contain important information regarding your legal immigration status in the U.S.
- Come to the ISSC office **immediately** if you are **not** doing *any* of the above; you may be eligible for reinstatement or record correction.

Things you must *never* do as an international student

- **Do not** work anywhere off campus without permission.
- **Do not** let your passport or I-20 paperwork expire; your passport must be current to at least 6 months in the future.
- Your visa must be valid when entering U.S.
- **Do not** stop going to class or drop a class without telling us; we must authorize any changes in your enrollment; a grade of W or WF **does not** count towards full-time enrollment.
- **Do not** enroll in more than one on-line class per semester; your full-time status will be invalid.
- **Do not** travel outside the U.S. without valid travel signatures on your I-20 form.
- **Do not** forget to report any change of address.

Things *always* requiring special permission

- Off-campus employment
- Change of major
- Requesting a leave of absence from your program of study

- Changing to another non-immigrant or immigrant status
- Extending your program of study; the request **must** be prior to the expiration date on your I-20
- Withdrawal from the University
- Transferring to another school

When must I leave the U.S.?

- After the "date of completion" on your current Form I-20, including any program extensions you may have received; or when you complete your authorized academic program requirements, whichever comes first.
- Students who are approved for authorized employment (Optional Practical Training, OPT) after they complete their academic program may remain until the end of the training period. OPT includes a 60-day grace period when you may not work but may travel inside the U.S. and prepare to return home no later than 60 days after the end of your training period/employment.

More information

Visit [for more information on your F-1 visa responsibilities and requirements.](#)

A Note About Health Insurance

All enrolled international students must carry health insurance; those in the F-1 visa category are required to purchase the University student health insurance plan each year they are studying here. These students are enrolled in the plan automatically and charges will appear on your UMass Dartmouth bill. Please see additional information in the [Health Insurance](#) link.

Authorized officials

The following University officials are authorized to sign the I-20 forms and other F-1 paperwork:

Principal Designated School Official (PDSO)

Daniel Pirbudagov

Executive Director

International Education

(508) 910-6633

INTL_Office@umassd.edu

Designated School Officials (DSO)

Meghan Houghton

Associate Director ISSC

(508) 910-6633

INTL_Office@UMassD.edu

Pat Mooney

Administrative Assistant ISSC

(508) 910-6633

INTL_Office@UMassD.edu

Pre-Arrival Information - Before You Arrive

Please view the **travel and health advisories** at [Student Health Services](#) for current information about international health alerts for travelers.

This page summarizes pre-arrival requirements and recommendations of the U.S. Government to help you prepare for your arrival to the U.S. Please also view: [Before you arrive: UMass Dartmouth requirements](#) and the [pre-arrival checklist](#).

U.S. Government requirements & recommendations

International Students and Scholars must adhere to U.S. government requirements before and upon entering the U.S.

Acquiring your Visa

Once you have been admitted to the University, and after you have sent your enrollment deposit and financial records, we will send you one of three forms:

- The I-20 form for F-1 students
- The DS-2019 form for J-1 Students
- The DS 2019 form for J-1 Scholars who have completed the [scholar appointment process](#)

The I-20 or DS-2019 form will show the semester you are entering the University as a student, or the term of your scholar appointment, and date of your expected arrival. With one of these forms and a letter of acceptance or appointment, you will be able to apply to a U.S. Consul for the student visa (F-1 or J-1), or scholar visa (J-1), that will allow you to enter the United States.

The U.S. Consul will require the following paperwork in addition to your letter of acceptance or appointment:

- A current passport from your country, valid for at least six months beyond your stay in the United States
- **AND** A U.S. Government Affidavit of Support completed by your sponsor(s)
- **OR** Other proof of financial resources

Check Visa Status

Students and scholars can now check the status of their visa applications online at the [U.S. Department of State \(DOS\) Visa Status Check](#)

SEVIS fee

A SEVIS fee must be paid at least three days prior to your F or J visa appointment at an embassy or consulate. Once you have paid the fee, please print the receipt and bring it to the visa appointment as proof of the SEVIS fee payment. Learn more about the [SEVIS fee](#).

Port of Entry

What happens at the Port of Entry in the U.S.? Learn more at [Study in the States](#), a site sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). J-1 exchange students please note: although the Port of Entry process described at Study in the States is for students entering the U.S. on F and M student visas, the inspection process is the same for students entering on the J-1 visa. Your documents are inspected by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP).

Form I-94

During the admissions process at your U.S. port of entry, a U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officer will create an electronic arrival Form I-94 record from a scan of your passport. Form I-94 is evidence of your lawful admission to the U.S. and is used in a variety of ways to document your legal status in the United States. After you have arrived on campus and checked in at the International Student and Scholar Center (ISSC) you will learn more about Form I-94.

Other resources

In addition to the [Study in the States](#) information site offered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Department of State (DOS) sponsors a network of advising centers and a website for international students interested in studying in the U.S. Learn more at [EducationUSA](#).

More information

- [Before you arrive: UMass Dartmouth requirements](#)
- [Pre-arrival checklist](#)

Before You Arrive - UMassD Requirements

UMassD requirements & recommendations

- [Admissions](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Billing & payments](#)
- [Health & immunization requirements](#)
- [Registering for classes](#)
- [Buying textbooks](#)
- [Student employment](#)
- [Social security numbers](#)
- [Meals & food; local shopping](#)
- [Mail](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Campus & community activities](#)
- [Weather](#)

Admissions process

For questions about the admissions process, please contact the admissions department directly:

- Graduate Admissions: graduate@umassd.edu
- Undergraduate Admissions: undergraduate@admissions.umassd.edu

Please address questions regarding assistantships directly to the academic department in which you will study.

Housing

It is important to make arrangements for housing before you arrive in the U.S., or else have money to stay in a hotel nearby temporarily while searching for housing.

Living on campus

Undergraduate students: Students usually make their on-campus housing arrangements as part of the admissions process. (Graduate students must make their own arrangements for on-campus housing and should follow the steps below.)

The standard academic year housing contract does not cover semester breaks or summer. Living on campus during semester breaks and during the summer costs extra. Please view the [cost chart](#), **including 10- and 12-month options**, for on-campus housing.

Graduate students: Follow these steps to arrange for on-campus housing. The University cannot accept debit/credit cards for payment of tuition, fees, room and board. Please also see Billing and Payments below.

1. Pay the housing deposit

- Log into the University portal at <http://my.umassd.edu> and use your credit card to pay - Select Housing; one of the choices will be "Housing Prepayment"

OR

- Prepare a check payable to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth for \$200 USD and mail it to the Student Service Center, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 285 Old Westport Road, Dartmouth, MA 02747-2300 USA;
 - your UMass Dartmouth student ID number **must** be written on the check.

2. Contact the Housing Office

- Email Brad Rohrer, the Assistant Director for Housing Administrative Services, at brohrer@umassd.edu and request a housing contract. You will be directed to the housing online contract at that time.
- For additional information, email: housing@umassd.edu.

Learn more about [Housing and Residential Education](#) and [on-campus rules and regulations](#).

Living off campus

If you choose to live off campus, you will be responsible for finding your own accommodation. Many graduate students choose to live off-campus. Please view this [off-campus housing information](#) provided by the Office of Housing and Residential Education.

Disclaimer: This information is provided as a service to students with the understanding that the university has not inspected the rentals and cannot warrant their condition, nor can the university guarantee the professional behavior of the property owners or managers. A written rental agreement is recommended. Although care is taken to provide correct information, there may be unintended errors, changes or deletions without notification. Users of this information communicate, contract and do business with individuals, companies, or firms at their own risk. The university, officers, agents, and employees of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall not be liable for any errors or omissions made in the compilation or printing of this information.

For information about your rights as a tenant in Massachusetts, refer to these government agencies:

- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)
- [Massachusetts Attorney General's Office](#)

Billing & payment processing

To check your University account for charges and payments, log onto your [COIN \(Corsairs' Online INformation\) account](#).

Information regarding billing and payment options is found on the [Bursar's Office website](#).

Required health immunizations & insurance

Health insurance will automatically be added to your bill. All UMass Dartmouth students must submit a completed health form to UMass Dartmouth Student Health Services. The form must include the immunization page, signed by your doctor. If Student Health Services does not receive your completed health/immunization form, **you will not be allowed to move into your residence hall, register, or attend classes.**

All UMass Dartmouth students must be immunized for the following:

- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Tetanus/Diphtheria (Tdap)
- Hepatitis B
- Chicken Pox (Varicella) or show evidence by titer that they are immune.

Note that there is no titer for Tdap. In addition, all new residential students must read information about Bacterial Meningitis and receive the meningitis vaccine or sign a waiver declining it.

Health Services has limited resources to assist with the required vaccines and urges students to receive these immunizations in their home countries.

Completing and submitting the required health forms

All required forms and a link to the Student Health Portal are available at the [Student Health Services](#) website. We prefer that you complete and submit the required forms by signing into the [Student Health Portal](#) using your UMass Dartmouth user name and password.

If you have difficulty signing into the Student Health Portal, you will be able to download the forms from the Student Health Services site. Once they are completed, you will need to fax or mail the forms to the fax number or address on the forms.

You should also bring a copy of your forms with you. When traveling or living internationally, it is good practice to have this information available to you.

Remember to use the university's forms and make sure they are signed by your doctor.

Registering for classes

New Undergraduate students typically register for classes during Orientation.

New Graduate students typically register for classes by consulting with the director of their graduate program or with their assigned advisor.

- There is no formal schedule for meeting with your academic advisor during [Orientation](#); so, you can email ahead and make an appointment **after Orientation** with your academic department or graduate program. Some departments will arrange to register you for your classes by email.
- Look up your academic department or graduate program.

Textbooks

The University Campus Store opens for extended hours during the first few weeks of the semester. The store will have all your textbooks for sale online. We recommend waiting until after your first class to buy your textbooks. The cost of new books can range from \$350 USD to \$600 USD per semester. Learn more about textbooks at [University Campus Store](#).

Student Employment

As an international student, your visa type determines your ability to work, where you may work, and how many hours you may work. Although most international students are eligible to work on campus as soon as they begin study, on-campus jobs are limited. For more information, see the [Student Employment Office](#).

Many international students cannot work off campus until they have been in the U.S. for one full academic year per immigration regulations. After you have been enrolled for one full academic year, the International Student & Scholar Center has information regarding the requirements for working off campus.

Social Security Numbers

In order to work in the United States, you must have a Social Security Number (SSN). To successfully apply for this number, F-1 students must have proof of an offer of employment signed by the immediate supervisor and by the International Student & Scholar Center. J-1 students need a letter of authorization from the International Student & Scholar Center. This application process will be discussed at Orientation.

Meals & food; local shopping

You may either buy meals and snacks on campus through Dining Services or purchase food to prepare for yourself from local grocery stores.

On-campus dining: Dining Services provides several options for dining on campus: traditional meal plans, declining balance plans, and block plans. Some options require signing a contract and paying in advance for the academic year. Learn more about [Dining Services](#).

Off-campus food and household shopping: There are large grocery markets near the campus: [Stop & Shop](#) and [Shaw's Market](#); a nearby Target store also carries groceries. Most household items can be purchased at [WalMart](#) or [Target](#); and these stores are close by UMass Dartmouth.

Target, WalMart and Stop & Shop all sell personal daily needs. However, the closest one is Target. You can walk to Target from campus in about 15 minutes, depending on where your dorm is located. You can also take the [Retail Loop](#) shuttle Monday-Saturday to several stores in the area including Stop & Shop, Target, and Walmart.

Mail

The Student Mail department provides incoming and outgoing mail services for students living on campus. [Learn more about Student Mail](#).

If you will be living off campus, or change to a new address while living in the U.S., visit the [United States Postal Service \(USPS\)](#) to officially change your address*.

*You **must** always keep your current U.S. address updated in **COIN**. Most students will have two addresses in COIN: your physical (mailing) address in the U.S., and your permanent address in your home country.

Transportation

The university's [Campus Transportation](#) department provides the free Corsair Shuttle service to help you travel throughout campus. Campus Transportation also provides information about other local transportation options including: Zipcar and local taxi services; The Loop, a free bus service provided by the City of New Bedford to and from the CVPA Star Store Campus; the Law School Shuttle Service; and the Retail Loop to access the immediate local area and stores for shopping nearby.

Most services are available only during the semester when classes are in session.

Our transportation page also includes information on the local bus company, [SRTA](#), that provides service to the campus from the nearby cities of Fall River and New Bedford, but is not under University control; students may show their UMass Pass Student ID to ride SRTA buses for FREE.

Student Organizations

Learn about opportunities on- and off-campus to participate in recreational, social, and cultural activities and organizations with [Student Activity, Involvement and Leadership \(SAIL\)](#). SAIL keeps a list of student organization contacts, among them the Asian, Indian, and Muslim student associations.

Weather

The weather in and around Dartmouth can range from extremely cold in the winter (below 0°F or -18°C), to extremely hot in the summer time (in excess of 90°F or 33°C). For winter, be sure to get adequate clothing such as boots, scarves, hats, and gloves.

More information

- [Before you arrive: U.S. Government requirements](#)
- [Pre-arrival checklist](#)

F-1 Visa Regulations - Detail

This page contains more detailed information on maintaining your F-1 visa status than is found in the [Summary of Requirements](#). Click here to view more detailed instructions regarding your I-20 and maintaining F-1 status. (Page 3 of I-20)

UMass Dartmouth is authorized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to admit students for study in the F-1 student visa category.

The Process

- students are admitted to UMass Dartmouth either through the undergraduate or graduate admissions office
- students must submit the required personal, academic, and financial information to the UMass Dartmouth admissions office
- the UMass Dartmouth admissions office asks the ISSC to create an initial I-20 form and then sends it to the student
- students apply for an F-1 student visa at a U.S. consulate abroad (usually in the student's home country)

After Entry to the United States in F-1 status

- to keep your F-1 status in good standing, you must
 - make normal progress toward completing your degree requirements
 - comply with reporting requirements of the Student and Exchange visitor Information System (SEVIS) throughout the period of study
 - have a passport that is kept valid at all times, unless exempt from the passport requirement
 - attend the school that issued the I-20 used to obtain the visa
 - continue to carry a full course of study as defined by the program: usually, no fewer than 12 credits at the undergraduate level or in the law school, and no fewer than 9 credits at the graduate level
 - **A special note about online courses:** U.S. Immigration regulations require that only ONE online three-credit class per semester can be used to count toward the minimum number of credits needed for full-time enrollment. If you need only one course to complete your

program of studies, that course CANNOT be online or distance learning.

- follow certain procedures to extend the period of study if necessary for completion of a degree program
- follow certain procedures to continue from one educational level to another (for example from the bachelor's to the master's level) at the same school
- follow certain procedures to transfer out of UMass Dartmouth to another school
- limit on-campus employment to a total of 20 hours per week while school is in session
- refrain from off-campus employment without authorization

Post-Arrival Information - After You Arrive

Once you arrive on campus

Complete New International Student Check In eForm

All new international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa must complete an electronic “check in” eForm upon arriving to the Dartmouth area. You will receive an email requiring you to upload certain documents into your electronic file. Below are samples of the required documents:

- [Admissions Stamp](#)
- [Visa](#)
- [I-94](#)

The email will also require you to update your local US address in your COIN account and enter emergency contact information in your COIN account,

Arrange for temporary or permanent housing

- Unpack and settle everything in your room.
- Visit the supermarkets nearby for purchasing any needs -see [below](#).
- Visit the health center and get your insurance card.

Attend the International Student Orientation

- Bring your campus map and walk around the whole school; find your classrooms.

- Research information about getting a Social Security Number and getting a job on campus, etc.

Login to student portal

- [Login to myUMassD](#)
- Do you need to enroll in classes, or are you already enrolled?
- Do you need an appointment with your academic advisor before enrolling?
- Use COIN to find your advisor's name and location!
- Purchase your textbooks and school supplies in the [Campus Store](#).

When you have some free time

- Visit the [Library](#) or the [Fitness Center](#).
- Research getting a [driver's license](#).
- Join some school organizations or clubs and be involved in the campus life.
- [Convert metric measurements](#) (including the outside temperature!) to the American standard units of measurement.
- Find out [what's going on at UMass Dartmouth](#) and in the surrounding communities.
- Read up on everything [Massachusetts](#) has to offer.

If you have any questions, please email us at intl_office@umassd.edu.

Household and Personal Needs

Most household items can be purchased at [WalMart](#) or [Target](#); and these stores are close by UMass Dartmouth.

There is another supermarket called [Stop & Shop](#) just past the [Dartmouth Mall](#). The [local bus route 9](#) that stops on campus goes to the Dartmouth Mall; and the shuttle makes a stop directly at Stop & Shop. While Wal-Mart and Target have some food and other supplies as well, Stop & Shop is a large grocery store with a much greater variety of food options. Students who have a kitchen can go there to buy ingredients.

Target, Walmart, and Stop & Shop all sell products for personal daily needs; however, the closest one is Target. You can even walk to Target from campus in about 15 minutes, depending on where your dorm is located.

School Needs/Supplies

Textbooks and most school supplies can be found in our [Campus Store](#). Target and Walmart also sell all kinds of school supplies, such as folders, pens, pencils, highlighters, etc.

If you have any questions about how to get to a particular store, please feel free to email or call us. Our email address is intl_office@umassd.edu; our phone number is 508-910-6633. We will be glad to assist you!

Student Employment

Important information about student employment. We also review this topic at our International Student Orientation.

Students on F-1 or J-1 visas are generally permitted to work **part-time on campus** while attending UMass Dartmouth and maintaining **full-time student status**.

Note:

- In **some instances**, students on an F-1 or J-1 visa are permitted to work off-campus.
- Each kind of employment has its own regulations and limits.
- Campus employment procedures **must be followed** to obtain required paperwork and permission.

Ask questions about anything you don't understand about international student employment. Not following the regulations can have **serious consequences** for your study and your visa status.

Social Security Numbers

You will need to apply for and receive a Social Security Number (SSN) from the U.S. Social Security Administration in order to work at UMass Dartmouth.

Here is information from the Social Security Office regarding an easier process for you to apply for your social security card.

By completing the application with this link :

[Request a Social Security number | SSA](#) , or click on the [SSN QR Code](#), you just have to complete this online application first and **then** visit the office within 45 days of completion of the application to **submit your documents** (passports, visa, I-20, etc.). Your application will already be in the database so you will not have to complete it at the SSO.

In the U.S., your Social Security Number is used in many different kinds of record-keeping systems, so it is important to keep it private and give it only to organizations and persons who are authorized to ask you for it.

- **Learn more:** [Protecting Your Social Security Number](#)

A frequently asked question is: will I pay Social Security taxes?

- **Learn more:** [Social Security/Immigration](#) (Scroll to the section for Students.)

On-Campus Employment

On-campus employment

Where to find a job on campus?

- You can use the self-service system [CORSAIR Jobs](#) to locate a position;
- Or contact your graduate program department about possibility of working as a graduate assistant.

Student Employment Office is responsible for administering the on-campus work programs. Please visit the [Student Employment Office](#) for further information about how to find a job on campus.

Note: International students (F-1, J-1, etc.) are **not** eligible for on-campus Federal Work-Study employment, which is sponsored by the U.S. Federal Government.

How many hours you can work?

On-campus employment is limited to no more than 8 hours per day and **20 hours per week** while school is in session but may be full time (**40 hours**) during vacations, semester break, and summer.

Employment requirements

F-1 visa students

On-campus employment is allowed with F-1 status and **does not require special permission**. You may work on campus as long as you remain in valid F-1 status and meet the following requirements:

- must be in good academic standing and remain enrolled full-time in your program of study
- must have a job offer

- complete the [F-1 Job Offer Letter – On-Campus](#) form and have your supervisor sign it
- after you complete the job offer letter, upload the file via [F-1 Job Offer Letter DSO Signature Request-eform](#) to obtain a signature from the ISSC
- apply for a [Social Security Number \(SSN\)](#).

J-1 visa students

If your J-1 visa is sponsored by an outside agency such as Fulbright, contact the Responsible Officer (RO) at your sponsoring agency for the required work permissions. You do not need to demonstrate unforeseen economic necessity to receive this permission.

On-campus employment is allowed during J-1 status and requires permission of the Responsible Officer (RO) or Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) for the University J-1 program. You may work on campus as long as you remain in valid F-1 status and meet the following requirements:

- must be in good academic standing and remain full-time in your program of study.
- have a Hiring Form from the department where you have been offered work.
- complete the [J-1 student employment authorization](#) letter (bring to the ISSC for a signature along with the Hiring Form)
- [J-1 Social Security letter](#) with a signature by the ISSC
- apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) if you don't already have one

Dependents

Dependents of F-1 visa holders, who hold the **F-2** visa, **may not** work.

Dependents of J-1 visa holders, who hold the **J-2** visa, **may** work in some circumstances, by application through the ISSC and approval from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Please consult the ISSC for help. (See also [J-1 Family Information](#).) If the employment approval is granted, the J-2 family member will need to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN).

Important information

- You will need to **apply for and receive a Social Security Number** from the U.S. Social Security Administration **before** working on campus.

- You may not work after your F-1 or J-1 program is complete (for example, upon graduation, at the end of an authorized employment period such as post completion OPT or Academic Training, or completion of an exchange program).

Travel

Before you travel:

- Contact us immediately if you have an emergency situation requiring you to leave the U.S. temporarily in the middle of your semester.
- If you need to renew your entry visa, additional time will be required, since agencies outside the University will be involved. Please see the ISSC staff for assistance. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RE-ENTER THE U.S. IN TOURIST STATUS.**
- See special concerns regarding renewal of visas subject to [Administrative Processing/Security Clearance](#)
- If you have changed your visa status, you will need a new entry visa in the new status.

Time to Travel

The most likely times for international students to travel, either inside or outside the U.S., are

- **Semester Break/Intersession/March spring break/Summer Vacation**

For information on the dates for breaks and intersession, please see the [Academic Calendar](#).

Traveling Inside the U.S.

When taking a domestic travel, please take the following documents with you:

- a valid passport
- a current, original I-20 signed

See this [Additional travel information](#) for other tips.

Traveling Outside the U.S.

Traveling on F-1 Visa

To travel outside the U.S. students in F-1 status, please prepare these documents to re-enter the U.S.:

- passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your date of **return**
- valid F-1 visa
- I-20 with travel signature (**valid for 12 months**) - To obtain a travel signature, please complete the [I-20/DS-2019 Reprint Request-eform](#).
- Recommended: an unofficial transcript copy, proof of funding, proof of enrollment

Traveling on J-1 Visa

If you are traveling outside the U.S. in J-1 status, please prepare these documents to re-enter the U.S.:

- passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your date of **return**
- valid J-1 visa
- DS-2019 with travel signature (**valid for 12 months**) - To obtain a travel signature, please complete the [I-20/DS-2019 Reprint Request-eform](#).
- if applicable, approved [Application/Authorization for Academic Training](#)

Traveling During F-1 OPT

If you plan to travel during the F-1 OPT period, please prepare these documents to re-enter the U.S.:

- passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your date of **return**
- valid F-1 visa
- I-20 with travel signature (**only valid for 6 months on OPT**) - To obtain a travel signature, please complete the [I-20/DS-2019 Reprint Request-eform](#).
- EAD card
- a letter from your employer verifying employment
- proof of payment (called "pay stubs") by your employer in recent 6 week period

Note: We do not advise students awaiting approval of OPT to travel outside the U.S. Please consult the ISSC if you have special circumstances.

Traveling to Canada

- Citizens of some countries need visas to **enter** Canada, in addition to all your other paperwork for entering and studying in the U.S. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
- Even if you have an expired entry visa, you may still travel to Canada, Mexico, and the [adjacent islands](#) and return to the U.S. by using Automatic Revalidation, as long as the rest of your documentation is current and your visit to those places is not longer than **30 days**. Visit the Traveling To Canada link on the right.
- **IMPORTANT** – If you are planning to use Automatic Revalidation, please visit the International Student & Scholar Center (ISSC) so we can review your paperwork *before* you travel.
- Automatic Revalidation **does not apply** to citizens of **Iran, Syria, and Sudan**. [Check for updates to this list](#).
- Students who have been denied a visa renewal at a U.S. Consulate in Canada are **not** eligible to use Automatic Revalidation, but must return to their home country.
- [Find Out If You Need a Visa](#)
- [Visa Office in New York](#)
- [It's All About Canada](#)

Forms and Instructions

Processing times

Please allow 3-5 business days for eform processing by the ISSC.

Academic Program

Reduced Course Load (RCL)

Students who need approval for a RCL should print the [Reduced Course Load Form](#) (PDF) and ask your academic advisor to complete it. Then you should upload the signed form via [Reduced course Load Request-eform](#) for review and approval by the ISSC.

Transfer Out Request

All F-1 International students requesting a transfer from UMassD to another school, please use the eform below to request a transfer. You will find 3 different options upon opening the eform. Please choose the option that fits your situation and upload the required information requested.

Here is the link to the eform: [F-1 Transfer Out-eform](#).

Program Extension

If the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019 (for J-1 student only) is approaching and you are applying for a program extension, you should:

1. Print and fill out the [Program Extension Request](#) (PDF). Have your academic advisor, and graduate program director/department chair sign the form
2. Fill out the [Declaration and Certification of Finances](#) (PDF)
3. **If** your funding comes from a sponsor, please fill out the [Affidavit of Support](#) (PDF)
4. Prepare the original bank statement or official bank letter
5. Upload the required documents via [Program Extension-eform](#)

Financial Documentation

1. [What are Acceptable and Unacceptable Financial Sources?](#) (PDF)
2. [Declaration and Certification of Finances](#) (PDF)
3. [Affidavit of Support](#) (PDF)

New Form I-20/DS-2019

If your I-20/DS2019 form is **lost, damaged, stolen, or updated**, please complete the [I-20/DS-2019 Reprint Request-eform](#).

If you need to obtain a new **travel signature**, please complete the [I-20/DS-2019 Request-eform](#).

If you are requesting an I-20 for a **dependent** (spouse or child), please follow this [F-2 \(Dependent\) I-20 Request-eform](#) and upload all the required documentation.

Please note: We are implementing a new way to obtain your electronic I-20. It is through Document Management on our [UMassVIP website](#). Please follow this [Guide to Accessing Form I-20](#) (PDF) or follow this [video tutorial](#) to help obtain your I-20/DS2019 from the UMassVIP website.

Returning from Leave of Absence (LOA)

F-1 International students returning from an approved Leave of Absence, please fill out this [Return from LOA eform](#) to request a new I-20 prior to resuming your studies at UMass Dartmouth.

Employment

Job offer letter

When you are applying for a Social Security Number, you will need a job offer letter signed by your employer and the ISSC advisor. Once you have filled out your portion of the form and your supervisor has signed the form, you have to bring it to the ISSC for a signature. The Social Security Office is no longer accepting electronic signatures so the signatures have to be original.

On-campus Job

If you receive an on-campus job offer, you will need to have your potential on-campus employer complete the [F-1 Job Offer Letter-On Campus](#) (PDF).

Off-campus Job

If your first employment experience is with Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT), you will need a completed [F-1 Job Offer Letter-Off Campus](#) signed by your off-campus supervisor.

CPT (Curricular Practical Training)

All documentation for applying for CPT must be submitted electronically via the [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)-eform](#).

OPT (Optional Practical Training)

When applying for OPT, use the [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)-eform](#) to upload all of your documentation. Please read the [CPT & OPT information](#) page for further instructions on how to apply for OPT.

EAD Card

After you receive your EAD, please upload it via [Upload EAD-eform](#).

SEVP Portal Reset

If you did not receive the SEVP Portal Account setup email and

- it is **AFTER** your OPT start date,

- the link to set up your account expired, or
- you were locked out due to too many login attempts,

please fill out this [SEVP Portal Reset Request-eform](#) and we will reset the SEVP Portal. But please be aware that we can no longer reset passwords. You have access to do so on the [SEVP Portal homepage](#). We cannot reset portal prior to your OPT start date as the SEVP does not send you the first link to create an account until on or after the start date on your EAD.

STEM OPT reporting

Each STEM OPT student must complete and submit the validation every 6 months to confirm the information on the SEVP record is accurate, and complete and submit the self-evaluation every 12 months to describe the progress of the training experience. To complete the validations and self-evaluations, please use the [STEM Extension Reporting eForm](#).

Others

Authorization for document pick-up

Please complete this [Authorization for Document Pick up-eform](#) if you want someone to pick up a document for you.

Registry of Motor Vehicles support letter

If you are not eligible for a Social Security Number (SSN) and need a support letter to apply for a Social Security Denial Letter or a U.S. driver's license, please fill out the [Registry of Motor Vehicles Support Letter-eform](#).

New Immigration Document

If you received a new passport or visa, please use this [New Immigration Document-eform](#) to upload a copy of your new document.

Eship Global

To create an shipping label, please [create a FedEx Express label](#). We will then print and ship as soon as we are able.