

## **DOCUMENTATION FOR NON-CITIZENS' RETURN TO U.S. AFTER INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

The documentation required for reentering the United States varies depending on the foreign national's immigration status. Following is general information about the necessary documentation, but it is **not a substitute for contacting the Office of Global Citizenship about your travel plans!**

Upon request, the Assistant Counsel for Global Affairs can issue you an employment letter to facilitate your re-entry into the United States.

### **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) DURING F-1 STUDENT STATUS**

#### **J-1 VISA HOLDERS**

#### **H-1B VISA HOLDERS**

#### **LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS**

### **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) DURING F-1 STUDENT STATUS**

In order to return from travel abroad, F-1 students with OPT should be prepared to present:

- Current Passport valid for 6 months after the date of re-entry
- Valid F-1 Student Visa affixed to Passport
- Form I-20 endorsed for travel and signed by your Designated School Official (DSO) within the last 6 months
- Proof of SEVIS fee payment
- Current Employment Letter from the University including your position and salary

If your F-1 visa has expired, you must visit a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad to renew your F-1 visa. Please be aware that it can be difficult to receive a new F-1 visa during OPT.

One exception to the requirement for a current valid F-1 visa in your passport is the "Automatic Revalidation," which allows some F-1 visa holders who have traveled for less than 30 days to Canada, Mexico, or an island other than Cuba adjacent to the United States to return to the U.S. with an expired F-1 visa in their passport. Consult the Assistant Counsel for Global Affairs ([ajcolber\[at\]sewanee.edu](mailto:ajcolber@sewanee.edu)) to confirm whether this is an option for your travel.

#### **J-1 VISA HOLDERS**

In order to return from travel abroad, J-1 scholars should be prepared to present:

- Current Passport valid for 6 months after the date of re-entry
- Valid J-1 Visa affixed to Passport
- Form DS-2019 signed by the program sponsor within the last year
- Current Employment Letter from the University including your position and salary

If your J-1 visa has expired, you must visit a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad to renew your visa. One exception to the requirement for a current valid J-1 visa in your passport is the “Automatic Revalidation,” which allows some J-1 visa holders who have traveled for less than 30 days to Canada, Mexico, or an island other than Cuba adjacent to the United States to return to the U.S. with an expired J-1 visa in their passport. Consult the Assistant Counsel for Global Affairs ([ajcolber\[at\]sewanee.edu](mailto:ajcolber@sewanee.edu)) to confirm whether this is an option for your travel.

### **H-1B VISA HOLDERS**

In order to return from travel abroad, H-1B visa holders should be prepared to present:

- Current Passport valid for 6 months after the date of re-entry
- Valid H-1B Visa affixed to Passport
- Form I-797 H-1B Approval Notice
- Current Employment Letter from the University including your position and salary

If you do not have an H-1B visa in your passport or your H-1B visa has expired, you must visit a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad to renew your visa.

### **LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS**

In order to return to the U.S. from travel abroad, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) should be prepared to present:

- Current passport; and
- Valid Green Card (or Form I-551 endorsement in passport)

Please note that it is possible for an LPR to abandon his or her status, and the immigration authorities may assume that is the case after a lengthy absence. A lengthy absence could also affect your eligibility to become a U.S. citizen.

If you are an LPR and plan to be abroad for more than six months consecutively, please contact the Assistant Counsel for Global Affairs ([ajcolber\[at\]sewanee.edu](mailto:ajcolber@sewanee.edu)) *as soon* as you know that is a possibility.

**DISCLAIMER:** This information is intended to inform generally, not to advise in individual cases. Areas of law are rapidly changing. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of State regularly change regulations and processing and filing procedures. For legal advice seek the assistance of an immigration attorney.