

What to Expect When Traveling

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Overview

When you re-enter the United States, you should expect more thorough screening procedures at airports and other ports of entry. Your identity and the validity of your visa and immigration document I-20 or DS-2019 will be checked against U.S. law enforcement databases.

You may also be subject to in-depth questioning about your immigration status, travel history, the purpose of your visit, background, and other issues, and, potentially, inspection of personal belongings and luggage, photocopying of documents, etc. You may be delayed by a “secondary inspection” if you do not have proper documents, had some previous immigration problem or error, or if you simply fall under certain criteria or circumstances.

During these entry procedures, it is best to be honest, patient, and courteous with all U.S. government officials, even if they are not so with you. Remain patient and answer all questions clearly. If you do not understand a question, make sure that you ask for clarification before answering. Omission or misrepresentation of information can cause serious problems.

US-VISIT

US-VISIT is a “check-in system” which collects biographic information and biometric identifiers on all foreign nationals applying for visas and entering the U.S. US-VISIT entry procedures are currently in place at U.S. airports and seaports with international arrivals and in the secondary inspection areas of U.S. land border ports of entry.

Upon arrival at a port of entry where US-VISIT is in place, you are required to comply with the procedures. Procedures involve photographing and digital fingerprinting. Your information will be stored and checked against various national security and law enforcement databases.

For more information, refer to [US-VISIT](#) ^[2] on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security web site.

Traveling Within the U.S. (Without Exit and Reentry)

When you are in the Ann Arbor area, we do not advise carrying your passport and I-20/DS-2019 with you. You should, however, keep with you a print-out of your electronic Form I-94 downloaded from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home> [3]. Keep your original documents in a safe and secure location. We strongly recommend that you make photocopies of these important documents and store them in a different place from your original documents. Keep your original immigration documents in a safe and secure location to avoid loss or theft.

When you are traveling in the U.S. (some distance from Ann Arbor), you should bring the following original documents on your trip:

- Passport
- Paper or print-out of electronic Most Recent [Form I-94](#) [4] (please click on the link for instructions)
- I-20 or DS-2019

A little-known regulation exists which says that international visitors to the U.S. must carry their “registration document” with them. The “registration document” for F-1 students and J-1 students and scholars is the Form I-94. You should always carry a printout of your electronic Form I-94 downloaded from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/> [5]. With increased security precautions, particularly at airports, you should ensure you are in compliance.

Bringing Money into the U.S.

When entering to the U.S., some students choose to bring large sums of money with them, in cash, money order, or travelers' checks. Any amounts of money exceeding \$10,000 maximum must be declared in advance on the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Declaration Form 6059B.

This blue form is given to incoming travelers on the airplane. It must be filled, one per family, correctly and truthfully. See a [Sample Form 6059B](#) [6].

If you do not declare your money, the penalties for non-compliance can be severe. Your money might be taken away, in which case you will be required to provide a written explanation, your case will be adjudicated, and you might have to pay a fine.

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection authorizing regulation states that “...all persons, baggage and merchandise arriving in the customs territory of the United States from places outside thereof are liable to inspection and random exams. Upon entry into the United States from a foreign country, you may be selected for an additional examination and experience a slight delay in your customs processing.”

For more information, refer to the [U.S. Customs and Border Patrol](#) [7] web site and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) [8].

Special Registration or NSEERS Procedures - No Longer Operational

When you entered the U.S., you may have been required to follow “special registration” or National

Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) procedures. If you have undergone NSEERS registration, you received an extra “hand written” number notation on the Form I-94 issued upon arrival, called a fingerprint identification number (FIN), and special walkaway materials instructing you to depart the U.S. through a port that has been authorized for NSEERS departure control.

Effective April 28, 2011, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) removed all countries designated for participation in NSEERS. The regulation remains in place; however, DHS does not currently designate any country, nor does it require any foreign national to participate in the system. Nonimmigrants previously required by NSEERS to submit to special registration procedures and depart from specified ports are relieved of these obligations.

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/what-expect-when-traveling>

Links

- [1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/do-i-have-pay-i-901-sevis-fee>
- [2] <https://epic.org/privacy/surveillance/spotlight/0705/editorial.html>
- [3] <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>
- [4] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/i-94>
- [5] <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/>
- [6] <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/sample-declaration-form>
- [7] <https://www.cbp.gov/>
- [8] <https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/list>