

Executive Order Update from the International Center

Dear International Student, Scholar, Faculty or Staff Member,

The new White House administration has recently published several executive orders related to immigration issues, including one titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." This email is intended to address and clarify some issues and questions that may be of concern to you as an international student, scholar, faculty or staff member. There is much we do not yet know, but we will keep you informed as we learn more.

Many of the provisions of the Executive Order relate to admission to the U.S. as a refugee. These particular provisions do not apply to your status as non-immigrants on F, J, H, TN, E, or O visas.

However, some parts of the Executive Order apply more broadly and so may affect you. This includes new restrictions and changes to the visa-issuance process and entry procedures to the U.S.

For at least 90 days from January 27, 2017, citizens ("nationals") of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen will not be issued visas and will not be able to enter the U.S. (This includes dual citizens of one of these countries and another non-U.S. country). The details of that process are currently unclear and, as with other issues, may change.

The Executive Order also requires a review of the visa issuance process, including screening standards and procedures. As part of that review, within 30 days the Department of Homeland Security must compile a list of countries that do not currently provide the information about their citizens (which could include criminal records, etc.) that will be needed for the new screening process. The countries on that list will then have 60 days (that is, until the end of April, 2017), to begin providing the information needed for the screening. If they are not willing or able to do that, their citizens will not be issued visas and will not be able to enter the United States. We will not know which countries will be on that list until the report is issued. It is also possible that any new restrictions that could block entry to the US will be imposed without any transition period and that additional countries could be added to the list.

Also, going forward, all visa applicants will require an in-person interview, so visa wait times may increase. The redesigned visa issuance process may include new questions and other new processes, further increasing wait times.

Finally, the Executive Order instructs the Department of Homeland Security to expedite the completion and implementation of a biometric entry-exit system for all travelers to the U.S.

RECOMMENDATIONS

* It is very important to remember that it is not yet clear how this and other Executive Orders will actually be implemented. The International Center will continue to monitor this situation and update the University community as we learn more. Please watch for these communications and read them carefully.

* For students, scholars, faculty, and staff who are citizens ("nationals") of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen (including those with dual citizenship of another non-U.S. country), you should understand that if you leave the United States-even in an emergency- you will not be able to return during the aforementioned 90-day period, and possibly longer. We encourage you to speak with an adviser in the IC, prior to making any travel plans.

* For citizens of other countries, if you travel outside the U.S., you should expect increased visa delays and be aware of the risk that entry rules change while you are travelling. Please speak with an adviser should you need to renew your visa or if you have specific questions pertaining to your travel.

* As always, continue to maintain your immigration status and to follow the advice you receive from the IC.

The IC and the university remain committed to ensuring the well-being, safety, and success of international students and scholars and employees at U-M. We will continue to advocate on the behalf of all international students, scholars, and employees for immigration and visa policies that facilitate your success in the United States. We will also support you by ensuring that you have information and resources to prepare for changes in the visa application process and other immigration policies and procedures. During this challenging and uncertain time, please take care of yourself and continue to focus on the positive reasons you came to U-M.

We are glad that you are here.

The International Center

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