

It is your responsibility to maintain your F-1 immigration status

Students in F-1 status are responsible for learning, understanding, and complying with U.S. federal laws and regulations governing the F visa.

Failure to do so will violate your legal status in the United States and may have serious consequences.

Important Note

This information is subject to change without notice. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your legal status in the United States, it is important for you to visit the International Education & Programs office (Sisson Hall 136) and speak to an advisor.

International Education & Programs

The Office of International Education & Programs at SUNY Potsdam is committed to assisting both newly admitted and currently enrolled students from the international community.

We are here for you!

Whether it's an immigration issue, academic difficulties, or you just need some advice, we are here to assist you in any way we can. We welcome you to the SUNY Potsdam community and hope your experience here is both enriching and rewarding.



Read your Campus E-mail

Stay informed about changing immigration regulations! While it is the responsibility of the Office of International Education & Programs to keep SUNY Potsdam international students informed about changing federal immigration regulations, it is your responsibility to **STAY INFORMED** by **checking your e-mail** and campus mail regularly.

F-1 Immigration Basics

What you need to know to maintain your F-1 Status

**SUNY Potsdam
International Education & Programs
(IEP)**

Tel: 315-267-2507

Fax: 315-267-4890

136 Sisson Hall

international@potdam.edu

www.potsdam.edu/academics/international



Your F-1 Status Explained

Your responsibilities include the following:

Keep Your Passport Valid at All Times - You must have a valid passport in your possession. For information on renewing your passport, visit the web site of your country's embassy or consulate in the United States: www.usembassy.gov

Report Address Changes within 10 days to the Office of International Education & Programs (IEP) - U.S. federal regulations require all F-1 students to report a change of address directly to IEP within 10 days of the address change.

Maintain a Full Course of Study Each Semester - U.S. federal regulations [8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)] require you to pursue a full course of study each fall and spring semester until graduation or transfer to a new school.

Obtain PRIOR Authorization from IEP BEFORE Dropping Below a Full Course of Study - There are very limited exceptions to the full course of study rule. Those reasons include; academic difficulty, medical condition, or completion of study, and there are strict criteria for each. You must obtain PRIOR authorization from IEP. After obtaining this authorization, you may then drop the course(s).

Report Changes in Program to International Education & Programs (IEP) - Students must notify IEP whenever there is a change in their academic program, program dates or level of study.

Maintain Required Health and Accident Insurance - F-1 students must have IEP-approved health and accident insurance for themselves and any F-2 dependents throughout their stay in the United States.

Abide by U.S. Federal Employment Regulations - F-1 students may work no more than 20 hours per week on campus when classes are in session [8 CFR 214.2(f)(9)]. These 20 hours include the work you do for an assistantship if you have one. You cannot work off-campus (including credit-bearing internships off-campus) without PRIOR authorization from IEP and the U.S. federal government. Opportunities for off-campus work are limited.

Bring Your SEVIS I-20 to IEP Prior to Traveling Outside the United States - Students should bring their Form I-20 to IEP prior to traveling outside the United States to see if an updated IEP signature is required. A new Form I-20 may need to be issued. If you will be traveling AND applying for a new visa, you will also want to request a letter of certification from the IEP, to verify that you are a full-time student.

Notify the IEP of Any Accompanying Dependents, or Dependents Who Will Join You Later - IEP prepares visa documents for any dependents of F-1 students who will enter the United States on F-2 visas. IEP is required to report biographical data on F-2 dependents to the U.S. federal government.

Obtain Transfer Authorization Prior to Leaving Potsdam - Students who plan to transfer to another college or university in the United States must inform the IEP of their final choice by completing a "SEVIS Release Form" so that the IEP can perform the "transfer out" in SEVIS and designate the school to which you will transfer.

Apply for an Extension Prior to the I-20 Expiration Date - Students must apply for an extension BEFORE their Form I-20 expires if they intend to stay at SUNY Potsdam and cannot complete their program by the Form I-20 expiration date. Requests for an extension may be submitted at any time up to thirty days prior to the expiration date on the form. You will need to obtain the "Academic Advisor's Recommendation Form for Extension of Stay".

Ending Your Studies at Potsdam Unexpectedly? Report Your Departure Date and Reason to IEP - Periodically, students leave the university early or unexpectedly due to a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include early graduation, leave of absence, withdrawal, or termination. U.S. federal regulations require F-1 students to inform the Office of International Education & Programs if they plan to leave the university before the expiration date of their Form I-20 as well as the reason for doing so.

Depart the U.S. within the 60 Day (F-1) Grace Period - Students in F-1 status must depart the United States within 60 days of the I-20 ending date OR their program end date, whichever is earlier. The exceptions to this rule include those who have applied for Optional Practical Training, are transferring to a new school, or have applied for a change of status with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Additional Resources

International Education & Programs (IEP)

136 Sisson Hall

international@potdam.edu

<http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/international>

Phone: (315) 267-2507

Fax: (315) 267-4890

**U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement –
Maintaining Your Status Fact Sheet**

ENGLISH-

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/SEVISFactSheet.htm>

SPANISH

http://www.ice.gov/sevis/factsheet/sevis_spanish_fs.htm

JAPANESE –

http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevis_japanese_fs.pdf

CHINESE -

http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevis_chinese_fs.pdf

KOREAN -

http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/sevis_korean_fs.pdf