



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

International Student and Scholar Services COVID-19 UPDATES

OIED will continue to provide all immigration services for all international students and scholars and FAMU departments remotely beginning Wednesday, March 18. Advisors are available during normal business hours for questions via email or to schedule phone or Zoom appointments. Please scan and submit applications for CPT, OPT, STEM OPT, I-20 extensions, travel signatures, etc., to your OIED advisor via email. For current official coronavirus updates, visit famuedu/coronavirus.

I am a newly admitted international student and plan to start my academic program at FAMU in the Fall 2020 semester. Is OIED issuing immigration documents (Forms I-20 for F-1 students or DS-2019 for J-1 students) for the upcoming fall semester?

Yes, if you are not able to attend during Fall 2020 due to U.S. Embassy closures, you can explore an online coursework option with FAMU until the COVID-19 situation improves. We can also advise you on deferring your admission to Spring 2021 if needed.

How would my immigration status be affected by FAMU moving to online classes?

Due to safety precautions related to COVID-19, your status will not be affected. Please continue to be enrolled full time and follow full-time enrollment exception regulations if needed. OIED is working closely with SEVP (Student Exchange and Visitor Program) which oversees SEVIS in order to ensure that these courses still count towards your full-time enrollment.

Please refer to the following latest guidelines issued by SEVP in response to COVID-19:

Students: Requirements and Best Practices

Maintain status: It is important that F and M students maintain their nonimmigrant student status, even during emergency events. This means you must continue to take all the necessary actions to remain in status, to the extent possible under the circumstances. You must also communicate with your designated school official (DSO) about the emergency plans on your campus, including any changes to your address.

I am a student on OPT, what has been the latest SEVP guidance with regards to students on OPT?

SEVS advises students to communicate with employers: If you are participating in practical training, work with your employer to maintain practical training agreements. If changes have been made to your workplace environment, SEVP encourages you to consult with your employer to seek alternative ways to maintain training agreements, such as teleworking or other arrangements. Please contact OIED for more specific OPT related questions.

I am a current student who would like to return home due to COVID-19 until the situation improves. What do I do?

Be cautious traveling: Refer to guidance from the CDC, U.S. Department of State at <https://www.state.gov>, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at <https://www.dhs.gov/coronavirus> for specific port-of-entry screening processes, as well as any travel restrictions. Please note that you may not be able to reenter the U.S. or return to your home country due to the temporary border closures related to COVID-

19. OIED highly advises students not to travel until the situation improves as you may not be able to reenter the U.S. if the U.S. borders are closed due to COVID-19 in the future.

If I am issued a new I-20/DS-2019 immigration document, how will I receive it?

Due to COVID-19 OIED is emailing copies of I-20 forms to newly admitted international students. SEVIS has recently allowed schools to send scanned versions of physically signed Forms I-20 or electronically signed Forms I-20 to students.

NOTE: Currently, there has not been additional guidance given in regards to the emailing of DS-2019 forms. Therefore, those documents will have to be mailed once OIED reopens and/or more guidance is issued.

I have heard that visa services at U.S. consulates/embassies have been suspended. What if I can't get my visa in time to attend FAMU?

OIED continues to monitor the situation within the U.S. Department of State regarding U.S. consular services around the world. U.S. embassies and consulates will provide consular services when conditions in each particular country allow for a safe visa application process for both applicants and consular personnel. The situation will vary country by country, so we encourage people to carefully monitor news on the website of the consular post where they intend to make their visa application for current information.

OIED will continue to process I-20 and DS-2019 immigration documents and provide allowable copies to students as soon as we receive the required materials from the student and the academic department, in anticipation that visa appointments will become available again before students need to arrive in the U.S. for the fall semester. If you are an international student who is unable to come to campus due to visa delays, you may have the option to defer your admission to another semester or enroll online at FAMU.

If you are currently attending a U.S. school and have F-1 or J-1 student status, you may be able to transfer your visa sponsorship from your current school to FAMU. Students who transfer their F-1 or J-1 student status to FAMU **do not** need to leave the U.S. to maintain their current U.S. immigration status. If you transfer your immigration status to FAMU and the visa in your passport has expired, it does not impact your U.S. immigration status, as long as you remain **inside** the U.S. A new visa will only be needed if you travel outside the U.S.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON COVID-19

Florida A&M University is carefully monitoring developments related to the Coronavirus. This is a rapidly evolving situation, and we will provide updated information and guidance as it becomes available. Our highest priority remains the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff.

About the Coronavirus

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as SARS. COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that has not previously been identified in humans. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with common coronavirus diagnosis.

For the latest information on the outbreak, visit [CDC Official Updates](#)

What are the Symptoms? For confirmed cases, symptoms have ranged from infected people having few to no symptoms to people becoming severely ill. Symptoms appear within 2 through 14 days and can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

What areas are currently affected? For the latest information on cases in Florida, visit the [Florida Department of Health](#).

How is COVID-19 transmitted? The virus causing COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person, according to the CDC. Someone who is sick with the virus can spread the illness to others. The virus spreads through small droplets from the nose or mouth, including when an individual coughs or sneezes.

What does exposure mean? According to the Centers for Disease Control, exposure is defined as being within 6 feet (or 2 meters) of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time (such as caring for or visiting a patient) or having unprotected direct contact with a patient, such as being coughed on or touching a used tissue with a bare hand.

How is it prevented? The best way to prevent infection is avoid exposure to the virus. As a reminder, the CDC recommends everyday actions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

For more information about handwashing, see [CDC's handwashing site](#)

Do you have any recommended information on cleaning and disinfection?

The CDC has provided an easy-to-read printable on workplace, school and home cleaning. The CDC has also provided information for facilities with suspected and confirmed cases and recommendations for homes where a person has a suspected or confirmed case.

What is the difference between self-quarantine and self-isolation?

Quarantining in general means the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease but are not yet symptomatic from others who have not been exposed to prevent the possible spread of the disease. Self-isolation means the separation of a person or group known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious from those who are not infected to prevent spread of the disease.

I have come in contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19. What should I do?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends self-quarantine or self-isolation only for individuals who were in close contact with a case of COVID-19. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on). If you were in close contact with a case of COVID-19 or during the next 14 days feel sick with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, please seek medical advice and call ahead before going to the doctor's office or emergency room. Also, please avoid contact with others, do not travel while sick and avoid using public transportation.

If you did not come in close contact with a case of COVID-19, here are some reminders on how to stay healthy. Please remember to avoid close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching your face, stay home when you are sick, clean frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning spray or wipes and wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Visit the links for more information:

<https://www.nafsa.org/regulatory-information/sevp-covid-19-guidance-sources#sevpcovid19faq>

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/covid-19-resources>