

Automatic Extension of Visa Validity

For Aliens in F and J Status

“Automatic Extension” is also known as “Automatic Revalidation.”

Definition

Students & dependents in F or J status may, under certain conditions, re-enter the United States with an expired visa after traveling solely to the contiguous territories of Mexico, Canada, or an adjacent island (see list*) if the travel is for 30 days or less.

Individuals NOT Eligible

The automatic extension rule does NOT apply to nationals of countries the U.S. has identified as sponsors of terrorism. As of 04/17/2009 the four countries identified as sponsoring terrorism are: Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria. Although Iraq, Libya and North Korea are not on the list, students from these countries are strongly urged not to attempt to use this benefit.

In addition, aliens who apply for a new visa while abroad are not eligible to re-enter the U.S. under Automatic Extension of Visa Validity.

Likewise, individuals who are out of status in the U.S. or whose visa has been canceled are not eligible for this benefit.

Most port of entry officials will require a current valid visa for Mexican and Caribbean students to re-enter the U.S. if coming from their home country.

How to Receive this Benefit

An individual in F or J status is eligible for this "automatic extension of visa" provided the individual:

- 1) has not been absent from the U.S. for more than 30 days and was solely in a contiguous territory or adjacent island (see list*);
- 2) has maintained and intends to resume his/her current status;
- 3) is in possession of a valid passport, unless exempt from passport requirements. (Individuals carrying new passports issued from within the U.S. to replace an old passport that contains the original nonimmigrant visa may qualify for automatic visa extension **only if** they have the old passport in their possession.);
- 4) has not applied for a new visa while abroad;
- 5) is not from a country the U.S. has identified as sponsoring terrorism;
- 6) presents a current, valid I-94 (so you must keep it when you leave the U.S), and
- 7) presents a valid I-20 (if in F status) or valid DS-2019 (if in J status) which shows an unexpired period of authorized stay and has been signed by an international student advisor for travel.

***Islands Included**

Adjacent islands include Saint Pierre, Miquelon, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, the Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Martinique, and other British, French, and Netherlands territories or possessions in or bordering on the Caribbean Sea. Cuba is **NOT** included.

Individuals that changed to F or J status while in the U.S.

An individual who entered the U.S. in a classification other than F or J, but whose status was subsequently changed to F or J may be eligible for "automatic extension and conversion of visa" (whether expired or not) to the changed classification as long as the above criteria are met.

Other Nonimmigrants

Individuals in many other non-immigrant classifications may also be eligible for automatic extension of their visa. Please consult an international student advisor for details.

Obtaining a Visa for Travel to Other Countries

Note: when traveling to or passing in transit through **any** country you may be required to obtain a visa to enter. Please contact directly the appropriate embassy or consulate of the country you intend to visit for more information. Plan accordingly for application processing times if a visa is required.

Consulate General of Canada

Immigration Section
600 Renaissance Center, Suite 1100
Detroit, MI 48243-1798
Phone: (313) 567-2085
Fax: 313.567.2125
<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/detroit>

Mexico Consulate

1600 Baltimore, Suite 100
Kansas City, MO 64108
Phone: (816) 556-0800
Fax: (816) 556-0900
You should call them for details.

A list of websites for embassies of other countries in the U.S. may be found at:

<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm>

Contact information for consulate offices of other countries in the U.S. may be found at:

<http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/>

Obtaining a New U.S. Visa in Canada or Mexico

If traveling to Canada or Mexico for the purpose of obtaining a new U.S. entry visa, an appointment with the U.S. consulate is required. Follow the instructions on the appropriate website:

To book an appointment in Mexico: <http://www.visa-usa.com.mx/determineTCN.aspx>

To book an appointment in Canada: <http://www.nvars.com/>

CAUTION! If you apply for a new visa and it is denied, you will not be allowed to re-enter the U.S. under Automatic Extension of Visa. Even if a new visa is granted, some aliens will receive only a single entry visa which will be immediately used up when re-entering the U.S.

Reference: 8CFR 214.1 (b) (1) and (2); INA 101(b)(5); 22CFR 41.112(d)

http://travel.state.gov/visa/laws/telegrams/telegrams_1441.html#