



Embassy of India Student Hub Advisory [Updated 27 March 2020]

Following the growing cases of COVID-19, US universities have taken measures to shut down on-campus operations and/or move classes online. The Embassy of India/India Student Hub has the following advisory for Indian students who may be impacted by these decisions. Please note that this advisory is based on information available as of **27 March 2020**. The [WHO](#), [CDC](#), Government of India [Ministry of Health and Family Welfare](#) (for India-specific updates), and your universities are the best sources for the latest information in this rapidly evolving situation. Further India Student Hub updates will be issued as needed.

Please read this advisory carefully. For emergencies, continue to contact the [24x7 Consular Emergency helplines](#) at Embassy or Consulates as per your present location. In addition, to help support Indian students during the COVID-19 crisis, the Embassy of India Student Hub has established a [non-emergency Peer Support Line](#). Details for these are given below:

1. If you are staying on-campus and are asked to vacate, check with your university about retaining on-campus housing. If your petition is not accepted, consult with your university and/or with your network on how to find alternate accommodations;
2. If your university or program is shutting down on-campus services, check with your university or program on how to avail your university's health services, student health insurance, international student services, and any other essential service(s) that may be impacted;
3. The Embassy of India/India Student Hub can provide information on temporary emergency resources. The Embassy has partnered with and is grateful to members of the Indian community who have made these resources available for Indian students in an emergency. During this extraordinary situation created by the pandemic, our commitment remains steadfast to ensure welfare of our students in the best possible manner within available resources and with the support of the US government;
4. The Embassy of India is in touch with the US government, which is monitoring the implications that this evolving situation may have for international students. Please note:
 - The Student and Exchange Visitor Program ('SEVP') has confirmed that international students can temporarily engage in distance-learning, either from within the U.S. or outside the country, in light of COVID-19, without any penalty to their visa status;
 - In addition, for most cases, SEVP noted that the five-month temporary absence rule will not apply for students who remain in Active status. Read the full SEVP guidance here: (<https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2020/COVID-19FAQ.pdf>);
 - The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides updated information on visa status and CPT/OPT applications/extensions at <https://www.ice.gov/covid19>.
 - If you, a relative, or a friend were admitted on a visa that may be expiring (and were not admitted as an F-1 student for [Duration of Status](#)), you may need to take action to extend the authorized stay. We are given to understand that DHS is currently not in a position to offer a blanket extension of visa cases. However, they are working hard to quickly process urgent

requests from individuals. We have been asked to advise Indian nationals whose visa status may be expiring (for any reason) to apply online as early as possible through USCIS. You may direct yourselves/family members to <https://www.uscis.gov/visit-united-states/extend-your-stay> for specific information regarding extensions of status for individuals who are unable to depart as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Official campus advisories and your Designated Student Official (DSO) and/or program coordinator can also provide more information or clarification on questions relating to F-1/J-1 students or their dependents.

5. Please avoid all non-essential domestic or international travel, as recommended by the WHO and CDC:

- For official advisories on domestic travel within the US or internationally, consult the US [Department of State](#), [US Transportation and Security Administration](#), and the relevant local and state government websites;
- Kindly note that India has suspended all scheduled international commercial passenger flights until 1830 hrs GMT on [14 April 2020](#). In addition, all domestic passenger flights within India are also suspended until 14 April 2020. This action has been taken in the interest of public health and safety of all Indian citizens. The latest Government of India travel advisories can be found at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>;
- Remain in contact with your DSO for information on any possible impact international travel may have on your F-1 or J-1 status.

We again request you to avoid travel for two reasons:

- a. to protect you from exposure to COVID-19, and
- b. to prevent you from being a source of transmission to other people/communities.

We will update the information as soon as commercial flights to India resume. Meanwhile, if you need any support, please do reach out to us using the information below.

6. Please practice social distancing (staying at home as much as possible, except to access essential services) and maintain a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people to minimise the transmission of COVID-19. If you have flu-like symptoms, please self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days. Consult the [WHO](#) and [CDC](#) websites for further information about the disease, preventative measures, and what to do if you experience any symptoms.

This is an unprecedented situation, but we can successfully manage it by making decisions with a calm mind. Please take prudent health precautions and carefully review information and travel advisories.

To receive the latest Embassy of India Student Hub advisory(s), [register here](#): https://www.indianembassyusa.gov.in/Indian_Students_Registration

Contact Information

For **peer support and advice**, contact the **India Student Hub's COVID-19 Peer Support Line** at (414)-404-6342 or (414)-40-INDIA (11 AM - 5 PM EDT daily), or by email at: covid19@ishubus.com

For **emergency consular services by jurisdiction**, please visit:

Residents of Bermuda, Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia	https://indianembassyusa.gov.in/ cons4.washington@mea.gov.in Tel: 202-213-1364 and 202-262-0375
Residents of Alabama, Florida, Georgia,	https://www.indiainatlanta.gov.in/

Mississippi, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virgin Islands	cons.atlanta@mea.gov.in Tel: 404-910-7919 and 404-924-9876
Residents of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin	https://www.cgichicago.gov.in/ visa.chicago@mea.gov.in Tel: 312-687-3642 and 312-468- 3276
Residents of Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Nebraska	https://cghouston.gov.in/ enquiriescgi@swbell.net Tel: 713-626-2149
Residents of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont	Reach out through PRAMIT available on our website: https://pramit.indiainnewyork.gov.in/ Tel: 212-774-0607/347-721-9243
Residents of Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming	https://www.cgisf.gov.in/ oci2.sf@mea.gov.in Tel: 415 483 6629