



**Florida Gulf Coast University  
Office of Global Initiatives & International Services**

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## Maintaining your J-1 Student Status

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Since United States immigration laws and regulations are constantly changing and penalties for non-compliance are becoming more severe, it is critical that international students in J-1 visa classification maintain their legal status in the United States. J-1 students should be aware of and comply fully with the following compliance requirements set forth by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS):

- You must maintain a valid passport at all times, unless exempt from passport requirements.
- You must attend the college/university listed on your current DS-2019.
- You must notify International Services Office if you intend to transfer to another institution.
- You must be full-time enrolled during the Fall and Spring semesters. Full-time enrollment is defined as **9 credit hours for graduate students** and **12 credits for undergraduate students**. *Full-time enrollment may vary for students on exchange programs.* Check with International Services prior to registering for less than a full course load or prior to dropping below a full course load.
- If you wish to extend your stay at FGCU, make an appointment to meet with the International Services Office Assistant director prior to the expiration date on your DS-2019.
- You must obtain a new Form DS-2019 **before** changing your academic program from one degree level to another (e.g., from Bachelor's to Master's level), one school to another (e.g., from the School of Music to the School of Nursing), or one major/field of study to another (e.g., from Civil Engineering to Nursing).
- You are allowed to work on campus, up to 20 hours per week, with written authorization from FGCU's Responsible or Alternate Responsible Officer. For an authorization letter, come to International Services Office with an employment offer letter and request a letter of employment authorization. This authorization letter must be given to your employer **prior** to your employment start date.
- You and your J-2 dependents are required by federal law to have health insurance that includes medical evacuation and repatriation in effect for the duration of your exchange visitor status, pursuant to 22 CFR 62.14. A willful failure to carry insurance is considered to be a violation of your legal status in the U.S. and will result in immediate termination of your status, pursuant to 22 CFR 62.45(d) and (f).
- You must report any change of address or residence within 10 days to immigration. Go to <https://egov.uscis.gov/crisgwi/go?action=coa> to change online or [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) and select "Change Address Online."



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Remember to have International Services Office sign your DS-2019 prior to traveling outside the United States. To request a signature, you need to submit your DS-2019 form for *Immigration Travel Signature* at International Services Office at least 5 days prior to the anticipated travel date.

If you wish to bring any accompanying dependents (spouse or children) to the United States in J-2 status, schedule an appointment with International Services to obtain a dependant DS-2019. You will need to provide International Services Office with biographical information (full name, date of birth and country of birth) along with proof of funding.

If you are subject to the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), you must comply with all requirements. Comprehensive information regarding the NSEERS program is available at the Department of Homeland Security's website - <http://www.ice.gov/pi/specialregistration/index.htm>.

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This information is not exhaustive and is subject to change without notice. International students should contact International Services Office at 239-590-7925 to arrange an appointment to discuss any questions or concerns related to your legal status in the United States.

To remain up-to-date on changes in United States immigration law and/or changes in International Services policies and/or procedures, to be informed about events, workshops and sessions offered by International Services Office, and much more, please check out our news, announcements and information sessions posted at: [www.fgcu.edu/international](http://www.fgcu.edu/international)

The International Services Office web site is also an important resource for a variety of important information regarding your stay in the United States. To access the site, go to [www.fgcu.edu/international](http://www.fgcu.edu/international)

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"I have read the information above about maintaining my legal status in the United States and understand that I must comply fully with these regulations in order to remain in legal status. I further understand that this information is not exhaustive and that I should direct any additional questions or concerns about my legal status to a professional in Global Initiatives and International Services Office, McTarnaghan Hall 223, 239-590-7925."

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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