



The University of Pittsburgh
Office of International Services _____

OIS Compliance Form: Maintaining Your F-1 or J-1 Student Status

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY AND SIGN ON THE REVERSE

It is critical that international students in F-1 and J-1 status understand how to maintain their legal status in the United States. **OIS is here to assist; however, each student is ultimately responsible for maintaining his/her own status. Students must be aware of and comply fully with the following compliance requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State (DOS):**

- ❑ **You must maintain a valid passport at all times.** Ensure that your passport is valid for 6 months beyond your intended stay, unless your country is a member of the 6-month club. Members of the 6-month club are only required to have a passport valid for their intended period of stay.
- ❑ **You must have a valid I-94 card when in the U.S.** To download your most recent I-94 information visit www.cbp.gov/i94.
- ❑ **You must attend the college/university DHS has authorized you to attend.** This is the school that is listed on your current Form I-20 or DS-2019. You must complete an official immigration transfer whenever you change educational institutions. This must be coordinated between your current and your new educational institution.
- ❑ **You must apply for an extension of your program of study prior to the expiration date on your Form I-20 or Form DS-2019** if you cannot complete your program by the form end date. Extension requests should be submitted 30-60 days prior to the expiration date of the Form I-20 or Form DS-2019.
- ❑ **You must be making normal progress toward completing your degree.** This means attending class and completing requirements within the time period on your I-20/DS-2019.
- ❑ **You must obtain a new Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 before changing your academic program** from one degree level to another (e.g., from Bachelor's to Master's level) or one major/field of study to another (e.g., from Chemical Engineering to Physics).
- ❑ **You must have a valid U.S. visa stamp in order to re-enter the country after international travel** unless you are using the automatic revalidation visa benefit for travel to Canada, Mexico, and/or adjacent islands for less than 30 days. Not all students are able to use this benefit. Consult OIS with questions.
- ❑ **A valid travel signature from a Designated School Official (DSO) or Alternative Officer (ARO) is required for re-entry into the U.S. after international travel.** The travel signature is located on page 3 on the Form I-20; and on page 1 on the Form DS-2019. A travel signature is valid for 1 year from the original signature date. Travel signature requests are processed at OIS, 708 WPU.
- ❑ **F-1 and J-1 students must complete a full course of study during normal enrollment periods, which means 9 credits or full-time dissertation study for graduate students; 12 credits for undergraduates.** Only 3 credits of "distance learning" courses (courses conducted only online) can be applied toward full-time enrollment. There are a few exceptions to full time enrollment but you must receive authorization/permission from OIS in advance.

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- ❑ **On-campus Employment- F-1 students are allowed to work on-campus** up to 20 hours per week when school is in session. There is no limit to the number of hours students may work on-campus during official academic school breaks. **J-1 students must receive permission from their program sponsor** prior to beginning on-campus employment. On-campus employment eligibility ends if you complete or withdraw from your academic program.
- ❑ **You are not allowed to work off-campus in the United States without authorization.** Off-campus employment requires permission in advance and must meet certain conditions in order to be authorized.
- ❑ **You must report any change of address or residence and/or any change of name within 10 days** of the change. Change of address is done through my.pitt.edu, name change request through my.ois.pitt.edu. OIS will then electronically notify DHS of the changes required by federal regulations.
- ❑ **If you have accompanying dependent(s) in F-2 or J-2 status, these individuals must complete a check-in with OIS.**
- ❑ **You must file tax forms in April each year, even if you do not earn any money in the U.S.** Check OIS' website for resources.
- ❑ **All international students are required by the University of Pittsburgh to have health insurance. J-1 students and their J-2 dependents are required by federal law to have sickness and accident insurance and medical evacuation and repatriation insurance** in effect for the duration of their exchange visitor status.
- ❑ **Your grace period begins at the end of your academic program,** even if it is prior to the end date on your I-20 or DS-2019. F-1 students have a 60 day grace period; J-1 students have a 30 day grace period. No work is allowed during this time unless you have authorization; this time should be spent preparing to depart the U.S. if you are not applying for an immigration benefit such as OPT or Academic Training. **If you academically withdraw or fail to maintain status you might not be eligible for the full grace period.**

If you have questions, OIS has a number of ways to help you. The OIS website (www.ois.pitt.edu) has more information about the above rules and benefits to your status. OIS will also provide students with updates and reminders to your official pitt.edu account.

To contact OIS directly, you can email us at ois@pitt.edu, visit OIS during walk-in hours (1-4 pm, Monday-Thursday) or make an appointment with an immigration specialist via our website.

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.

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ SEVIS ID: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____