



SUGGESTIONS FOR FOREIGN COLLEAGUES TRAVELING TO THE USA JUNE 30, 2025

This information is intended to be helpful and general in nature. Because everyone's situation is different, it should not be taken as formal advice. For guidance tailored to your specific circumstances, it's best to contact the appropriate government agency directly.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for foreign nationals traveling to the United States, whether for pleasure, business, professional reasons, an exchange program, or as a student. Countries are now issuing warnings about travel to the United States. The SAA International Government Affairs Committee is concerned for the safety and well-being of our foreign colleagues and students and has prepared this list of tips. We want your stay here to be as pleasurable and meaningful as possible, keeping in mind that SAA is a non-governmental organization and we have no official authority.

- Begin your visa request early. The waiting time for an Embassy or Consulate to issue visas has increased dramatically.
- Be aware that US visa requirements and restrictions can change, so it's crucial to check the latest information from the US Embassy or Consulate in your home country. People who previously received visas are now reporting denials. Before booking any flights or hotels, confirm with your airline that they will honor a refund if you are denied a visa.
- Under certain conditions, you may be eligible to enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program known as ESTA. This program has specific eligibility criteria, so check with the US Embassy before you travel. There is a processing fee, currently about USD20, payable by credit card or PayPal. Beware of the scam sites online. The official ESTA webpage is here <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta>
- This is the State Department's website for visas for students and exchange visitors: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study.html>
- This is the State Department's website for visa applications: <https://www.state.gov/visas/>
- Be aware that the United States has implemented stricter border enforcement measures, which can lead to detentions or denials of entry, even for those with valid visas. Tell friends, family and colleagues both in your country of origin and the U.S. which flights you are on (including any scheduling delays, if possible).

- Have photographs of your visa and your passport on your phone and in hard copy in your carry-on luggage and have at least one contact, preferably more, in your phone whom you will telephone if you have trouble at the airport.
- Do **not** overstay your visa; if you overstay, you can face potential negative consequences, including deportation and a lifetime ban from reentering the United States.
- If you need to extend your visit to the United States past 30 days, contact the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to see if you need to register, but there is no guarantee that you will get the extension.
- If you are here on a tourist or travel visa, you are not permitted to work for a salary or engage in barter.
- If you are here as a “temporary worker,” check this State Department website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html>
- Here is the link to other visa categories: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/other-visa-categories.html>
- We respect freedom of speech but strongly advise against participating in any kind of political or social demonstration or protest. As a foreign visitor to the United States, it is prudent to avoid involvement in any such event or with any political organization involved in US politics, including US foreign policy.
- Because of the current administration’s fluidity regarding foreign visitors, keep checking with the US Embassy in your country or the US State Department website for changes that may affect your travel.
- Once you are in the United States, always carry your passport securely on your person.

If you are detained by federal immigration officials, there are a number of organizations that can assist you, including the following:

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

The ACLU’s Immigrants’ Rights Project works to protect the civil liberties and rights of immigrants through litigation, advocacy, and public education, [according to the ACLU website](#).

National Immigrant Law Center

The National Immigrant Law Center’s mission is advancing the rights and opportunities of low-income immigrants and their loved ones: <https://www.nilc.org/>.

Your embassy or consulate

The country that issued your passport should have an embassy or consulate in the United States.