Your Visa Stamp & Applying for a New One

Remember that a valid visa is necessary to ENTER the U.S. If your visa stamp expires while you are here, or entered with a visa marked with ‘single entry,’ you are here legally as long as you have a valid passport and a valid I-20/DS-2019.

Emergency Immigration Situations numbers:
(804) 505-4291 OR (804) 505-4131

1. If you have an expired visa stamp and want to travel abroad, you must apply for a new visa in your country. You cannot renew your visa stamp in the United States.

2. Visit the web site of the consulate where you will make your visa application to verify the procedure and necessary documentation before leaving the U.S.

3. We suggest you have the following documentation:

   • valid passport
   • original financial documentation
   • all previous and current I-20s/DS-2019s
   • official, sealed transcript
   • documentation from your academic advisor about what classes you have completed for your degree and what classes remain.
   • I-797 approval notice (if you have changed to F or J status in the U.S.)
   • I-901 SEVIS fee receipt. Application forms can be downloaded at: fmjfee.com
   • one passport-sized photograph (some consulates may require two photographs)
4. Bear in mind that you will have to go through an interview. Unfortunately, it is not guaranteed that the U.S. consulate will renew your visa or even that you will be able to enter the U.S. even after getting the visa, although the likelihood of those two scenarios is very small. We recommend following these tips for visa renewal:

- Be prepared to show ties to your home country.
- Speak for yourself and be brief; it might help to have a sheet with a bulleted list to explain your situation.
- Know the program you are studying and how it fits your career plans.
- Explain what type of documents you are submitting.
- Remember that the application process might be longer in some countries.
- If your dependents remain behind, be prepared to explain how they will survive in your absence.

**Administrative Processing**

A consular officer may make the determination that your visa application requires additional review, above and beyond the normal processing. Your application may be placed under administrative processing for many different reasons, and it means that your visa issuance will be delayed. The State Department claims that most administrative processing is resolved within 60 days of the visa interview. When administrative processing is required, the timing will vary based on individual circumstances of each case. Visa applicants are reminded to apply early for their visa, well in advance of the anticipated travel date.

**Automatic Visa Stamp Revalidation**

If you are going to Canada, Mexico or the islands adjacent to the U.S., please verify directly with those countries regarding any visa requirements. Some individuals can travel to these places for less than 30 days with an expired visa and re-enter the U.S. with no complications; this process is called Automatic Visa Revalidation. If you are planning to make a trip to one of these places and have questions, please e-mail VISA or make an appointment to speak with your VISA advisor.

*Note that if you apply for a new U.S. visa while in Canada, Mexico, or islands in the Caribbean and the visa application is denied, you will not be able to return to the U.S. in any visa status!*

---

Visa & Immigration Service Advising  
2006 Dragas Hall  
757-683-4756 | intlstu@odu.edu