



H-1B/O-1 Travel Information

To all countries except Canada and Mexico

You must always maintain a valid passport. Be sure that you have all of the documents required by the country that you are intending to visit.

In addition, **make sure that you have a valid, unexpired H-1B or O-1 entry visa in your passport.** If you do not have one, then you must obtain a new H-1B or O-1 entry visa from an American Consulate or Embassy while outside of the United States. Contact the American Consulate or Embassy in the country in which you are planning to visit to inquire about obtaining visa(s) to enter the United States (<http://usembassy.state.gov>). Be sure to ask whether they will allow visa applications from third country nationals. Find out whether you need an appointment, how long it takes to get a visa, the applicable fees, and which documents they will want to review. With regard to fees:

- i. NIH-sponsored H-1B workers are exempt from paying the Border Security Fee under Public Law 111-230 (see <http://dis.ors.od.nih.gov/advisories/h1bbordersecurityfeenotice.pdf>)
- ii. U.S. Government employees traveling on official business may be exempt from the Machine Readable Visa (MRV)/Non-immigrant visa application processing fee (*per 22 CFR §22.1, item 22*). Check with the American Consulate directly (such as through their expedite email or visa referral system) to confirm your eligibility and to schedule an appointment. Provide the Consulate with a copy of your travel authorization (obtain from your Administrative Officer).

Book a flight that allows sufficient time for you to obtain a visa. **Additional security or technology checks are in place, as well as requirements for in-person interviews, which can result in delays of 30 to 120 additional business days or more in some cases.** In addition to the required visa application forms and documentation, you should also bring the items recommended below. These are often requested by a Consular Official to show that you have maintained your status. For more information on visa applications, go to <http://travel.state.gov/>.

The documents required vary from country to country so please inquire at the American Consulate in the country you plan to visit before you leave the U.S. to determine whether they will allow you to apply for a visa, the specific documents required, the applicable fees, and the general length of time needed for visa processing. Neither the Department of State (DOS) nor the Division of International Services (DIS) can expedite your visa application, so please plan your travel carefully. However, please notify the DIS if your application is pending more than 30 days from your interview date so that we can keep a record of visa delays.

Please inform the DIS of your travel plans at least 2 weeks in advance. Please notify the DIS if you will be applying for an entry visa while you are abroad.

When reentering the U.S., the documentation to present should include:

- 1) Valid passport
- 2) Valid visa
- 3) Original, valid Form I-797 H-1B or O-1 Approval Notice
- 4) Current letter of employment explaining that you are currently employed by NIH in the same position as described in the H-1B or O-1 petition, and that you must enter the U.S. to continue that employment; the letter should include a brief description of your research activities at NIH (request from your Institute/Center; a sample can be found at <http://dis.ors.od.nih.gov/advisories/SampleLetterTravel.doc>)
- 5) Identification Badge (ID) badge
- 6) Copy of most recent pay stub
- 7) If H-1B, copy of Labor Condition Application (LCA)
- 8) If H-1B, and if applicable, original Form I-797 Approval Notice to Waive the Foreign Residence Requirement (I-612)

Upon your re-entry to the U.S., check your Form I-94 (and any family members) to ensure it is annotated properly. You must fax a copy of your new I-94 and new visa (if applicable) to the DIS.

REMINDER: If you are not traveling to your home country, you may need an entry visa to enter the country that you plan to visit. Please contact the appropriate consulate of that country for information regarding this matter.



U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

National Institutes of Health

9000 Rockville Pike
Building 31, Room B2B07
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-2028

ph (301) 496 6166
fx (301) 496 0847
<http://dis.ors.od.nih.gov/>

Rev. 02/2012