



Automatic Extension of Visa Validity

If a student's or scholar's visa expires while he or she is in the United States, or if a person changes status to F or J status in the United States, the next time they travel abroad they must obtain a new visa in the proper category in order to be readmitted to the United States.

An exception to this rule exists for nonimmigrants (in "active" F or J status) who travel for less than 30 days solely to Canada, Mexico or "adjacent islands other than Cuba."¹ The visas of such nonimmigrants are considered to be "extended" to the date of re-entry, eliminating the need to obtain a new visa at a U.S. consulate before that particular reentry. [22 CFR 41.112\(d\)](#)

Citizens from Syria, Sudan, and Iran are not eligible for the Automatic Extension of Validity.

To qualify for Automatic Extension of the Validity of the visa, F and J visa holders must have the following:

- An unexpired passport
- An I-20 (for F status) or DS-2019 (for J status) endorsed for travel
- An expired visa stamp (If the expired visa stamp is in an expired passport, that passport and visa stamp must also be presented upon reentry to the U.S.) OR
- Evidence of an USCIS approved change of status, (e.g. I-797A and/or I-94 card)
- I-94 marked D/S (Do not give up your I-94 when you leave the U.S.!)
- Have not applied for a new visa during this particular trip
- Has maintained and intends to resume nonimmigrant status.

You must keep your I-94 card (if applicable) upon exiting the U.S., it should NOT be collected from you.

¹ Adjacent islands include: Saint Pierre, Miquelon, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, the Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Martinique, and other British, French, and Netherlands territories or possessions in or bordering on the Caribbean Sea (Cuba excluded from list)