FAQs For Newly Admitted Students

Congratulations from the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) on your admission to Yale!

The mission of OISS is to support Yale’s international community in many ways, but particularly when it comes to U.S. immigration and visa regulations. We know that you are concerned about getting a U.S. visa and arriving at Yale in time for the fall semester. We want to assure you that despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, OISS will continue to provide you the immigration documents and the up-to-date information you need. Please know that both OISS and Yale University are closely monitoring this global health crisis and we will regularly communicate with you about any updates or changes. All OISS updates pertinent to newly admitted students will be posted on this page. More information is available at [Yale University's COVID-19 website](https://www.yale.edu/coronavirus) [1].

1. **Is OISS still issuing immigration documents (I-20 or DS-2019) for newly admitted students?**

OISS is not closed; we are just working remotely. So, yes, we are still issuing these forms. Our work begins once you have accepted your offer of admission. It takes a couple of days for your student record to flow to our system after you accept your offer. Once we receive your record, you will get an email from us so that you can complete the OISS New Student Survey. You will answer a few short questions, and upload a copy of your passport and evidence of funding (if needed) to complete the survey. Instructions about these items will be provided in the survey, so no need to worry about this right now. If everything is in order, your immigration document will be issued.

2. **How is OISS mailing immigration documents?**

For the most part, OISS will be shipping your I-20 or DS-2019 by courier service (FedEx or UPS). Your admission office at Yale is supplying OISS with the shipping label and they will be using the mailing address you provided when you applied for admission.

3. **How long will it take to get my immigration documents?**

OISS staff are working remotely for the foreseeable future, which is slowing things down a little bit. However, we still plan to have your immigration documents ready for mailing within a week of getting all the completed information from you. As long as the courier services remain open, we will drop off the immigration documents for shipping once a week. So, the full process will take us about two weeks. When we are able return to working in the office, everything will speed up and go much faster.

When we prepare and mail your I-20 or DS-2019, you will get an email with the tracking number and your SEVIS ID number. You will also get additional information about the next steps and access to our online platform, Passport to Yale. More information about applying for a visa can be found on our website [2].

4. **Will I still be able to get a visa?**

As of March 2020, most U.S. embassies and consulates around the world have suspended the routine processing of visas. Please check the [U.S. Department of State's visa page](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/legal/consular-legal.html) [3] for announcements and updates to stay informed on the resuming of consular services and visa processing times. OISS is closely monitoring this and will provide updates here as necessary.

5. **Can I arrive late, after the start date on my I-20?**

Regulations require that F-1 students arrive in the U.S. no later than the Initial Session Start Date listed on your I-20. If you will be traveling to Yale after this date, your I-20 should be amended for a new start. If you are in J-1 status you can arrive up to 30 days after the DS-2019 start date, but this may need to be amended to facilitate your entry to the U.S. Amendments do not cancel your visa application or SEVIS ID, they only change information in your record which is then printed on a new I-20 or DS-2019. If you know you cannot arrive by the start date on your I-20 or DS-2019 please get in touch with your designated OISS adviser [4] about your travel changes.

6. **What if I am already in the U.S. on an F-1 or J-1 visa?**
Please get in touch with your designated OISS adviser about your eligibility to transfer your F-1 or J-1 status from your current U.S. institution to Yale.

7. I am now in the U.S. on another non-immigrant status (H-1B, TN, etc.). What should I do?

Please get in touch with your designated OISS adviser. Your course of action depends on many variables, and your adviser can help outline the issues.

8. Who do I contact at OISS if I have questions?

You may either contact your designated OISS adviser or send an email to newstudents.oiss@yale.edu. We are doing our best to answer your emails as quickly as possible, but we also appreciate your patience.