Travel Ban Exemption Expanded to Include Brazil, China, Iran and South Africa

April 29, 2021

On April 26th the U.S. State Department announced an expansion of the travel ban exemptions [1] to Presidential Proclamations (PPs) 9984, 9992, and 10143 related to the spread of COVID-19.

This means that students and academics on J-1 visas from China, Iran, Brazil, and South Africa, may now qualify for a National Interest Waiver (NIE) as has been the case for students and scholars from the Schengen area, the United Kingdom, and Ireland.

If you have a valid F-1 visas and intend to begin or continue an academic program commencing August 1, 2021 or later you do not need to contact an embassy or consulate to seek an individual NIE to travel. You may enter the United States no earlier than 30 days before the start of your academic studies, as noted on the form I-20.

If you need to apply for a new F-1 visa, check the status of visa services at the nearest embassy or consulate; if you are issued an F-1 visa you will automatically be considered for an NIE to travel.

If you hold a valid J-1 student or scholar visa you need to contact the U.S. consulate or embassy and obtain an NIE before you travel. If you need to apply for new J-1 visa, check the status of visa services at the nearest embassy or consulate; if you are issued an F-1 visa you will automatically be considered for an NIE to travel.

For additional information review the web sites of the US consulates where you will be applying for a visa.

Press Release from Department of State US Embassy China [2]

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[1] https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/News/visas-news/national-interest-exceptions-for-certain-travelers-from-
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