Arriving in the U.S.: Immigration Inspection

Proof of Vaccination & Negative COVID-19 Test Result
Pursuant to a presidential proclamation issued October 25, 2021, Advancing the Safe Resumption of Global Travel During the Covid-19 Pandemic [2], all noncitizens who are nonimmigrants traveling to the United States are required to show proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Similarly pursuant to an order [3] issued on the same day, all individuals 2 years or older traveling by air to the U.S. from another country are required to show to the airline proof of a negative COVID-19 test or present documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 in the last 90 days before boarding their flight. For more detailed information on proof of vaccination and negative test results, please refer to our Current Travel Guidance and Restrictions [4] page.

Documents to Have On Arrival in the U.S.

Upon arrival, you will go through immigration inspection, where your electronic I-94 entry record will be created. Be sure to have your passport, immigration document, and the rest of the recommended items below with you. Do not pack them in your checked luggage.

With all the COVID-19 related updates to international travel, we want you to have all the documents that you may need in entering the U.S. When you arrive at the U.S. port of entry or preclearance, the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer will mainly ask to see the first three documents below, but they may ask to see other documents on this list. The officer may also ask you to answer additional questions about what you intend to do at Yale or your purpose of travel to the U.S.

Important Note:
Carry these documents with you - don't put them in your checked luggage

1. **Valid Passport**: must be valid at least 6 months into the future at the time of admission.
2. **Valid U.S. Visa** (Canadian citizens do not need a visa)
3. **Your Immigration Document**: an I-20 for F-1 status or a DS-2019 for J-1 status.
   - F-1 students must print (double-sided) the electronically sent I-20s. At the border, you cannot present your electronic I-20 on your phone.
5. **Copy of your admissions letter and proof of funds**: while you may not be asked for it, it is advisable for new students to carry these documents as well. Proof of funds can include the same documents you submitted to obtain your I-20 or DS-2019, such as bank statements and scholarship/financial aid letters.

**Traveler Health Form**
As of June 25, 2021, the New York State Travel Advisory is no longer in effect. As such, travelers arriving in New York are no longer required to submit traveler health forms. If you are entering the U.S. at other locations, please check the requirements for that state.

What to Expect at the U.S. Port of Entry

Your visa and other immigration documents are evidence of your eligibility to apply for admission in a particular visa status at a U.S. Port of Entry.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and is the government agency that controls admission to the United States. The CBP officer makes the final decision on your admission to the U.S. in a particular status and determines how long you may stay based on your documents.

1. Meet the CBP Officer

The officer will review your documents and ask you a few questions about the purpose of your travel to the U.S.

If all is in order, the officer will admit you to the U.S. and will stamp your passport with:

- date and place of arrival
- immigration status
- expiration of your stay in status

If the officer has additional questions, please see Secondary Inspection below for more information.

2. Confirm that your visa stamp is accurate

The CBP officer will admit you to the U.S. and stamp your passport with:

- date and place of arrival
- immigration status
- expiration of your stay in status

Before you leave the immigration check point, confirm that your visa information is correct. Make sure you have the small ink entry stamp with your visa classification and expiration date (“D/S” if you are F-1 or J-1) handwritten. The expiration date should match the end of the program (on the I-20 or DS-2019) plus a grace period.

Important Note:

If you do not have a stamp, or see the wrong visa classification written, request that the CBP officer give you a correct stamp. You may need to go to the Deferred Inspection section of the airport.

3. Review your I-94 (after arrival)
After your entry to the U.S. please look up your I-94 record [6] as soon as possible to make sure it is accurate. Print or save a copy on your device.

Secondary Inspection

Most Yale students and scholars will clear U.S. immigration after your documents are reviewed by a CBP officer. However, a few of you may be referred to another officer to verify your immigration status or for additional questioning. This is referred to as “secondary inspection [7]”. Although a referral to secondary inspection can be intimidating and make you feel anxious, there is usually little cause for alarm. Be aware that it can take a while to complete this inspection process.

If the CBP officer has questions that can be answered by OISS, please ask the officer if they would like to call OISS for confirmation. During office hours, you can call your adviser directly [8] or our front desk at (203) 432-2305. After hours please call the Yale Police Department at (203) 432-4400 who will immediately call the OISS director or associate director.

Get to New Haven

Find out how to get from the airport to your new home! [9]