

Immigration Policy Updates and Q & A

La Sierra University and the Office of International Student Services (OISS) recognize that recent changes in immigration policy may raise questions and concerns amongst our international community. This page was created to provide information and resources for our La Sierra University students.

LATEST NEWS

1. What are the current actions being applied for the Executive Order?

On March 6, 2017, President Trump signed a new executive order “Protecting the Nation from Terrorist Entry into the United States.” This order includes a revised entry ban. Effective March 16, 2017, it institutes a 90-day ban for citizens from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. The ban does not affect U.S. lawful permanent residents (green card or temporary I-551 stamp), dual citizens, or C-2, G-1, G-2, G-3, or G-4 visa holders, foreign nationals granted asylum or refugee already admitted to the U.S., as well as, individuals who have been granted withholding of removal, advance parole, protection under the Convention Against Torture, or special waivers.

Visa Interview Waiver Program is suspended immediately, this will require all individuals seeking a nonimmigrant visa undergo an in-person interview.

- [Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Terrorist Entry into the United States- March 6, 2017](#)
- [Travel Advisory for Nationals of Certain Countries Pursuant to Executive Orders- available via NAFSA Professional Resources.](#)

On February 9, 2017, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals denied the government’s emergency motion for a stay on the District Court’s temporary restraining order preventing the government from enforcing EO. The TRO does not cover any other section, such as the Visa Interview Waiver Program.

****Remember this is a temporary restraining order. The situation remains very fluid. Travelers must be aware that the situation could rapidly change.**

- [Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Decision](#) available via NAFSA Professional Resources

On February 7, 2017, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments. The 3-judge panel recognized the public’s interest and urgency and stated their intention to render a decision as soon as possible.

On February 4, 2017, the Trump administration appealed the District Court’s temporary restraining order (TRO), and asked the Court of Appeals for an emergency stay of the

Circuit Court's TRO. This immediate emergency appeal was denied until the court could meet.

- February 4, 2017 [Notice of Appeal](#) available via NAFSA Professional Resources
- [Government's motion for an emergency stay of the TRO](#) available via NAFSA Professional Resources.
- [Court of Appeal's order denying immediate administrative stay](#), pending full consideration of the government's emergency motion for stay and setting schedule available via NAFSA Professional Resources.

On February 3, 2017, the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington issued a TRO prohibiting the U.S. government from enforcing the 90-day travel ban on "immigrants and nonimmigrants" from designated countries and the 120-day ban on U.S. refugee program of the January 27, 2017 Executive Order (EO) on a nationwide basis. All U.S. land and air ports of entry are prohibited from enforcing these portions of the EO until further order from the court.

Additionally the case of State of Washington v. Trump et al. was filed

- [The United States District Court for the Western District of Washington restraining order](#) available via NAFSA Professional Resources
- February 4, 2017- [DHS Statement on Compliance with the Recent Court Order](#) available on Department of Homeland Security website
- February 4, 2017- [US Department of State \(DOS\)](#) has confirmed that assuming there are no other issues in the case, provisionally revoked visas have been reversed and are once again valid for travel.
- February 4, 2017- [US Customs & Border Protection \(CBP\)](#) all CBP officers have been instructed to immediately resume inspection of travelers under standard policies and procedures. All airlines and terminal operators have been notified to permit boarding of all passengers without regard to nationality.

On January 27, 2017, President Trump issued "Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States". It contains several provisions that directly affect our student population.

[Executive Order: Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States](#) – January 27, 2017

[Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements](#)- January 25, 2017

[Executive Order: Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States](#)- January 25, 2017

- Suspension of Issuance of Visas and Other Immigration Benefits to Nationals of Countries of Particular Concern. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall temporarily suspend (90 days) all travelers (except U.S. citizens) traveling on passports from Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. Lawful Permanent residents will be allowed to board U.S. bound aircraft and will be assessed for entry at port of arrival.
- Refugee Admission Program. The Secretary of State shall suspend the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days.
- Visa Interview Security. The Secretary of State shall immediately suspend the Visa Interview Waiver Program and require additional nonimmigrant visa applicants to undergo an in-person interview.
 - [Protecting the National From Foreign Terrorist Entry To The United States](#) available on the dhs.gov website.

There are indications that there could be additional executive orders on immigration related matters. La Sierra University and the OISS will continue to provide information and updates as they become available.

2. How will these new changes affect my immigration status?

Currently, these new changes have no immediate impact on the immigration status of those students who are in the United States. Present regulations remain in place, until any changes taken by the new administration. Be aware that changes in laws or regulations generally take time and normally advance warning is given.

However, an Executive Order (EO) happens more quickly and changes in policy can take effect immediately. OISS will continue to monitor any decisions impacting our international student population, and will provide updated information via this website or email.

NAFSA: International Association of International Educators offers an excellent summary of the U.S. immigration system, government agencies and the process of change of their [Practical Immigration Concepts in a Time of Change](#) webpage. More detailed information can be found in the following sources (from resource list at [NAFSA.org](#)).

- [How Laws are Made and Presidential Executive Orders](#) available via USA.gov website
- [The Legislative Process](#) available on the Congress.gov website

- [Series of videos describing the legislative process](#) available on the Congress.gov website

3. What are the current Executive Orders affecting immigration?

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4. Can I travel outside the United States? Can I get my visa renewed?

Yes. Students can travel outside the U.S. Please note warnings.

- a. At this time, we are advising that immigrants or nonimmigrant from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, or Yemen not travel outside the U.S. Please consult with an immigration attorney or the OISS if you have any questions.
 - b. At this time, we are recommending that if you are traveling to your home country and will need to renew your visa please be prepared for possible slower visa issuance times. Please remember that you must have an in-person interview.
 - c. At this time, we recommend that all immigrants or nonimmigrants carry documents verifying who you are (driver's license, student ID card) and your valid immigration status (copies of passport, I-20).
- [Know Before You Visit](#) available on the cbp.gov website.
 - [Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States](#) available on cbp.gov website.

5. Will I still have OPT/STEM/CPT? Will the H1-B program be cancelled?

At this time there is no information regarding what actual changes we will see in the future for any particular visa category. Current regulations remain in place.

- April 3, 2017- USCIS will temporarily suspend premium processing for all H-1B petitions. This suspension may last up to 6 months. Expedited processing will remain in effect if H-1B petitioner meets the criteria. [Suspension of Premium Processing for All H-1B Petitions](#)
- [Travel Advisory for Nationals of Certain Countries Pursuant to Executive Order, see section entitled](#) “The question of the entry and immigration benefits other than visas and entry” available on nafsa.org website.

6. Will my county of citizenship be a factor in my admission to La Sierra University?

La Sierra University welcomes applicants from around the world. Applicants are evaluated based on their academic preparation and qualifications. They are not based on country of citizenship.

What are La Sierra University and the Office of International Student Services doing to advocate for international students at La Sierra University?

First, La Sierra University's biggest demographic that could potentially be affected by immigration reform is the DACA (Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals) Program and our undocumented immigrant students.

Dr. Whisbey has signed a statement back in December supporting this demographic along with hundreds of university presidents nationwide. Additionally, many faculty and staff have shown tremendous support through their caring gestures and phone calls to students directly affected.

Second, OISS advocates for our international students on a campus and community level by continuing to provide education, training, and advising for campus partners and stakeholders regarding the complex issues facing our student population.

OISS also works for advocacy through our membership in [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#), the world's largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education and exchange.

7. Where can I find support if I have immigration concerns? Support for anxiety or stress?

Please visit OISS with any immigration concerns or questions. We strive to provide a welcoming, safe environment to discuss concerns you may have related to your visa status, as well as explore options and benefits available for your current or future plans. For complex issues beyond our scope, we can assist you in finding a referral for an immigration attorney.

La Sierra University students also can access our Counseling Center, which offers individual confidential counseling appointments, group counseling, and more. This is a free service to all La Sierra University students.

- [La Sierra University Counseling Center](#)

8. What things could currently jeopardize my status?

At any time, it is important to avoid any violations of your F-1 status. In addition to enrollment requirements, address reporting, or employment restrictions individuals in non-immigrant status are expected to refrain from breaking any U.S. state or federal laws. Please think carefully before engaging in protest activities, as arrests can seriously impact immigration status or future visa applications. Arrests or convictions that involve violence, drugs or alcohol can have serious or long-lasting impact on current or future immigration status.

Also be aware that while marijuana use is legal in many U.S. states, it remains illegal at the federal level and use constitutes a violation of federal law. Use of marijuana, or alcohol/drug-related DUI arrests or convictions can lead to severe immigration consequences ranging from fines, visa cancellation, or deportation.

If you are arrested or have any legal concerns, please contact OISS immediately. In such cases, we urge you to retain immigration legal counsel to advise you as to next steps and possible consequences. Additional tips for interacting with US law enforcement and understanding your rights is available with the American Civil Liberties Union:

- [American Civil Liberties Union](#)

What do I do if ICE is at your door?

1. Keep calm, you have rights
2. You don't have to open the door. You can ask the agents what they want and why are they there, through a closed door.
3. Ask them if they have an administrative removal order, warrant signed by a judge. Ask them to slide the warrant under the door so that you can verify it. Look at the warrant and make sure it was issued by a court and that it is signed by a judge.
4. Ice agents have no right to enter your house if they don't have a court warrant signed by a judge and that warrant needs to have the name of whoever lives in that house. If they still insist on entering, tell them, "I don't authorize your entry." If they still insist it is very important that you don't put up a fight.
5. Keep insisting that you are not authorizing their entry and that you are exercising your right to remain silent. Demand to talk to a lawyer as soon as possible. It is very important that you do not lie or produce false documents. Make sure you do not sign any document without talking to a lawyer first.

What do I do if the police, immigration agent, or the FBI stops me?

1. You have rights.
 - You have the right to remain silent. If you wish to exercise that right, say so out loud.
 - You have the right to refuse to consent to a search of yourself, your car or your home.
 - If you are not under arrest, you have the right to calmly ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, calmly walk away. If you are under arrest, you have the right to know why.
 - You have the right to a lawyer if you are arrested. Ask for one immediately.
 - Regardless of your immigration or citizenship status, you have constitutional rights.
2. You have responsibilities.
 - Stay calm and be polite.
 - Do not interfere with or obstruct the police.
 - Do not lie or give false documents.
 - Do prepare yourself and your family in case you are arrested.
 - Do remember all the details of your encounter.

- Do file a complaint with your lawyer if you feel your rights were violated.

9. How do I contact the OISS?

- Call: 951-785-2237 or 951-785-2920
- Email: oiss@lasierra.edu
- Keep my business card in your wallet or purse. Call security (Security 951-785-2222) if it is outside business hours. Explain clearly what has happened and they will contact an administrator or me.