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Automatic Revalidation of Expired Visa

Under certain circumstances, an F1/F2 nonimmigrant in valid status may re-enter the US with an expired F visa; this is called Automatic Revalidation. Travel under this provision is limited to 30 days to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent Caribbean islands (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). To qualify for automatic revalidation, you must not apply for a new visa while outside the US and have the following items with you at re-entry:

- ☐ Proof that travel outside US did not exceed 30 days (i.e., airline tickets)
- ☐ Valid I-20, signed (revalidated) on page 3 within last 6 months
- ☐ Valid passport
- ☐ I-94 Card (do not give up when you leave US) **or** Valid Admissions Stamp*
* If you arrived in the US on or after April 30, 2013 an electronic I-94 admissions record was created and maintained in Custom and Border Patrol (CBP) systems. CBP will verify the I-94 electronically to re-validate an expired visa if traveler meets the conditions of automatic revalidation.
- ☐ Expired F visa or proof of adjustment of status to F while in US
- ☐ If you are on Post-Completion OPT, valid EAC and proof of employment

Below are regulatory citations pertaining to Automatic Revalidation. We suggest you read them and carry the handout with you to present to the port officer if you have any difficulty at the US port-of-entry. **Please note that a Port-of-Entry immigration officer may deny entry to anyone they feel poses a threat to the US, is no longer maintaining valid F status, or intends to immigrate to the US.**

Finally, contact the consulate/embassy of the country you plan to visit to determine if you will need an entry visa.

Title 22: Foreign Relations

[PART 41—VISAS: DOCUMENTATION OF NONIMMIGRANTS UNDER THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT, AS AMENDED](#) [Subpart K—Issuance of Nonimmigrant Visa](#)

§ 41.112 Validity of visa.

(a) Significance of period of validity of visa. The period of validity of a nonimmigrant visa is the period during which the alien may use it in making application for admission. The period of visa validity has no relation to the period of time the immigration authorities at a port of entry may authorize the alien to stay in the United States.

(b) Validity of visa and number of applications for admission.

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section, a nonimmigrant visa shall have the validity prescribed in schedules provided to consular officers by the Department, reflecting insofar as practicable the reciprocal treatment accorded U.S. nationals, U.S. permanent residents, or aliens granted refugee status in the U.S. by the government of the country of which the alien is a national, permanent resident, refugee or stateless resident.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(1) of this section, United States nonimmigrant visas shall have a maximum validity period of 10 years.

(3) An unexpired visa is valid for application for admission even if the passport in which the visa is stamped has expired, provided the alien is also in possession of a valid passport issued by the authorities of the country of which the alien is a national.

(c) Limitation on validity. If warranted in an individual case, a consular officer may issue a nonimmigrant visa for:

- (1) A period of validity that is less than that prescribed on a basis of reciprocity,
- (2) A number of applications for admission within the period of the validity of the visa that is less than that prescribed on a basis of reciprocity,
- (3) Application for admission at a specified port or at specified ports of entry, or
- (4) Use on and after a given date subsequent to the date of issuance.

(d) Automatic extension of validity at ports of entry.

(1) Provided that the requirements set out in paragraph (d)(2) of this section are fully met, the following provisions apply to nonimmigrant aliens seeking readmission at ports of entry:

(i) The validity of an expired nonimmigrant visa issued under INA 101(a)(15) may be considered to be automatically extended to the date of application for readmission; and

(ii) In cases where the original nonimmigrant classification of an alien has been changed by DHS to another nonimmigrant classification, the validity of an expired or unexpired nonimmigrant visa may be considered to be automatically extended to the date of application for readmission, and the visa may be converted as necessary to that changed classification.

(2) The provisions in paragraph (d)(1) of this section are applicable only in the case of a nonimmigrant alien who:

(i) Is in possession of a Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record, endorsed by DHS to show an unexpired period of initial admission or extension of stay, or, in the case of a qualified F or J student or exchange visitor or the accompanying spouse or child of such an alien, is in possession of a current Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status, or Form IAP-66, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status, issued by the school the student has been authorized to attend by DHS, or by the sponsor of the exchange program in which the alien has been authorized to participate by DHS, and endorsed by the issuing school official or program sponsor to indicate the period of initial admission or extension of stay authorized by DHS;

(ii) Is applying for readmission after an absence not exceeding 30 days solely in contiguous territory, or, in the case of a student or exchange visitor or accompanying spouse or child meeting the stipulations of paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section, after an absence not exceeding 30 days in contiguous territory or adjacent islands other than Cuba;

(iii) Has maintained and intends to resume nonimmigrant status;

(iv) Is applying for readmission within the authorized period of initial admission or extension of stay;

(v) Is in possession of a valid passport;

(vi) Does not require authorization for admission under INA [212\(d\)\(3\)](#); and

(vii) Has not applied for a new visa while abroad.

(3) The provisions in paragraphs (d)(1) and (d)(2) of this section shall not apply to the nationals of countries identified as supporting terrorism in the Department's annual report to Congress entitled Patterns of Global Terrorism.

[52 FR 42597, Nov. 5, 1987; 53 FR 9112, 9172, Mar. 21, 1988, as amended at 55 FR 36028, Oct. 31, 1990; 62 FR 24332, May 5, 1997; 66 FR 38543, July 25, 2001; 67 FR 10323, Mar. 7, 2002; 67 FR 66046, Oct. 30, 2002]

A note about Airlines:

Some airlines may refuse boarding if you do not have a valid entry visa. The following page is an information sheet from USCBP's Carrier Liaison Program about Automatic Revalidation of Visas. While the airline has the right to deny boarding of any passenger, presenting the following guidance from CBP prior to boarding may provide additional information that the airline needs.



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

*Carrier Liaison Program
2012 CLP Bulletin*

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CLP@dhs.gov

IMPORTANT UPDATE **AUTOMATIC REVALIDATION OF VISAS**

The validity of an expired nonimmigrant visa may be considered to be automatically extended to the date of application for readmission at ports of entry. This includes cases where U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has changed the nonimmigrant classifications of an alien to another nonimmigrant classification. The validity of an expired or unexpired nonimmigrant visa may be considered to be automatically extended to the date of readmission and the visa may be converted as necessary to that changed classification. [22.C.F.R. 41.112(d)]

Visitors (and accompanying spouses and / or children) whose visas have expired may be boarded provided they meet the following requirements:

F and J nonimmigrants:

- Readmission from contiguous territory or adjacent islands (except Cuba)
- Readmission after an absence not exceeding 30 days
- In possession of Form I-94 endorsed to show an unexpired period of initial admission or extension of stay or in possession of the Certificate of Eligibility Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) I-20AB or SEVIS DS-2029
- In possession of a valid passport, unless exempt
- Does not require authorization for admission under the INA 212(d)(3)
- Has not applied for a new visa while abroad
- Has maintained and intends to resume nonimmigrant status

All other nonimmigrants:

- Readmission from contiguous territory
- Readmission after an absence not exceeding 30 days
- In possession of Form I-94 endorsed to show an unexpired period of initial admission or extension of stay
- M-1 student must also present a properly endorsed SEVIS Form I-20MN
- In possession of a valid passport, unless exempt
- Does not require authorization for admission under the INA 212(d)(3)
- Has not applied for a new visa while abroad
- Has maintained and intends to resume nonimmigrant status

The provisions of the automatic revalidation of visas does not apply to citizens of countries identified as supporting terrorism in the State Department's annual report to Congress. Countries that are ineligible are Iran, Syria, Sudan and Cuba.

The information on this bulletin supersedes page 18 inside the revised May 2011 Carrier Information Guide.