

Visa Pause

Effective May 27, 2025, a visa pause has been issued by the U.S. Department of State for all F and J visa appointments.

“Effective immediately, in preparation for an expansion of required social media screening and vetting, consulate sections should not add any additional student or exchange visitor visa appointment capacity” until the guidance is issued, the cable says.

While this action immediately affects plans of foreign students and exchange visitors, **it does not stop program operations**. We are encouraging applicants to continue submitting applications and to check regularly for the resumption of appointment availability.

To date, there have been no further details on the nature of the “expansion of required social media screening and vetting”.

Below is what we currently know:

1. **The pause is temporary.** The action is in response to the Trump administration’s requirement that all foreign students applying to study in the United States undergo social media vetting, and it will be lifted once the Department of State develops the social media scrutiny guidance.
2. **The pause is expected to be short-term.** According to Secretary Rubio, the pause is “until further guidance is issued [...], which we anticipate in the coming days.” In a press briefing held on Thursday, May 29, the Department of State confirmed that the pause will be short and there “will be an endpoint” that will not be “weeks or months” from now. The State has also encouraged program applicants to continue submitting DS-160 requests.
3. **The pause only affects new appointments.** Consulates have been instructed not to schedule any new appointments until the vetting procedure is in place. This policy applies to all U.S. consulates worldwide.
4. **This is not a program or travel ban.** Program operations continue and visas are being issued to the following categories:
 - Participants whose appointments have already been scheduled.
 - Canadian citizens remain visa exempt so may seek entry with the I-20 or DS-2019 and valid Canadian passport.
 - Applicants currently in the United States, obtaining F or J visa through a change of status process.

We understand that this pause presents a major disruption for students and exchange visitors. Below are some guidelines from the American Immigration Council:

If you have recently started or are about to start your application:



- Please proceed as planned. It will take at least a month or longer to prepare your application package, and the situation may change.

If we issued your I-20 or DS-2019, but you have not yet scheduled your interview:

- Please keep checking the visa appointment page regularly as new appointments may become available at any time.
- Please keep us apprised to your status.

If you are preparing for your visa appointment:

- Please review your social media accounts. Keep one or two accounts active. **Deleting them all will likely result in a denial** as a consular officer will conclude the applicant closed them to hide adverse information.
- Remove postings which criticize the current U.S. administration, its foreign policy, and cultural values the administration promotes, or show behaviors that may be considered inappropriate, such as partying, drug or alcohol use.
- Add postings about being excited to experience America during your work and/or training.
- Be patient. It may take longer than usual for the vetting to occur.