



The following email was shared with University of Maryland leadership on Friday, January 25, 2019.

Dear Deans, Directors and Department Chairs:

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) is aware of your concern about the impact of the federal government shutdown on individuals' immigration status. We would like to share with you information on federal agencies and immigration services as they currently stand. This updated information is based on immigration alerts prepared by the University of Maryland's immigration law firm, Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP, published on December 18, 2018.

- **Visa applications:** [U.S. consulates are currently open](#) and processing visa applications, but foreign nationals who anticipate a need for a new visa in the coming weeks or months should consider submitting an application and making a visa appointment as soon as possible. Though application fees are currently supporting Department of State consular operations, a prolonged shutdown could deplete these funds, leading the State Department to suspend visa processing or limit it to urgent medical or humanitarian cases only. Visa applications subject to a security clearance could be subject to longer-than-usual delays if clearances require input from other government agencies affected by the shutdown.
- **Applications to USCIS:** [USCIS continues to process applications and petitions](#) for immigration benefits during the shutdown and has confirmed that all individuals should attend scheduled USCIS interviews and appointments.
- **PERM and iCert Certifications:** U.S. Department of Labor remains fully funded through September 30, 2019; PERM labor certification operations remain as normal. iCert is fully functional at this time.
- **Functions of U.S. Customs and Border Patrol:** This agency continues to adjudicate border applications for TN and L-1 status. Foreign nationals seeking I-94 corrections should make an appointment with an ISSS advisor to review their case as soon as possible. Please make an appointment at <https://globalmaryland.umd.edu/offices/international-student-scholar-services/schedule-appointment-issv-advisor>.
- **Social Security** number issuance and state driver's license and ID processing are not affected by the shutdown. If conditions change for Social Security, ISSS will send an update.

- **E-Verify** is not processing applications at this time due to the partial government shutdown. Employers remain subject to I-9 requirements. Employers may not take any adverse action against an employee whose employment eligibility verification cannot be confirmed in E-verify.

Special note: UMD-sponsored foreign nationals – who are employed under U.S. government grants and contracts in the following immigration statuses: H-1B, J-1, TN, O-1, E-3 or F-1 – are affected. Departments that have received a stop work order from the government will need to contact their Department Chair and ISSS to review options. During this difficult time, ISSS will be working with each individual department to look at the employment status and the options available regarding an individual’s immigration status.

General Guidelines by Immigration Status

The following are the general immigration categories of foreign nationals who may be affected by the government shutdown.

H-1B Employees

As per U.S. Department of Labor and H-1B regulations, the University of Maryland cannot furlough employees on the H1B immigration status. If the government shutdown terminates the employment of the employee, via a “stop work” order, UMD may be required to end the employment of the faculty member and assist with the cost of return airfare to their home country.

Alternatively, if H1Bs are not permitted to report to their place of employment at the U.S. government agency, but the UMD department is able to make arrangements to accommodate the faculty member on campus and continue to pay the individual, then the employment may continue with little disruption.

In all cases, please contact ISSS to review options and the impact on the H-1B status.

J-1 Exchange Visitors

J-1 exchange visitors who were placed at third-party sites should be directed to return to campus to continue their research.

If the department will not be able to continue to fund the program, please contact ISSS to review options and the impact on the J-1 status.

F-1 Students

Please follow the direction of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School if an F-1 student is dependent on Federal agencies for stipends and tuition payments. Dean Fetter's message, dated Tuesday, January 22, 2019, follows:

Dear graduate students, faculty and staff,

The Graduate School has been monitoring the impact of the extended Federal government shutdown on graduate students. Together with the Office of Student Financial Services and Cashiering and the Office of Student Financial Aid, we are committed to assist students who are dependent on Federal agencies for tuition payments and stipends, and to provide emergency funding on a case-by-case basis.

Please let Jeffrey Franke, Assistant Dean in the Graduate School (jfranke@umd.edu), know if you are affected financially by the shutdown. We would also appreciate knowing any other impacts on your research due to the shutdown (e.g., loss of access to laboratory facilities, lost data, etc.).

We understand that this is a stressful time and we will work with you to minimize the impact on your graduate education.

Best regards,

*Steve Fetter
Associate Provost and Dean, The Graduate School*

F-1 students on assistantship at an impacted Federal agency should work with ISSS regarding their immigration status. To maintain F-1 status please review the requirements listed on the [ISSS website](#). As a reminder, F-1 and J-1 students do not have permission to work off campus. Please send all concerned F-1 and J-1 students to ISSS for advising on employment decisions.

General Inquiries

If you have any questions, please contact either Connie Jesse Lira at 301-314-5823, or me at 301-314-1713.

Regards,
Susan-Ellis Dougherty
Director, International Student & Scholar Services