Important Information to Read before Travel

This information is for international scholars (postdocs, faculty, lecturers, visiting scholars, researchers and other non-students). You may wish to print and carry this information with you when you travel.

[International enrolled or visiting students should consult the information for international students from the MIT International Students Office.]

Emergency Information

International Scholars Office Emergency Phone Number: 617-253-2888

If you have problems upon arrival at a US airport or border crossing, and additional information is requested, please contact the ISchO emergency phone number above if/when you are able to do so.

Do not call this number to report your successful arrival, only call if you encounter problems. To report your successful arrival, and for all other questions or information, please email ischo@mit.edu.

Travel Documents

When entering the US, international scholars must carry the following documentation to present to US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers. Do not pack these documents in your checked baggage. Carry them with you to present at time of entry.

- Passport
- Valid US entry visa stamp (issued by a US Embassy/Consulate)*
- Form DS-2019 (J-1)
- Form I-901 (SEVIS fee) receipt (J-1)
- Form I-797 (Approval Notice) and letter of invitation/employment (H-1B and O-1)
- Letter of employment and proof of degree (TN scholars from Canada or Mexico)
- Letter of invitation and proof of ESTA enrollment (Waiver for Business/WB)
- Letter of invitation (B-1)
- You could also be asked for proof of connections to home country (non-immigrant intent — the same as you presented during visa application at US Embassy/Consulate)

* Canadian citizens exempt

Be prepared to answer additional questions about your intended activity at MIT, employment history, and travel history.
**Traveling with Electronics or Data**

Please note that new US Department of Homeland Security regulations allow for CBP officials to request information about social media accounts, including searching your accounts, laptops, phones, tablets, or other electronic devices. US Department of Homeland Security guidance says that no passwords or other personal information will be retained. While this is not usual, you should be aware that such searches can be made.

**Device Inspection**

US Customs officials are authorized to search or retain electronic devices, including digital cameras, cell phones, media players, and disk drives as well as the items listed above, even without probable cause, to look for violation of export control regulations as well as other laws and regulations.

**Be Prepared**

- Don’t carry data you don’t want others to see: medical records, data files from your research, financial information, photos, etc.
- Don’t carry the only copy of data you can’t afford to lose.
- Have a “Plan B” if there is data you will need when you reach your destination.
- Consider taking a minimal device equipped with only ordinary, recognizable software and minimal data so any search can be fast and the consequence of a loss less disruptive.
- Read the following important information:
  - MIT’s “Guidance regarding international travel with MIT data and materials”
  - The Vice President for Research’s webpage on “International Travel”
  - MIT IS&T Travel and Technology page

**Form I-94 Arrival Record**

Form I-94 is the arrival record issued by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to foreign nationals entering the US. Once you have been admitted to the US, you may download your electronic Form I-94 Record from the CBP website. Click on “Already Visiting & Need Proof of Visitor Status?” then click on “Get my most recent I-94.” Please check your I-94 record to be sure you were admitted to the US in the correct visa status. If not, please contact the ISchO for assistance.

**Other Resources**

American Immigration Lawyers Association “Know your rights”
American Civil Liberties Union “Know your rights at the airport”