UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Office of Global Engagement
1324 S. Lumpkin St. Athens, Georgia 30602
TEL 706-542-2900 | FAX 706-583-0123
is.uga.edu

H-1B TRAVEL CHECKLIST

While most of us need to travel for work, visiting family, or vacation, there are times when traveling outside the U.S. while in H-1B status is NOT advisable. If one of the below situations applies to you, then the Immigration Services (IS) office does **NOT** recommend travel outside the U.S. You should not travel outside the U.S. if:

- You have an application on file to change your immigration status to H-1B from another status, or from H-1B to another immigration status. If you leave the U.S. before the H application is approved, your application may be considered to be abandoned, and you will might not be allowed back into the U.S.
- An H-1B extension has been filed for you, but your current authorization (I-797 approval notice) has expired. If you leave the U.S. before the extension is approved and after the current approval has expired, you will not have any valid paperwork and you will not be allowed back into the U.S. until our pending petition is approved.
- An H-1B "change of employer" application has been filed for you, but your current authorization (I-797 approval notice) has expired. If you leave before the H-1B at the new employer has been approved and after the current approval has expired, you will not have any valid paperwork and you will not be allowed back into the U.S.

If the above situations do not apply to you and your H-1B petition has been approved OR you are awaiting the approval of an extension and your current I-797 will still be valid on your return date, then you are eligible for travel and re-entry to the U.S. In order to re-enter the U.S. after your trip, you must have the following items:

- Valid, unexpired form I-797 H-1B approval notice.
- Valid passport - **CBP Officers aren't allowed to admit someone past the expiration date of their passport.**
- Valid H-1B visa stamp in passport.
- Photocopy of the entire H-1B application filed for you by UGA (copy from IS).
- Letter from your employer confirming that you are still employed in the position described in the H-1B petition, that you are making a short trip and expected back to work soon (IS recommends that you carry two originals written on department letterhead).

**If your visa has expired or you have changed your status in the U.S. and never had an H-1B visa, you must obtain a new H-1B visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate before you can re-enter the U.S. To find out what specific documents you should have with you to obtain your H-1B visa, you should locate the web site for the Embassy or Consulate you will be going to at https://www.usembassy.gov/

The only time a valid H-1B visa is not required for re-entry to the U.S. is when traveling to Canada or Mexico for 30 days or less. In this case you will travel under what is known as "Automatic Visa Revalidation." To take advantage of this you should request a letter from your H advisor at the same time you request your I-797. You will show this letter at the border along with your expired H-1B visa.

After your travels, remember to upload your visa, passport (port-of-entry) stamp, and I-94 record (can be printed from www.cbp.gov/i94) to Compass at compass.uga.edu. Once you login, look at the list of menu

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items on the left. Click on general and then "Update My Personal Information". Complete and upload all documents.

Please look at the date written on the passport stamp and be sure to check your I-94 record. The status end date on your I-94 record should match your I-797 approval notice end date!! **Reminder: CBP Officers aren't allowed to admit someone past the expiration date of their passport.** ***Please contact IS immediately if I-94 record does not match I-797 approval notice end date.***

An H visa holder cannot be admitted beyond the expiration date of the passport presented at the time of admission. CBP Officers aren't allowed to admit someone to the U.S. if the passport has expired.

Have a great trip, and email your H advisor if you have any problems while you are abroad!