

International Student Handbook

2021-2022



Office of International Affairs (OIA)



**WEST VIRGINIA STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Welcome from the Office of International Affairs

Dear International Students:

Welcome to West Virginia State University! We are very proud that you have chosen to join us and our international student body from more than 20 different countries.

Studying in a foreign country is a challenging and memorable experience. However, we are aware that adjusting to a new environment is not always easy, nor is it the same for each person. To minimize the difficulties you might have, we are here to provide you with all the assistance and support possible to help you during this transition period.

In this handbook, you will find information about Office of International Affairs, the United States Department of Homeland Security requirements, international students tracking system (SEVIS), the WVSU community and other topics. We hope that this handbook, along with the WVSU Catalog and other brochures, will answer most of your questions. Please feel welcome to call us or stop by the Office of International Affairs whenever you have questions or concerns.

All international students are urged to keep in regular contact with your international student advisor.

We wish you every success during your stay at WVSU.

Sincerely,

Patrick Liu
Director of International Student Services
304 Ferrell Hall
Phone: (304) 204-4094
Email: international@wvstateu.edu

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

Implementation of SEVIS

Q: What is SEVIS?

SEVIS, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), is an Internet-based system which maintains accurate and current information on non-immigrant students (F and M visa), exchange visitors (J visa), and their dependents (F-2, M-2, and J-2). SEVIS enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information and event notifications via the Internet, to the Department of Homeland Security and Department of State (DOS) throughout a student or exchange visitor's stay in the United States. The system reflects international student or exchange visitor status changes, such as admission at Port of Entry (POE), change of address, change in program of study, and other details. SEVIS also provides system alerts, event notifications, and basic reports to the end-user schools, programs, and field offices.

Q: What exact data will be sent to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security via SEVIS?

Law and regulation requires SEVIS to collect the following data from international students and exchange visitors.

- I-20 (F-1) and DS-2019 (J-1) form Information
- Name, place and date of birth;
- Country of citizenship; address
- Status (full-time V. part-time)
- Date of commencement of studies
- Number of credits completed per year
- Degree program and field of study, Change in major
- School transfer, reinstatement
- Practical training (beginning and ending dates)
- Termination date and reason, if known
- Date of visa issuance and classification granted
- Current academic and program status of students
- Any disciplinary actions taken against the student due to criminal conviction
- Information on the date of entry and port of entry

WVSU is required to report your information to U.S. Department of Homeland Security via SEVIS within 30 days after the first day of classes each semester. If there is any change or update regarding the above-mentioned items, please inform the Office of International Affairs (OIA) immediately.



You are urged to keep in close contact with OIA for the accurate reporting of your information.

F-1 Visa and Immigration Information



Enforcement of U.S. Immigration Laws and Regulations

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 radically altered the structure of the agencies involved in the immigration process. The Act mandates that the functions of the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) be moved to the new Department of Homeland Security, for the abolition of INS. INS ceased to exist on March 1, 2003.

U.S. immigration functions are divided between three bureaus of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

1. **USCIS:** The *Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services*, which calls itself U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is responsible for most applications and petition adjudications.
2. **ICE:** The *Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement* (ICE) is responsible for immigration investigations, detention, removal, intelligence, and SEVIS.
3. **CBP:** The *Bureau of Customs and Border Protection* (CBP) is responsible for immigration inspections at U.S. ports of entry, for the Border Patrol, and for the Customs Service.

Like all other countries of the world, the United States has laws and regulations governing foreigners who are temporarily within its boundaries. These regulations are often complex, and they change periodically. You are responsible for knowing the regulations regarding your particular immigration status. Violating any of these regulations will result in your falling out of status and may subject you to deportation. **10 essential things that you are responsible for doing with respect to immigration law and regulations are summarized below:**

1. **Keep your passport valid at all times.**
2. **Maintain your full-time enrollment during the academic year.**
3. **File a program extension in advance if you need more time than allowed on the I-20 to complete the program of study for which the I-20 is issued.**
4. **Do not accept employment unless the employment is officially authorized.**
5. **Do not travel outside the United States even briefly without the proper documents and signatures on those documents.**
6. **If you are about to graduate or otherwise complete the activity for which you came to the United States and you want to remain in the U.S. for further study or some other activity, apply before you complete your current activity for whatever authorization you need to remain here.**
7. **Report your new address to the Office of International Affairs within 10 days after you change it.**
8. **Give truthful answers to any questions an immigration officer might ask you about your student status.**

9. **Keep close contact with your international student advisor.**
10. **Read carefully Instructions to Students on page 3 of your I-20 and letters or notices from the Office of International Affairs every time you receive them.**

What is a DSO?

DSO refers to a designated school official. Designated school officials serve as liaisons between international students, the school and the U.S. government. DSOs issue necessary immigration forms, guide students through the process of studying in the U.S., maintain records in SEVIS. WVSU has one PDSO-Principle Designated School Official and a couple of DSOs on campus.

WVSU is required to notify U.S. government agencies when a student or exchange visitor has failed to maintain his or her status or is no longer attending the University. USICE has granted limited authority to school officials to authorize employment for international students. In general, it is the student's responsibility to keep a close contact with his/her international student advisor, and an international student advisor will do his/her best to help students and scholars in fulfilling their legal obligations so they can maintain their legal status.



Basic Immigration Documents

You should make photocopies of your immigration documents and keep the copies in a safe place.

1. The passport pages that have your picture and personal information
2. The passport page with the visa on it
3. Your I-94 card
4. You should keep all I-20s

Passport and its Renewal Your passport is your own government's permit for you to leave and reenter your own country. You should keep your passport valid at all times. Most passports contain an expiration date. Consult your own consulate or embassy in the U.S. to renew your passport. The officials there will tell you what forms and fees, if any, are required. If you are required to supply a letter affirming that you are a student at WVSU, you can request such a letter from the Office of International Affairs (OIA).

Visa Stamp The visa stamp put in your passport by the U.S. consul abroad is needed to enter the United States. The visa shows the latest date on which you can apply to enter this country. It does not show how long you can stay in the U.S. It also indicates the kind of visa you have--usually F-1 visa. An American visa is computer-generated and machine-readable, and it shows the date the visa was issued, the date on which the visa will expire, the nonimmigrant status for which the visa was issued, and the number of entries that may be made by using this visa. Canadian students don't need a visa to study in the U.S., but an F-1 student visa status.

When you arrive at your "U.S. port of entry," an Immigration inspector examines your passport, visa, I-20 and other documents if you have an F-1 visa, and determines whether you are admissible to the U.S. and how long you can stay.

Renewing Your Visa Stamp It is necessary to renew your visa **only if** you plan to leave and reenter the U.S. after your visa has expired It is **NOT** possible to renew an F-1 visa while you are within the borders of the U.S. Please be aware that your F-1 visa does NOT determine how long you can stay in the U.S. and that you can study with an expired F-1 student visa as long as you are full-time enrolled and the program end date on your I-20 is in the future.



Form I-94, Departure Record Your I-94 card shows that you have been lawfully admitted to the U.S. and it contains an eleven digit identifying number (called your admission number), which is used to keep track of your arrival in and departure from the United States. Open this link <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home> to print out a copy of your I-94 card.

Expiration of an I-94 Since you are an F1 student, "D/S" (duration of status) will be on your I-94 card. You are admitted for the length of your program as indicated on Form I-20 and for as long as you maintain your nonimmigrant status according to the regulations governing your status. If your I-94 has a specific departure date, please contact the Office of International Affairs as soon as possible.

The Form I-20 Your I-20 has three pages, and it is issued for the program and level of study you are presently pursuing. You should keep it for your own record. Please read it read carefully, especially the **Instructions to Students** on page 3. Page 2 has spaces for information about the F-1 student's employment authorization, curricular practical training permission, optional practical training recommendations, or signatures by your international student advisor.

Full-Time Study With few exceptions, F-1 students **must** maintain full-time student status each semester until they receive their degrees. (F-1 students are not required to register for the summer session.). **Full-time** is defined as (9) credit hours for graduate students, and twelve (12) credit hours for undergraduate students each required semester. Any deviations from full-time study should be discussed with an international student advisor. WVSU is required to report via SEVIS when an F-1 student is enrolled less than full time. Exceptions to the full-time enrollment requirement are possible in the case of health problems or for valid academic reasons.

Duration of Status F-1 students have permission to remain in the United States for what is known as "duration of status," noted on the Form I-94 as "D/S." Duration of status is defined as "the period during which the student is pursuing a full course of studies in any educational program (e.g., bachelor's or master's degree, or a doctoral program) and any period of authorized practical training, plus sixty days within which to depart from the United States."

Completion Date Program end date on your I-20 shows the date by which you are expected to complete the program of study for which your I-20 was issued. This date is based on an estimate of the length of time it takes a student to complete that particular program of study. If you complete the program of study before the date on your I-20, we will shorten your program end date to reflect the actual graduation date.

Program Extension If you cannot complete the program of study by the date shown on your I-20, you **MUST** request a program extension **in advance**. If you have valid reasons for requesting more time and have maintained your F-1 status, please come to the Office of International Affairs to request program extension

weeks **prior to** the program end date. You are responsible for your program extension. **Your program extension must be made before the completion date on your I-20.**

Level of Study The various levels of study are indicated on the I-20. When an F-1 student changes from one level to another, a new I-20 must be issued. If you complete a program at a certain level of study and continue for a second program of study at that same level, for example, if you earn a bachelor's degree and want to earn a second bachelor's degree, a new I-20 must be issued for the second program of study.

Change of Major If you change your major, you should notify your international student advisor of such a change immediately. A new I-20 will be issued to reflect such a change.

Change of Address If you change your address, you must report your new address OIA with 10 days after you change it. If you change your address in your home country, you should report as well.

School Transfer To be eligible for school transfer, an F-1 student must have been pursuing a full course of study in the semester immediately preceding the transfer, or have been engaged in post-completion practical training. Any student not meeting these requirements is ineligible for the school transfer and must apply to USICS for reinstatement to student status. Before leaving the old school, the student **must** inform that school of the intention to transfer school and fill out a Transfer-out Form. Upon receipt of the form completed by the student, the current school's DSO will update the student as a "transfer out" to the intended new school in the reporting system. The student is then required to report his or her presence to the new school so that the DSO at the transfer school can acknowledge the student's attendance, obtain the student's current address, and confirm that the student has completed the transfer process.

Online Classes An F-1 student may take undergraduate or graduate on-line classes during his/her full time studies at WVSU. However, Those students for whom on-line education credits can be counted toward the obligation to maintain a full course of study will be limited to counting one class or three credits per semester toward the obligation, provided that the class is accepted for credit at the school that the student is currently attending. No on-line or distance education classes taken by an F-1 student in a language program or elementary or secondary school program, can be counted as being part of the student's full course of study, given the limited duration or focus of those programs. **Please Contact OIA for the detailed information regarding online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

What Options you will have if you are Graduating

Generally speaking, as an F1 student, you have the following 4 options:

1. Depart the U.S. within 60 days of completing the course of study.
2. Continue in F-1 status by pursuing further F-1 studies either at the same institution or another school.
3. Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) before completing the course of study. OPT will allow you to work in the US up to 12 months if you have not used any before graduation.
4. Apply to change status, to another non-immigrant classification no later than 60 days after completing the course of study, such as an H-1B temporary work visa.

If an F-1 student does not choose one of these options after completing a course of study and remains in the U.S, he or she will be considered "out of status."

How Long can You Stay Legally in the U.S. After Graduation

F-1 students remain in status for a period of 60 days immediately following their graduation or OPT. For example, if you are graduating on April 30, 2022, then the last day of your legal stay in the U. S. is June 30,

2022; however, if you have not used any of your Optional Practice Training, you may apply for OPT so that you will have 12 months to work in the US, and plus 60 days after the end of your OPT. (see the latest regulations on OPT and STEM OPT)

To Pursue Your Second Degree or a Master's Degree at WVSU

If you would like to pursue a second bachelor's degree or a Master's degree at WVSU after graduation, please contact your international student advisor. Please remember that all F1 international students must be engaged in full-time study to maintain their legal status no matter what kind of program they are studying.

F-1 Travel Outside of the United States

If you plan to travel outside the U.S. you should consult OIA first. All students in F-1 status should come to the OIA to obtain an adviser's signature on their I-20 before leaving the United States. Students and their F-2 dependents without a current signature on their I-20 may be denied reentry to the United States, or may experience delays and inconvenience at the port of entry.

F-2 Dependents <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html#spouse>

Only the spouse and unmarried minor children (under age 21) who accompany the primary visa holder to the U.S. may receive F-2 dependent status. Their eligibility to stay legally in the U.S., as well as to extend their stay, is contingent upon the primary visa holder maintaining his/her legal status and extending his/her program in a timely manner. All other family members must apply for a B-1 or B-2 visitor's visa to gain entry to the U.S.

Documents Needed to Apply for an F-2 Visa

- Valid passport
- Photographs
- F-2 dependent SEVIS Form I-20
- Visa application fee and Visa Application
- Supporting documentation, including copies of the F-1 student's immigration documents, proof of student status, and financial documentation.

Important Information about F-2 Status

- Once the F-1 student has completed his or her studies and has left the U.S., the F-2 dependents must leave as well.
- Dependent children over age 21 are no longer eligible to F-2 status and will need to change to another status such as F-1 (for full time students) if they wish to stay in the U.S.
- At the end of the F-1 program, there is a 60-day grace period during which the F-1/F-2 may stay in the U.S. Once the F-1 primary leaves the U.S., the F-2 dependents must leave as well.
- The F-2 spouse and children of an F-1 student **may not** accept employment in the U.S. However, they may do volunteer work as long as there is no compensation of any kind and the F-2 dependent is doing a job usually done by volunteers.
- F-2 dependents of F-1 students in the United States may study part time at the postsecondary level in any certified program at an SEVP-certified school, as long as the study does not amount to what regulations define as full time for an F-1 student [defined in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)].
- F-2 dependents may also study full time in avocational or recreational studies, such as hobbies.

- F-2 minor children must comply with compulsory education requirements in attending kindergarten through 12th grade. However, an F-2 dependent who wants to enroll full time in a course of postsecondary academic or vocational study must apply for and obtain approval to change nonimmigrant status to F-1 before beginning their full-time study.

Employment (F-1 Students)

Employment opportunities for foreign students in the U.S. are restricted by law. These laws are intended to protect job opportunities in the U.S. for U.S. citizens and permanent residents by minimizing the number of foreign nationals competing for jobs with Americans.

Social Security Number

A Social security number is required if you will do any work in the United States during your time at WVSU, including on-campus work. Please refer to **HOW TO GET A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD** on page 14 of this handbook.

On-Campus Employment

No USCIS permission to work is required when an F-1 student who is maintaining his or her status is employed under the terms of a scholarship, or assistantship or at any part-time on-campus job. F-1 students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week on campus when school is in session and up to 40 hours per week on campus during vacation.



To work off campus, you must have proper authorization from USCIS or OIA.

Off-Campus Employment Categories

1. **Employment authorized because of severe economic hardship.**
2. **Certain employment sponsored by international originations**
3. **Special student relief program employment**

(Please visit OIA for the detailed information on the above 3 types of employment)

4. **Practical training (OPT & CPT)**

Practical Training F-1 students may participate in two kinds of practical training: curricular practical training (CPT)/Internship and optional practical training (OPT). Both types of practical training allow an F-1 student to work off campus in a job related to his or her major field of study.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) This type of practical training permission allows students who are still registered for classes to participate in internships which are an integral or required part of their curriculum. Any student who participates in one year (12 months) of full-time curricular practical training is not eligible for any optional practical training. Part-time curricular practical training does not count against optional practical training. For detailed information, please stop in the Office of International Affairs

Optional Practical Training (OPT) An F-1 student may have a maximum of 12 months optional practical training permission. This type of practical training may be saved until the completion of studies, or it may be used in bits and pieces while a student is still enrolled in school. The following restrictions apply to optional practical training: (1) the undergraduate student must have maintained F-1 status for one full academic year; (2) work must be related to a student's major field of study.

Optional practical training may be used for a part-time job (20 hours per week or less) when a student is enrolled in classes, or it may be used during the summer vacation period for a position that can be full-time. Students who have completed all of the required courses for their degree program and who are working on thesis or dissertation research may use optional practical training for a full-time position, or they may save it to use after graduation. It is possible to divide optional practical training into segments; for instance, to use three months one summer and save nine months for post-completion of study, or to use six months during two summers and save six months for post-completion of study, or any such combination. **The student must apply early to ensure that the student will have received his or her work permit in time to commence optional practical training.**

If you are a STEM major, you may apply for additional 24 months of STEM OPT

For detailed application procedure, please stop in the Office of International Affairs.

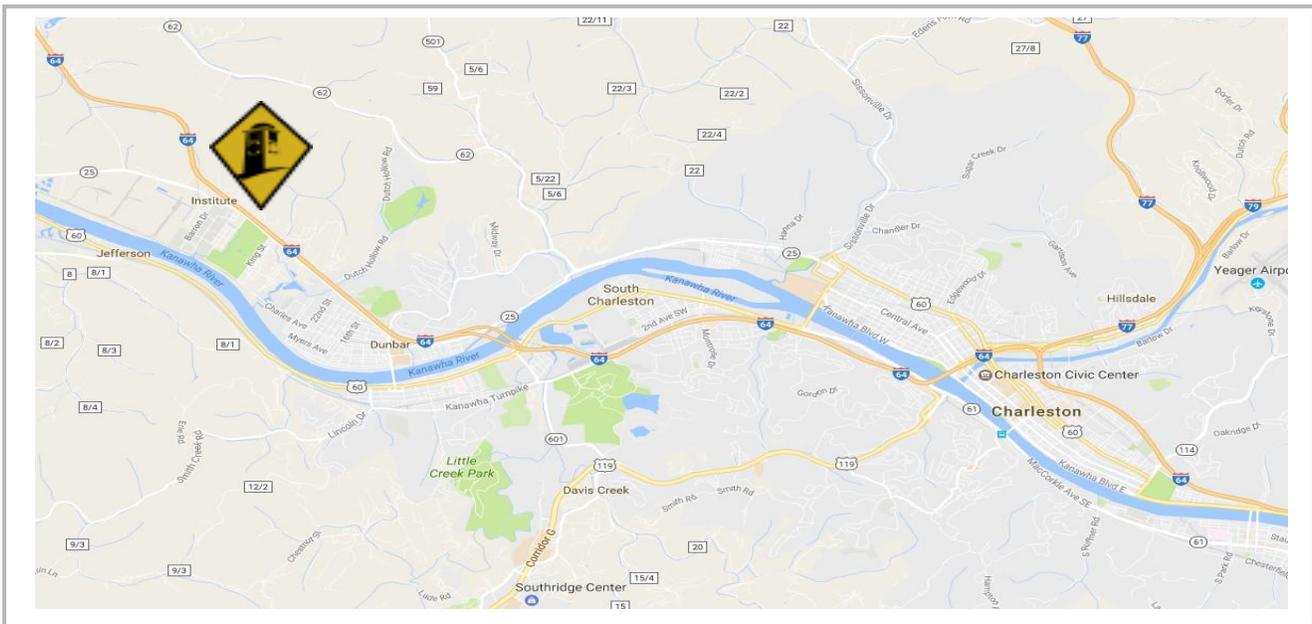


Community, Living, Transportation and Recreation

Charleston, West Virginia

West Virginia is located in the eastern United States, in the heart of the unique Appalachian region. Originally known for its logging and coal industries, West Virginia is quickly becoming a leader in 21st-century industries including manufacturing, energy, technology and more. The state features more than 45 state and national parks, a rich cultural heritage (particularly in music) and a wide array of possibilities for work, life and play.

WVSU is in close proximity to Charleston, the government and culture capital of the state. With a metro population of around 224,000, you'll find a city big enough to offer the opportunities you want, but small enough to feel like home.



Getting Around

Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority

www.rideonkrt.com

The area's bus transportation system drop-off and pick-up location for campus is outside of Ferrell Hall, along Barron Drive. Please open the link below for detailed bus schedule information:

<https://rideonkrt.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/KVRTA-Rt-3i-Web3c.pdf>

C&H Taxi, (304) 344-4902

www.chtaxi.com

Greyhound Long-Distance Bus Service www.greyhound.com/en

Charleston, WV Bus Station

300 Reynolds St., Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 357-0056

Uber

The mobile application Uber allows you to request a driver to any location by using your smartphone or tablet. If GPS or location services on your device are turned on, all you need to do is click “set pick up location” and Uber will show you what drivers are close to you and quote a price for pickup. You can also set your location manually by typing in an address. Uber prices are much cheaper than traditional taxi services. Payment is set up by putting your credit or debit card number into the application. Your card is charged automatically after your ride is completed. Uber drivers are often less than 10 minutes away, so there should not be a long wait.

Lyft

The mobile application Lyft also allows you to request a driver to any location by using your smartphone or tablet. It works the same way as the application Uber (see above). Drivers for Lyft are often also drivers for Uber.



How to Get a Driver’s License

In order to obtain a driver’s license in West Virginia, the first step is to apply for a learner’s permit. Please follow the steps below:

- Acquire a West Virginia driver’s manual from a local Division of Motor Vehicles center, and study the guide.
- Take the following documents with you to the Kanawha City Department of Motor Vehicles at 5707 MacCorkle Ave., South East, Suite 400, Charleston, WV 25317:
 - U.S. Social Security card or a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) denying the issuance of a Social Security card. (Please see section on following page for information on how to obtain a Social Security card.)
 - Two (2) proofs of WV residency
 - A valid passport
 - A form I-94
 - A visa issued by the U.S., if the applicant is from a nation whose citizens are required by the U.S. to obtain a visa
 - All original documents to verify status and length of authorized stay
 - A form I-20 and written verification of attendance at the school listed on form I-20 if the applicant’s status is F-1 or F-2

- Written verification from an employer, if the applicant's status is H1-A, H1-B, H-3 or H-4
 - A form DS 2019 and written verification of attendance at the school listed on form DS 2019 if the applicant's status is J-1 or J-2
 - Check or money order of \$5
- Take your eye screening and knowledge test at the Kanawha City Regional DMV Office of Charleston. Once you pass these, you will be issued your Instruction Permit.
 - Schedule a road test either online or by calling (304) 558-3900.

For more information, visit www.transportation.wv.gov/DMV

The WVSU campus is located an equal distance between two DMV offices:

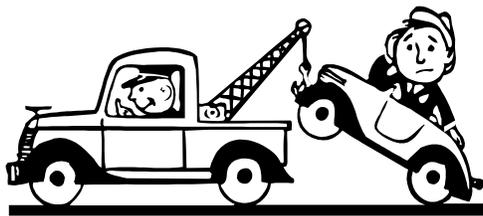
Kanawha City Regional DMV Office of Charleston
 5707 MacCorkle Ave. SE
 Charleston, WV 25317
 (304) 558-3900 | (800) 642-9066

Teays Valley/Winfield Regional
 116 Liberty Square
 Hurricane, WV 25526
 (304) 558-3900 | (800) 642-9066

Buying and Registering a Car

To save money, most international students buy a used car, either from a car dealer or from a private individual who has advertised a car for sale. In any case, you should have with you an American acquaintance or someone who is knowledgeable about cars.

When you buy a car, the "Certificate of Ownership" or "Certificate of Title" must be transferred to you from the previous owner. You must register your car and obtain a license plate for it. This is done at the Department of Motor Vehicles. If you buy a car from a dealer, usually the dealer will take care of these details on your behalf.



Automobile Insurance

It is essential to have at least liability insurance if you have a car since you are financially responsible if you cause your car to injure another person or damage someone else's property. There are several types of automobile insurance:

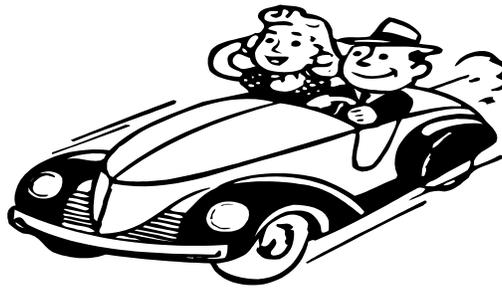
1. **Liability Insurance** is the most basic type. It protects you if your car kills or injures someone else, or damages someone else's property. You are considered legally liable if a car you own (whether you or someone else is driving it) causes injury or death to another person or damage to someone else's property, unless the accident is clearly not the fault of the person driving the car. If you are legally liable for injuries, death, or damages resulting from an automobile accident, you could face payments of tens of thousands of dollars. You

must have liability insurance to help pay those costs. Without it, you would have to pay them yourself. That is why you need liability insurance, even if your car itself is not very valuable.

2. **Collision Insurance** protects your car in case of collision with another car. This insurance may entitle you to benefits when repairing your car, in addition to the damages that might be paid by the other driver. Collision is the most common type of auto accident and it is **advisable** that you be covered by collision insurance in case you need to repair even minor damages to your car.

3. **Comprehensive Insurance** covers losses caused by storms, thieves, and vandals. This type of insurance is not as crucial as the others, but there are incidents of car theft and vandalism. If you are living in a large city, you may consider this type of coverage.

Buying Car Insurance Unless a friend can recommend a reliable agent to you, you should talk to at least two agents about your insurance needs. Insurance rates vary from company to company, and they depend on the value of the car, the amount it is driven, the age of the drivers, and the past driving records of the drivers.



How to Get a Social Security Card

In order to work, you will need a U.S. Social Security card with your Social Security Number on it. Please note that you must first have a job, as you cannot get a Social Security card without a job.

To apply, you will need to follow these steps:

1. Complete the application for a Social Security card (form SS-5)
2. Visit the Social Security Office:
Charleston Social Security Office
500 Quarrier St., Suite 300
Charleston, WV 25301 Tel: (800) 772-1213
3. Bring your:
 - I-94
 - I-20
 - Passport
 - Complete application
 - Letter from your employer. (It must identify you, your employment start date, the number of hours you will be working, supervisor's name and telephone number and Employer Identification Number.)
 - Letter from your designated school official (DSO)

Note: You *MUST* have a job to apply for a Social Security card. However, if you wish to apply for a driver's license in West Virginia, you will need to apply for the Social Security card and get the Social Security card denial letter to take to the DMV. For more information, visit: www.ssa.gov

Opening a Bank Account



You may need to open a checking or savings account with a bank after arriving. Many banks allow you to open accounts with them online or over the phone. But as an international student, it is much easier to go in and meet with them in person. (**NOTE: Huntington Bank is close in proximity and has ATMs on campus.**) Once you have chosen a bank, go to a branch with the following items:

1. Passport
2. I-94
3. I-20
4. Secondary identification (e.g., a school ID card or driver's license)
5. Your full name, U.S. address (on a utility bill or apartment lease or contract), U.S. phone number, campus phone number and the university address
6. Money you intend to open the account with (amount varies by bank)



Living On-Campus & Off-Campus

On-Campus Housing

Undergraduate are required to live on campus for their first two years at WVSU.

Students may choose a single room in either a traditional residence hall or suite style. Once housing assignments are made, we will email your housing confirmation and assigned building. Room numbers will not be available until you arrive. You must fill out the housing application as soon as possible before arriving.

- Graduate students may live in residence halls if space is available.

WVSU requires first- and second-year students enrolled for 12+ credit hours to live in residence halls and participate in a meal plan. This excludes summer sessions and is applicable until students attain junior status (58 credit hours), reach age 21, have graduated from high school two years prior to the academic year or exemption is granted by the Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Your room will include:

- Bed with extra-long twin mattress (Twin XL)
- Desk and chair
- Closet
- Window covering
- Amenities including TV cable connection, Ethernet port and free wireless internet

If you do not bring bed or bath linens, there are stores near campus where you can buy these and other necessities. You will also need to bring or purchase a pillow.

On-Campus Housing Options

Dawson Hall-Single or Double



Keith Scholars Hall-2, 3 or 4 BR



Appliances

U.S. electrical outlets are 110 volts AC. If you are bringing a small appliance and other electronic items, you may need a voltage adapter.

Off-Campus Housing Many housing options are available to graduate students and other students not living in campus housing. WVSU has limited apartments available on campus.

Apartment Finder is a useful tool for finding off-campus housing:
www.apartmentfinder.com/West-Virginia/Charleston-Apartments

Hotels If you arrive before the move-in date for your program, you will need to make arrangements with campus housing for a temporary assignment at a daily rate or stay in a local hotel.

Dining On Campus

The meal plan allows students to enter WVSU dining halls during mealtimes. This plan gives students access to a dining facility every day at WVSU, including most break periods. (Students have a certain number of meals per meal plan.)



On-campus dining options:

- Goldston Dining Room (Located at James C. Wilson University Union)
- Mondo Subs (Located at James C. Wilson University Union)
- BRB - Be Right Burger (Located at James C. Wilson University Union)
- Starbucks (Located at James C. Wilson University Union)
- William F. Pickard Café (Located in Judge Damon J. Keith Scholars Hall)

Dining Off Campus

There are a variety of dining options available on campus as well as in Charleston and surrounding areas. In addition, there are grocery stores nearby where vegan, vegetarian and Halal options are available.

Groceries

- International Groceries & Spices, 5304 MacCorkle Ave. SE, Charleston, Tel: (304) 926-6101
- Kroger, 5450 Big Tyler Road, Charleston, WV 25313, Tel: (304) 776-5063
- Kroger, 981 Dunbar Village Plaza, Dunbar, WV 25064, Tel: (304) 768-6481
- ALDI, 434 12th St. Dunbar, WV 25064, Tel: (855) 955-2534
- Capitol Market, 800 Smith St., Charleston, WV 25301
- Asian Market, 226 Seventh Ave. South Charleston, WV 25303

Restaurants

Little India Restaurant, 1604 Washington St. East Charleston, WV 25311, Tel: (304) 720-3616

- Sitar of India, 702 Lee St. East, Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 346-3745
- Sushi Garden, 800 Smith St., Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 344-1905
- Pho Vinh Long, 601 D St., Charleston, WV 25303, Tel: (304) 720-7333
- Asian Grill Restaurant, 1110 Fledderjohn Road, Charleston, WV 25314, Tel: (304) 720-8880
- Fujiyama, 5780 MacCorkle Ave. SE, Charleston, WV 25304, Tel: (304) 343-7788

Health Insurance WVSU requires all international students to have health insurance. The WVSU Student Health Insurance Plan is automatically added to your invoice.

Prescriptions Bring a copy, in English, of ALL prescriptions for medicines, eyeglasses and contact lenses with you to the U.S.

Student Health Services

Health care services are provided on campus at the Thomas Care Clinic inside the WVSU Student Union for illnesses affecting students such as cold, flu, upset stomach, etc. WVSU will cover the co-pay for the visit.

There are some costs students will be individually responsible for, should the need arise, including:

- Cost of any medication
- Cost of any dental services
- Cost of X-rays or laboratory work done outside the Care Clinic
- Cost of referred specialist
- Cost of hospital services
- Cost of emergency transportation (ambulance)
- Cost of optical services (glasses, etc.)



Pharmacies

If you need medications, local pharmacies in the Charleston area will have them in stock. Over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin or ibuprofen, are available without a prescription. Others are only available through a doctor's prescription. Visit WVSU's Thomas Care Clinic for additional guidance.

Pharmacies near WVSU

- Walgreens, 101 Goff Mountain Road, Cross Lanes, WV 25313, Tel: (304) 769-0590 (3.11 miles)
- Rite Aid, 1101 Myers Ave., Dunbar, WV 25064, Tel: (304) 768-1284 (2.12 miles)
- CVS, 121 10th St., Dunbar, WV 25064, Tel: (304) 768-0023 (2.3 miles)

Recreation and Fun



MOVIE THEATERS

Regal Nitro Stadium 12, 12 JW Drive, Charleston, WV 25313, Tel: (844) 462-7342
www.regmovies.com/theatres/theatre-folder/regal-nitro-stadium-12-8099

Marquee Cinemas-Southridge 12, Southridge Center, 331 Southridge Blvd., Charleston, Tel: (304) 746-9900
www.marqueecinemas.com/location/26192/Southridge-12

Park Place Stadium Cinemas, 600 Washington St. East, Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 345-6541
www.ghctheatres.com/location/24157/Park-Place-Stadium-Cinemas

ATTRACTIONS

Apartment Earth Gallery, 221 Hale St., Charleston, WV 25311, Tel: (304) 993-8384
www.facebook.com/apartmentearth

The Art Store, 233 Hale St., Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 345-1038
www.theartstorewv.com The Art Store is dedicated to showing original 20th-century and contemporary American art by locally, regionally, and nationally recognized artists.

The Charleston Ballet, 100 Capitol St., Charleston, WV 25301
www.thecharlestonballet.com Since its debut performance in April 1956 under the skillful direction of founder Andre Van Damme, the Charleston Ballet has presented well over 175 original works as well as many traditional ballet stagings.

Charleston Civic Center, 200 Civic Center Drive, Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 345-1500

www.charlestonwvciviccenter.com The Charleston Civic Center hosts concerts, fairs, sporting events, conferences and much more.

The Charleston Light Opera Guild, 411 Tennessee Ave., Charleston, WV 25326, Tel: (304) 343-2287
www.charlestonlightoperaguild.org The Charleston Light Opera Guild was founded in 1949 by a group of vocal teachers and talented amateur performers who sought an outlet for musical talent in the Kanawha Valley

Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences, One Clay Square, 300 Leon Sullivan Way, Charleston, WV 25301
Tel: (304) 561-3570 www.theclaycenter.org The stimulating Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences is a multimillion-dollar facility with performance and gallery spaces.

Cultural Center and State Museum, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E., Charleston, WV 25305, Tel: (304) 558-0220
www.wvculture.org Located on the State Capitol grounds, the Cultural Center includes the interactive West Virginia State Museum, archives, two libraries and the state theater.

Gallery 11, 1025 Quarrier St., Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 342-0083
www.galleryeleven.com Gallery 11 offers a diverse group of award-winning artists' work from West Virginia.

J.Q. Dickinson Salt Works, 4797 Midland Dr., Malden, WV 25306, Tel: (304) 925-7918
www.jqdsalt.com A seventh-generation salt-making family harvests an all-natural salt by hand, from an ancient ocean trapped below the Appalachian Mountains of the Kanawha Valley.

Kanawha Players, 311 D St., Charleston, WV 25303, Tel: (304) 343-7529
www.kanawhaplayers.org Kanawha Players is the second-longest continuously operating amateur theater company in the country.

West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, One Clay Square, Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 561-3500
www.wvsymphony.org The West Virginia Symphony Orchestra is West Virginia's premier performing arts organization, presenting more than 50 concerts annually to audiences throughout the Mountain State.

SPORTS AND OUTDOORS

WVSU Athletics

Facebook: WVSU Yellow Jackets

Twitter: @WVSU_GoJackets

Website: www.wvsuyellowjackets.com

Women's Sports: Basketball, Softball, Cross Country, Volleyball and Tennis

Men's Sports: Baseball, Basketball, Football, Golf and Tennis

ACE Adventure Resort, 1 Concho Road, Minden, WV 25879, Tel: (800) 787-3982
www.aceraft.com This adventure resort offers activities from whitewater rafting to rock climbing.

Appalachian Boarding Company, PO Box 744, Scott Depot, WV 25560, Tel: (304) 693-2955
www.appalachianboardingcompany.com From the mile-high mountain lakes of the Pacific Northwest to the crystal clear waters of the Caribbean Sea, Appalachian Boarding Company has paddled them all and everywhere in between. We've found there's nothing more wild and wonderful than the waterways in West Virginia right here at home in Appalachia.

Appalachian Power Park, 601 Morris St., Charleston, WV 25301, Tel: (304) 344-2287

www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t525 Don't pass up a West Virginia Power baseball game (Class A affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates).

Cato Park, 200 Baker Lane, Charleston, WV 25302

www.charlestonwv.gov/government/city-departments/parks-recreation Cato Park is the largest and most-used park in Charleston.

Charleston Family YMCA, 300 Hillcrest Drive East, Charleston, WV 25311, Tel: (304) 340-3527

www.ymcawv.org Full-service fitness and aquatic facility.

Kanawha State Forest, 7500 Kanawha State Forest Drive, Charleston, WV 25314, Tel: (304) 558-3500

www.kanawhastateforest.com Located just seven miles south of Charleston, Kanawha State Forest is in close proximity to the heavily populated Kanawha Valley and is a recreational haven.

South Charleston Memorial Ice Arena, 20 RHL Blvd., South Charleston, WV 25309, Tel: (304) 744-4423

www.memorialicearena.cityofsouthcharleston.com

A Note About Cultural Items

There are many opportunities for international students to share their culture on campus during festivals and special events. Please consider bringing your national dress or other clothes associated with a hobby or sport you enjoy in your country such as sports attire, dance costumes, etc. You also may wish to bring items such as photos, books, souvenirs, recorded music and musical instruments.

FAITH & CULTURE-RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

- India Center: www.indiacenterwv.com
- Muslim Association of Huntington (41 miles away): www.mahuntington.org
- Blessed Sacrament Church: www.blessedsacramentwv.org
- St. Anthony Catholic Church: www.stanthonywv.com
- Temple Israel: www.charlestonwv.com/listing/temple-israel-.aspx
- Congregation B'nai Jacob: www.bnaijacob.com



Typical Weather **What You can Expect**

Charleston, West Virginia, has a temperate climate, which means that the city experiences four distinct season changes. Please take the below into consideration when packing:

- Temperatures range from 5° Celsius (41° Fahrenheit) in January, 20° C (68 F) in April, 30° C (86° F) in July and 20° C (68° F) in October.
- On average, the hottest months of the year are July and August. Although the temperatures during the summer months don't seem extremely hot, the humidity seems to add a few degrees to the heat.
- The coldest months of the year on average are January and February. Snow or rain can be expected during the winters in Charleston, but rain is more common.

You will need clothing for both warm and cold seasons. Prepare to layer clothing. Also take or prepare to buy umbrellas and/or raincoats in case of rain.



Useful Links

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: <https://www.dhs.gov/>

- **ICE-U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement** <https://www.ice.gov/>
- **CBP-U.S. Customs and Border Protection** <https://www.cbp.gov/>
- **USCIS-Bureau of Citizenship and Immigrant Services** <https://www.uscis.gov/>

SEVIS Related:

Study in the States: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>

SEVIS Fee: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>

SEVP Portal (for approved OPT students): <https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login>

Students and I-20 <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/prepare/students-and-the-form-i-20>

Maintain Status <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/maintaining-status>

Applying for a visa to travel to the United States.

<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/applying-for-a-visa-to-travel-to-the-united-states>

Foreign Embassies and Consulates in the United States

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/consularnotification/ConsularNotificationandAccess.html>

U.S. Department of Justice <https://www.justice.gov/>

U.S. Department of State <https://www.state.gov/>

F-1 Student Visa <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>

Schedule an Interview <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html#howtoapply>

Visitor Visa <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visitor.html>

Citizens of Canada and Bermuda

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/citizens-of-canada-and-bermuda.html>

U.S. Embassies <https://www.usembassy.gov/>

U.S. Department of Education <https://www.ed.gov/>

U.S. Department of Labor <https://www.dol.gov/>

U.S. Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service (IRS) <https://www.irs.gov/>

The official site includes tax statistics, **IRS** information, and links to Federal tax forms.

NAFSA-Association of International Educators <https://www.nafsa.org/>