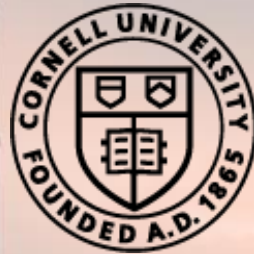


Immigration Policy Updates

What Cornell's International Community Needs to Know
August 31, 2026



Global Cornell

Agenda

- Cornell's commitment: resources and support
- Ending D/S: legal landscape and broader significance
- Legal challenge to D/S rule and next steps
- Immediate implications of D/S rule for Cornell students and scholars
- CPT guidance: overview and immediate implications for F-1 students
- Q&A

This presentation is for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice.

Today's Panel



Wendy Wolford
Vice Provost for
International Affairs



Laura Taylor
Director of International
Services, Office of
Global Learning



Dan Berger
Immigration Law & Policy
Fellow, Cornell Law

Cornell Resources and Support



- **International Services Alerts:**
international.globallearning.cornell.edu/alerts
- **International Services Get Advice:**
international.globallearning.cornell.edu/get-advice
- **Supporting Our International Community:**
global.cornell.edu/advocacy
- **Information on Executive Orders:**
info.cornell.edu/executive-orders
- **Undocumented and DACA Support:**
scl.cornell.edu/undocumented-daca-support

Ending D/S: Legal Landscape and Broader Significance



How Duration of Status (D/S) Worked

- Form I-94 showed **D/S** instead of a fixed admit until date.
- F-1 and J-1 visa holders could remain in the U.S. while maintaining status and participating in authorized academic, exchange, or training activities.
- International Services tracked program information in SEVIS and issued an updated I-20 or DS-2019 when an eligible program extension was needed.
- A program extension did not require Form I-539 to be filed with USCIS.

Rule Ending Duration of Status

- **Effective date: September 15**
- Admit until date (AUD) replaces D/S
- Restrictions on school transfers, changes of objective/major, and level
- New extension of stay process (EOS)
- F-1/J-1 work authorization changes

Legal Challenge and Next Steps

- Cornell is participating in the lawsuit challenging the D/S rule.
- Plaintiffs argue that DHS did not adequately consider over 20,000 public comments or the rule's economic impact.
- A hearing on the preliminary injunction is scheduled for September 3.

Admit Until Date (AUD)

F/J students and scholars who are admitted to the U.S. **before** September 15, 2026:

- Able to remain in the U.S. until their program end date on I-20 or DS-2019 or a four-year period, whichever is shorter.
- F-1 students retain legacy 60-day grace period.

F/J students and scholars who are admitted or readmitted to the U.S. **on or after** September 15, 2026:

- Receive I-94 upon entry with fixed end date (AUD), either program end date on I-20 or DS-2019 or a four-year period, whichever is shorter.
- F-1 students transition to 30-day grace period.

Transfers and Program Changes

Undergraduates: Must remain at the school that issued their initial Form I-20 and in their original program for at least one academic year.

Graduate students: May not transfer schools, change programs, or change educational objectives.

Exceptions:

SEVP may authorize exceptions for extenuating circumstances.

Changing Educational Levels

Lateral matriculation: F-1 students who complete a program may not begin another at the same educational level.

Reverse matriculation: F-1 students who complete a program may not begin another at a lower educational level.

DHS indicates that limited exceptions and further guidance may apply to certain bona fide educational or licensing pathways.

Extension of Stay (EOS)

Transfers beyond the AUD: Students transferring to a new school whose program extends beyond their current AUD will need to file Form I-539 to request an extension.

Stricter eligibility: Requests must generally be based on compelling academic reasons, documented medical conditions, or circumstances beyond the student's control.

File before AUD: Timely filing is generally required to preserve eligible employment authorization. Filing before your 30-day grace period begins may preserve F-1 or J-1 status, but not employment authorization.

Study while application is pending: F-1 students who file on time may continue a full course of study.

Additional review may include biometrics, an interview, and background and security screening.

Travel and Reentry

- Instead of filing EOS from within the U.S., someone with F-1 or J-1 status may leave the country and request readmission for a new fixed period.
- To return in F or J status, the traveler must present the required documents, including a valid passport, visa if required, and an updated I-20 or DS-2019.
- To return in a different visa classification, the individual must qualify and obtain the required visa and documentation.
- CBP determines whether to readmit and establishes the new AUD on Form I-94. Readmission is not guaranteed.

If an I-539 EOS application is pending, readmission based on a later program end date may cause USCIS to consider the application abandoned.

OPT and STEM OPT During the Transition

F-1 students admitted to the U.S. **before** September 15, 2026, who **remain** in the U.S. receive a post-completion OPT or STEM OPT benefit during the transition until March 18, 2027:

- If they file the I-765 (OPT application) with USCIS **by or before March 18, 2027**, they **do not** need to file the EOS application as well.
- Any student who travels and reenters **after September 15, 2026**, **must file** the I-539 EOS application in addition to the OPT I-765.
- Any student who files for OPT/STEM OPT **after March 18, 2027**, **must file** the I-539 EOS application in addition to the OPT I-765, even if they haven't departed and reentered the U.S.

Employment While I-539 is Pending

- F-1 students who file for **I-539 EOS before their 30-day grace period** receive an automatic extension of work authorizations for on-campus and CPT employment for **240 days** while their application is pending.
- Any student who files the I-539 EOS application **during their grace period** does not receive this benefit, though the student may remain in the U.S. and continue their studies.

The rule suggests that J-1 students and scholars may receive similar 240-day employment benefits, but further clarification is needed.

F-1 Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Guidance



New SEVP Guidance on CPT

On August 12, SEVP sent a broadcast message to school officials about the proper use of CPT, signaling a narrower interpretation of existing regulations.

“Ensure that CPT is only authorized when it is truly integral to the program. Only authorize CPT if its absence would make the attainment of a degree an impossibility and if the work associated with CPT is required for all students pursuing that degree.”

On August 24, a second message stated that CPT must be “conducted by employers that have established cooperative agreements with the school.”

How Cornell Is Responding

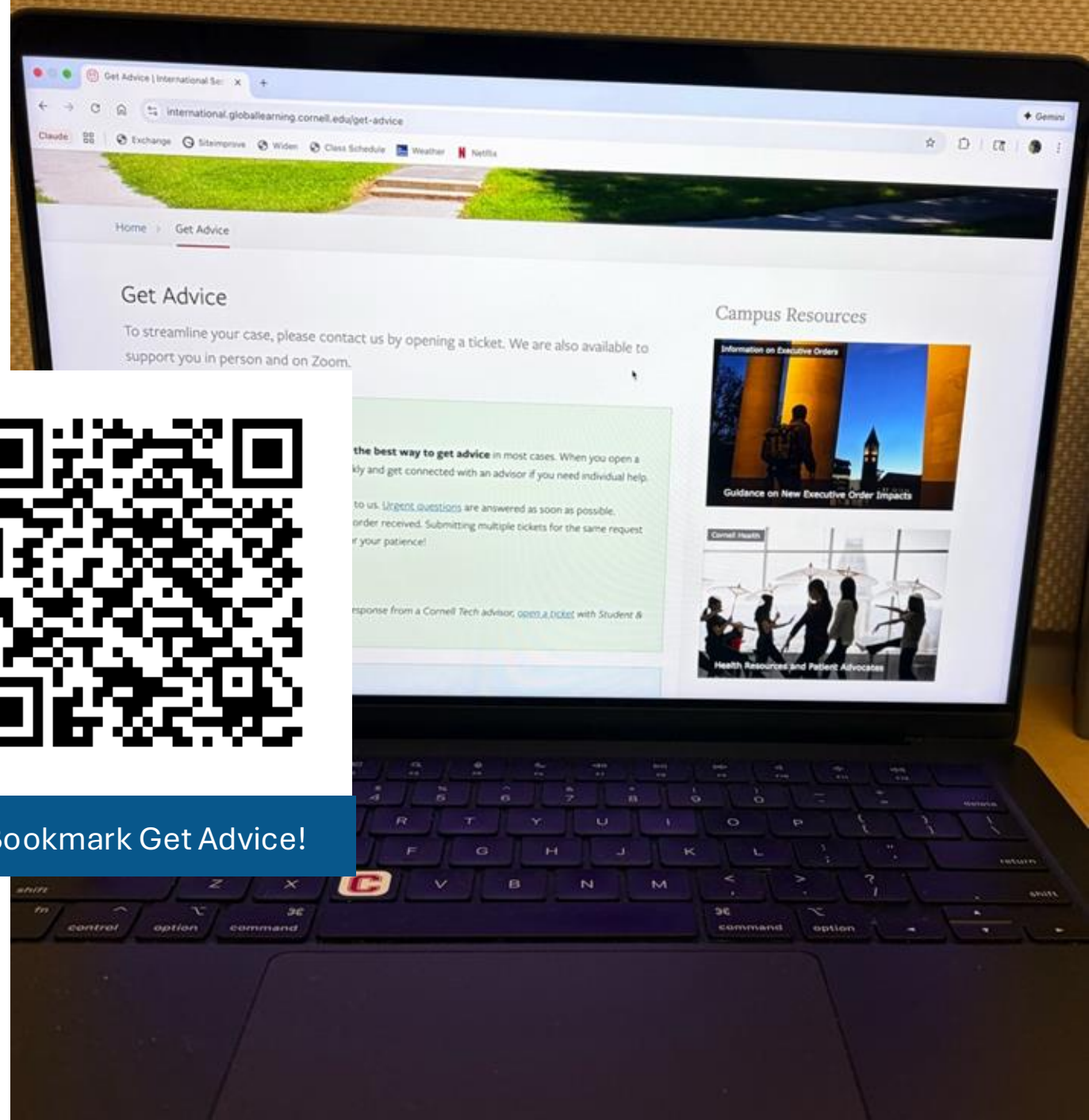
- From this point on, only CPT applications for students in a program that requires it will be approved
- We are working with programs to amend requirements where it makes sense
- We are not rescinding previously approved CPT
- We are working to better understand the details
- We will update with more information when we have it

Open a Ticket to Get Advice

- Submit a ticket through the **Get Advice** system to connect with an advisor.
- Advisor consultations can be virtual or in person.
- No walk-in appointments



Bookmark Get Advice!



The background of the slide features a silhouette of a building with a prominent tower and arched windows, set against a vibrant red sky with wispy clouds. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

Questions?