

Broadcast Message: Emergency Preparedness Reminders for SEVP-certified Schools in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina

To: SEVP-certified schools in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina

Date: September 12, 2018

Re: SEVP Guidance in the Path of Hurricane Florence

Number: 1809-01

General Information

With the potential impact of Hurricane Florence on the southeast United States, below are reminders for Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-certified schools, and F-1 and M-1 nonimmigrant students.

SEVP wants to make sure that both nonimmigrant students and school officials are safe and have appropriate guidance on how to maintain status if your school's operations are impacted.

What Your F-1 and M-1 Students Should Do:

- If living off campus, F and M international students and their accompanying dependents (if any) should follow the instructions of state, local and tribal officials, including any instructions to shelter in place or evacuate. All international students living on campus should follow their institution's emergency plan.
- If students have been ordered to evacuate, they should not return until they are told by local officials that it is safe to do so.
- International students must remain in contact with their school's principal designated school official (PDSO) or designated school official (DSO), and inform the PDSO or DSO of their [emergency plans](#), including whether they have been ordered to evacuate.
- Staying safe is paramount, however, international students must also do their best to [take all necessary actions to maintain their student status](#).
- Under the circumstances, international students may not be able to stay in status and may require reinstatement. Their DSO will help them with this, but it is essential that they keep necessary nonimmigrant documents in a safe, secure place and take these documents with them if ordered to evacuate.
- Before leaving, if possible, international students should communicate with their DSO about their emergency plans.

What PDSOs and DSOs Should Do:

- Remind international students that they should remain in contact with you and have emergency contact information on hand, including your email address and a number where they can call or text message you after business hours.

- Ensure international students understand that they must [take all necessary actions to maintain their student status](#), to the extent possible under circumstances, including keeping necessary documents in a safe, secure place; taking documents with them if ordered to evacuate; and communicating with you about their emergency plans.
- Promote [campus resilience](#) by sharing your school’s available emergency resources with your international students.
- Encourage international students to sign up for messaging alert systems for emergency notifications from the school, campus police or local law enforcement. These messages can help them keep informed on emergency response plans in the area.

Should you or your international students have questions, please contact the [SEVP Response Center](#) (SRC) Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. ET. Due to the likelihood of a higher than normal call volume, please use email to contact SRC where possible.

In the case of an emergency or life-threatening situation, please contact local law enforcement or officials.

Comments

To comment on this Broadcast Message, please email SEVP@ice.dhs.gov with “Broadcast Message 1809-01 Comment” entered in the subject line.

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