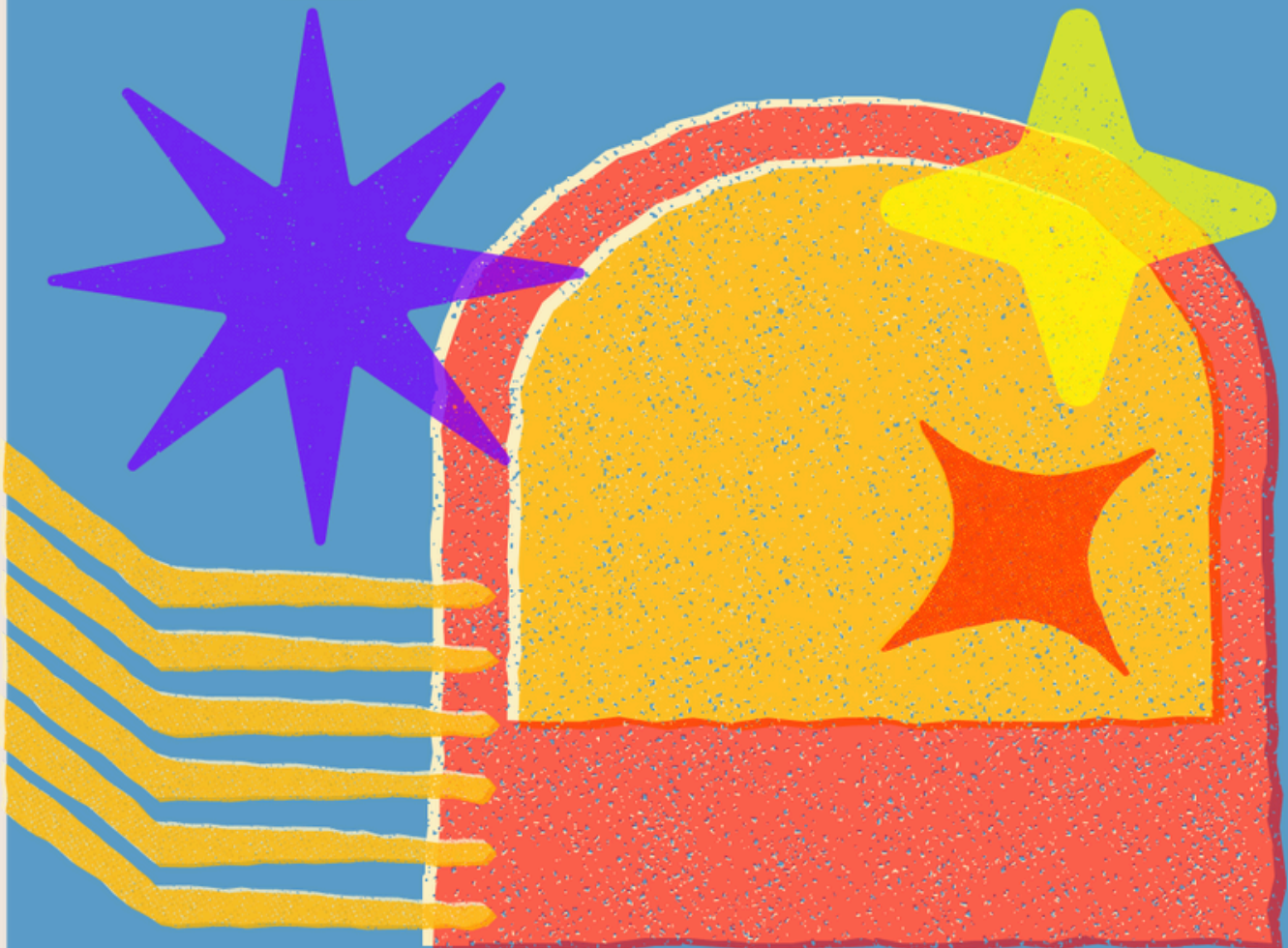


**LACC ISP PRESENTS**

**F-1 STUDENT**

**HANDBOOK**



**2025 EDITION**

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO F-1 STUDENTS IN LACC**

**MADE BY V.H**

# IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS ABOUT F-1 STATUS

LACC ISP OFFICE

## What is F-1 status?

- F visas are student visas that allows foreigners to **study academic studies** and/or language training programs in U.S. F-1 visas are **only issued at U.S. embassies and consulates outside the United States**. F-1 students must show that they are able to **financially support themselves** during their stay in the U.S. and employment opportunities are limited.

## How long can I stay?

- F-1 status covers the period when you are a **full-time registered student** making normal progress toward your degree, plus a **60-days "grace period"** to prepare to depart the U.S. or change to another status. Your length of authorized stay is not related to your F-1 visa expiration date. The F-1 visa can expire before your status expires, you are okay in the USA.

## What is I-20?

- An I-20 is a document that certifies that a nonimmigrant student is eligible to study in the United States. It's also known as a "Certificate of Eligibility". Your I-20 must be **valid at all times**. **We can extend or transfer your I-20 before it expires**, but **once it's expired your F-1 status will be terminated** and we cannot do anything about it. So when you are planning to extend your program, please extend your I-20 before the expiration date.

## How to maintain my status?

- As an international student, you have to be enrolled in **minimum 12 units** per semester, and **minimum 9 units in-person**. You can work **on campus up to 20hrs a week**, but you **cannot work outside the campus**. Also, you will have to contact the DSO and update your SEVIS info whenever you have change your personal information such as address, phone number and name.

## FAQs

- **Q.** Can I travel? **A.** Yes. If you are traveling inside the U.S you don't need to take any actions, but if you are **traveling outside the country**, you will need to get the **travel signature on your I-20**. Also, you will need a valid passport and visa.

**For more information, contact ISP office!**

# IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS ABOUT LIVING IN LA

## LACC ISP OFFICE

### Housing



Los Angeles City College **does not offer on-campus housing**. To assist you in securing a place to stay while studying in Los Angeles, there are a **few housing options and contact information**. Please note that LACC provides general information regarding housing accommodations for the purpose of assisting students only.



HOUSING RESOURCES

### Transportation



**LA Metro bus or rail line** is always around the corner at LA City College, making it easy to get from campus without a car to Los Feliz, Hollywood, Downtown Korea town and more. **Blue Line** Service to, Los Angeles and Downtown Long Beach. Possible destinations include: Staples Center and LA Convention Center Watts Towers, Queen Mary and the Aquarium of the Pacific. **Expo Line** Service to popular **destinations** such as: USC, Exposition Park (including the California Science Center and Natural History Museum), Santa Monica Pier.



LA METRO SYSTEM MAP

### Driver's license



The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website outlines the process of obtaining a California Driver's License. The steps include an **application**, a **written test** and **driving skills test**. To acquire a California Driver's License or renewal, take the following documents to DMV when applying : **Valid Passport, F-1 visa, Current I-94 form, Valid I-20, More than 2 proof of Address** (lease agreement, utility bills, bank statements, etc.)

Search for nearest locations of DMV here: <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/locations/>



DMV WEBSITE

### Bank Account



international students can open a **bank account in the U.S.** When you open a bank account, you'll need to provide **two forms of identification, I-20, proof of enrollment and valid U.S address**. You can make your bank account at several banks such as **Bank of America, Chase, HSBC** and more. Some banks offer accounts specifically for international students so make sure you do your research and see what's the best option for you!



BOFA WEBSITE

# IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS ABOUT COUNSELING

## LACC ISP OFFICE

### How to make an appointment?



You can make an appointment using this link, **fill out the form** and wait for the counselor to confirm your request. After submitting the form, you will receive an email right away, but please note that this **initial email is not confirmation for your appointment**. When there is high demand for counseling appointments at the moment, it may take **2-4 weeks** to receive the confirmation email. We appreciate your patience!

\*If you are facing an emergency, please visit or call our office to speak with the staff.

### Who should I talk to?



If you are an **initial student**, you have to talk to our Adjunct counselor **Crisalia Terrazas**([terrazc@lacitycollege.edu](mailto:terrazc@lacitycollege.edu)) and if you're a **continuing student**, you can talk to **Keika Stevenson**([stevenk@lacitycollege.edu](mailto:stevenk@lacitycollege.edu)). \*You have to see one of the international counselors.

### Express counseling



You can also join the express counseling session during these days of the week Monday & Tuesday **9am to 11am**, Wednesday and Thursday **1pm to 3pm**.



**MAKE AN  
APPOINTMENT**

### Important dates



**Make sure to check the important dates such as..**  
**First day of class, National holidays, Last day to add / drop**



**EXPRESS COUNSELING**

### FAQs



- Q.** How many classes should I take? **A.** As an international student, you have to take minimum **12 units**.  
**Q.** Can I take online classes? **A.** As long as you are enrolled in **9 units in person/hybrid**, you can.  
**Q.** What is permission number? **A.** It is a code that allows you to enroll in to classes after the deadline.  
\*to get the permission code, you will have to **contact your instructor** directly.  
**Q.** How to enroll in to late start classes? **A.** <https://youtu.be/Cb6hsNSqwP4?feature=shared>

**ISP staffs can answer your general questions, so don't hesitate to contact us!**

# IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS ABOUT TAX FILING

## LACC ISP OFFICE

### Do international students have to file taxes?



Aliens temporarily **present in the United States as students**, trainees, scholars, teachers, researchers, exchange visitors, and cultural exchange visitors are subject to special rules with respect to the taxation of their income. There is no minimum dollar amount of income that triggers a filing requirement for a nonresident alien, including a foreign student or a foreign scholar.

### Which form should I use?



**IRS Form 8843** is a tax form used by foreign nationals to document the number of days spent outside of the U.S. and help determine tax responsibility. **All F-1/J-1** foreign national (and their F-2/J-2 dependents) who are non-residents are **required to file** Form 8843.

And to those who currently, or were **employed** within the tax filing year, they also have to **file the form 1040nr** in addition to form 8843.

### When should I file?



You will have to file the forms before the tax day, which is **April 15th**. Non Resident Aliens cannot file the forms online so you will have to mail the forms to the IRS office directly.



OFFICIAL IRS  
HOMEPAGE

### How to get help with tax filing?



There are several websites and in-person tax preparation professionals around the town. If you are not confident about filing your own taxes, you can always get help from experts.



FORM 8843



FORM 1040-NR

### FAQs



**Q.** Does the ISP office offer help with tax filing? **A.** No, you have to consult a **tax preparation professional**.

**Q.** What happens if I don't file Form 8843? **A.** There is **no monetary penalty** for failure to file Form 8843. However, in order to be compliant with federal regulations students must file Form 8843.

**Q.** What if I didn't file the tax last year? **A.** Don't worry, when you file the tax for this year, you can file for the other years you missed, you can send all in one. \*consult with your tax expert for more information.

**For more information, visit official IRS website.**

# IMPORTANT INFORMATIONS ABOUT INSURANCE

LACC ISP OFFICE

## Do international students have health insurance?

- **All F1 international students at LACC are required** to enroll in a medical insurance policy provided by the Los Angeles Community College District. **Your medical insurance fee is included** in your tuition, and you don't have to apply for the insurance separately.

## LewerMark student insurance

- AETNA is your network of doctors and providers. The insurance plan will be administered by LewerMark. Your LewerMark plan includes a copay. These are out of pocket expenses that you pay for eligible medical services before the insurance pays.



GUIDE TO LEWERMARK

## How do I find a doctor?

- A PPO network is a group of medical service providers including doctors, clinics, and hospitals that agree to provide medical services at reduced rates. Go to [www.lewermark.com](http://www.lewermark.com) and click "International" and "Find a Doctor", then select the "GWH-CIGNA network". Choose the "PPO" option to find doctors, clinics, pharmacies and hospitals within your zip code. In most cases, you can reduce your out-of-pocket expenses by visiting a provider in your PPO network.

## What is Co-Pay?

- This is the amount of out of pocket expenses that you must pay the doctor, clinic, or hospital for each visit. Rest of the expenses are covered by your health insurance.

## FAQs

- **Q.** How can I print out my Insurance Card? **A.** When you log-in to Lewermark using your student ID, you will see the menu on the side that says "Online Insurance Card". You can download or screenshot the insurance card and print it out.
- Q.** Does Lewermark also provide mental health support? **A.** Yes, Lewermark has mental health support community service called "**Togetherall**". You can register for free with your student ID.