

**TEXAS**  **STATE**<sup>®</sup>  
**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT  
AND SCHOLAR SERVICES**

**J-1 Exchange Visitor Orientation Guide**



**Welcome to Texas State University**

Thank you for choosing Texas State as your research institution and contributing to our research efforts. We hope you enjoy your time here and look forward to helping you with any immigration concerns.

# International Student and Scholar Services

512-245-7966

<https://www.international.txstate.edu/>

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) provides exchange visitors with immigration advising, serves as your liaison with TIEC, host events and programs, helps file USCIS applications and more! You must bring copies of your current valid Visa, I-94 and signed DS-2019 to the Office and report any name or major changes during your program of study.



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Follow ISSS on Social Media!

- **Twitter:** @txst\_iss
- **Instagram:** @txst\_iss
- **Facebook:** /txstISS



# **J-1 Exchange Visitors Key Regulations**

The items below are a summary of important J-1 regulations and procedures. For more information refer to the Key Regulations website here:

<https://www.international.txstate.edu/departments/J1-Visa-Status-/j1-key-regulations.html>.

If you need further information about any of the items or other J-1 regulation questions, make an appointment to meet with an international advisor at International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).

## **1. The Exchange Visitor Program**

The Exchange Visitor Program provides opportunities for internationals come to the United States for a variety of educational and cultural exchange purposes under the sponsorship of a school, an agency, or an organization that has been designated as an exchange visitor sponsor by the United States Department of State.

The Texas International Education Consortium (TIEC) is a designated sponsor for the exchange visitor program at Texas State University.

## **2. Employment**

"Employment" is any type of work performed, or services provided in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, or for any other benefit. If you receive no pay or other compensation for work performed, the activity is not defined as "employment, but is considered to be volunteer work."

The exchange visitor may receive compensation from the sponsor when the activities are part of the visitor's program. To work for any employer other than the school named on the DS-2019, you should make an appointment to see an international student advisor. The employment must be directly related to your program objectives, incidental to your program activities, and should not delay completion of your program. In addition, it must be approved by your department head or supervisor.

With the sponsor's permission, professors and research scholars may participate in occasional lectures and short-term consultations. These activities must be directly related to the objectives of the exchange visitor program, incidental to the exchange visitor's primary program activities, and not delay the completion date of the exchange visitor's program.

The exchange visitor is prohibited from engaging in unauthorized employment as this is in violation of the regulations and subjects the exchange visitor to termination from the program. One form of unauthorized employment is working or continuing to work after a DS-2019 has expired is unauthorized.

## **3. Program Length**

The maximum program length differs per J-1 category. In general, professor and research scholar categories are limited to a maximum of 5 years. A short-term scholar category is limited to 6 months. Please note that J-1 Exchange Visitors are required to leave the United States within 30 days of the date your department indicates you have completed your program, even if the period on your DS-2019 is longer. Review J-1 categories here: <https://www.international.txstate.edu/departments/J1-Visa-Status-/J-1-Categories.html>.

#### **4. Program Extensions within the 5-year program length**

Requests for extensions are initiated by having your department complete and submit a new DS-2019 request form to ISSS. You should begin this process at least two months prior to the end date on your current DS-2019. Your extension will be processed at TIEC. Once your DS-2019 is completed, you may pick it up at ISSS. Learn more about requesting a program extension: <https://www.international.txstate.edu/departments/J1-Visa-Status-/j1-program-extension-form0.html>.

#### **5. Travel Outside the United States During Your Stay**

Prior to traveling outside the U.S. with the intent to return in your current program status requires a signature from TIEC. If you plan to travel outside the United States please notify the ISSS at least three weeks before you plan to leave so we can recommend what type of documentation you may need and so that there will be enough time to obtain the signature or documentation. When you travel outside the United States and you plan to return to the United States during the time of your J-1 program, you must take a properly endorsed DS-2019 with you. Under some circumstances it will be necessary for you to obtain a new DS-2019. If your visa and your DS-2019 are valid, it is likely that you will only need a signature from TIEC on your current DS-2019. Please bring your current DS-2019, passport, and I-94 card with you when you come to our office.

#### **6. Transfer to Another Program**

An exchange visitor may transfer from one program sponsor to another if the purpose of the transfer is to complete the objective for which he or she was admitted to exchange visitor status and if the exchange visitor remains in the same category. The transfer is accomplished through correspondence between the two Responsible Officers and notification to the U.S. Department of State. It is recommended that the exchange visitor begin the transfer process at least 60 days prior to the proposed starting date with the new sponsor to allow for processing of paperwork. Any employment under the new sponsor may not commence until the transfer has been approved. The transfer procedures must be completed before terminating employment at Texas State.

#### **7. Change of Category**

In general, a change of category is not permitted. At the discretion of the U.S. Department of State, an exchange visitor may be permitted to change categories (i.e. change from a J-1 Research Scholar to J-1 Student). A change of category must be consistent with and related to the participant's original objective. Sometimes, a change in category is considered a change of objective and is not permitted. If the exchange visitor applies for a change in category and it is rejected by the U.S. Department of State, the exchange visitor is expected to leave the country within 30 days of receiving the notice or within 30 days of the expiration date of the exchange visitor's current DS-2019, whichever is later. An approved application for change of category should be received by the J-1 exchange visitor before the exchange visitor begins activities in the new category. The exchange visitor is considered to be in legal status while the application is under consideration by the U.S. Department of State.

#### **8. Limitation of Consecutive Program Participation**

According to the DOS, an individual who has participated in the Exchange Visitor Program as a professor or researcher becomes subject to a **24-month bar** on “repeat participation” in those categories under two circumstances:

- If the exchange visitor completes a full five years of program participation with one or more sponsors; or
- If the exchange visitor completes a particular exchange visitor program, and the SEVIS record becomes Inactive before the full five-year period is over. In this case, the five-year window is “closed,” the individual is not eligible to access the remaining unused time, and the individual must wait for two years before beginning a new program as a J professor or research scholar.

The second circumstance subjects the participant to the two-year bar regardless of how much time he or she spent on the program.

### **9. The Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement**

Some J-1 exchange visitors and their J-2 dependents are subject to this requirement. Upon the completion of the J-1's program objectives, the J-1 and J-2(s) are expected to return to their country within 30 days or within 30 days of the expiration date on your DS-2019, whichever is sooner. If you are subject to this requirement, you are restricted from changing to some other types of nonimmigrant status, and restricted from changing to permanent residency. Under certain circumstances you may apply for a waiver of this requirement. Processing the application may take up to one year.

Note, if you receive a waiver, you are not permitted to apply for an extension of your DS-2019. Consequently, once the waiver is received, you should take steps to change to some other nonimmigrant status. It may take up to one year to receive a reply to a waiver application. Therefore, you should make sure that you have sufficient time indicated on your DS-2019 to apply for the waiver. See waiver information here:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor.html>.

### **10. Health Insurance Requirement**

Federal law requires that J-1 Exchange Visitors and their J-2 dependents have health insurance for the full duration of the J-1 program. The type of health insurance needed must meet specific coverage requirements. If you fail to obtain health insurance or if your health insurance does not meet the necessary requirements for you or your dependents, your J-1 sponsor must terminate your program and report the termination to the U.S. Department of State. For more information see here:

<https://www.international.txstate.edu/departments/J1-Visa-Status-/j1-key-regulations.html>.

### **11. J-2 Dependents**

In order to invite family members (i.e. husband, wife, or children) to join you on the J-2 visa you should submit an DS-2019 request form to ISSS. After you pick up the DS-2019, you should send it to your dependents so that they may apply for a J-1 visa at a United States Embassy or Consulate.

J-2 dependents may apply for employment authorization with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (CIS) as long as the income from the employment is not needed to support the J-1 exchange visitor and his/her dependents. Ask for a handout about J-2 employment and an I-765 form at the front desk of the ISSS. It normally takes from two to three months to receive employment permission (The Employment Authorization Document or EAD) or to renew employment permission. Therefore, applicants should plan

accordingly in order to avoid undesired breaks in employment.

J-2 dependents who want to change to J-1 status must do so at least within 6 months of their initial arrival to the United States while the J-1 participant is still in the U.S. and in lawful J-1 status.

## 12. Reinstatement Procedures

If a J-1 exchange visitor violates his or her J-1 immigration status, it is possible to apply to be reinstated to lawful J-1 status in some cases. Reinstatement applications are approved or denied at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State. If a reinstatement application is not approved, the exchange visitor's program will be terminated and the exchange visitor will be required to leave the United States.

## Housing in San Marcos

**On Campus Apartments:** To inquire about on-campus housing availability contact the Department of Housing and Residential Life at [reslife@txstate.edu](mailto:reslife@txstate.edu).

**Off-Campus Apartments:** You may live at any apartment complex or house that you wish however you should be careful to make sure it is on a bus route or walking distance to campus. To enquire about off-campus living, email [offcampusliving@txstate.edu](mailto:offcampusliving@txstate.edu) or call the Department of Housing and Residential Life at (512)-245-5595.

**Apartment Locators:** These are real estate agents or companies that assist people with finding apartments. There often is no fee for the individual searching for an apartment because Apartment Locators are rewarded by the apartment complexes when they find residents to live in their empty units.

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE:

- Read the lease before you sign it and ask about getting your deposit back when you move out
- Review renting advice from the Texas State University Attorney for Students: <https://attorney.dos.txstate.edu/student-resources/legal-info/renting.html>.
- Ask if utilities, water, internet, and cable are included in the rent payment or if you have to pay these separately.
- Ask about parking and parking permits.
- Check the apartment for broken appliances, cleanliness, and make sure you fill out the inventory sheet thoroughly and indicate any problems.

### Suggested Shopping List

Tooth Brush	Dish Soap	Toilet Paper
Shower Curtain	Dish Drying Rack	Shampoo
Bath Towels	Laundry Detergent	Body Soap
Hand Towels	Eating Utensils	Hand Soap
Bedding/Sheets/Blankets	Cups/Bowls/Plates	Desk Lamp
Pillow	Water Bottles or Water Filter	Food
Cell Phone	School Supplies	

# TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

To get a Texas driver's license or identification (ID) card, you will need to take with you to the Texas Department of Public Safety: your status verification letter (from International Student and Scholar Services), DS-2019, I-94, visa, and passport.

Review the Texas DPS website for how to apply for a Driver's License:

<https://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/ApplyforLicense.htm>.

**Cost of ID card:** \$16

**Cost of driver's license:** \$33

## **Texas Department of Public Safety Office Information**

**Address:** 1400 North IH-35 San Marcos TX, 78666

**Phone:** 512-353-2770

### **Hours:**

**Monday** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

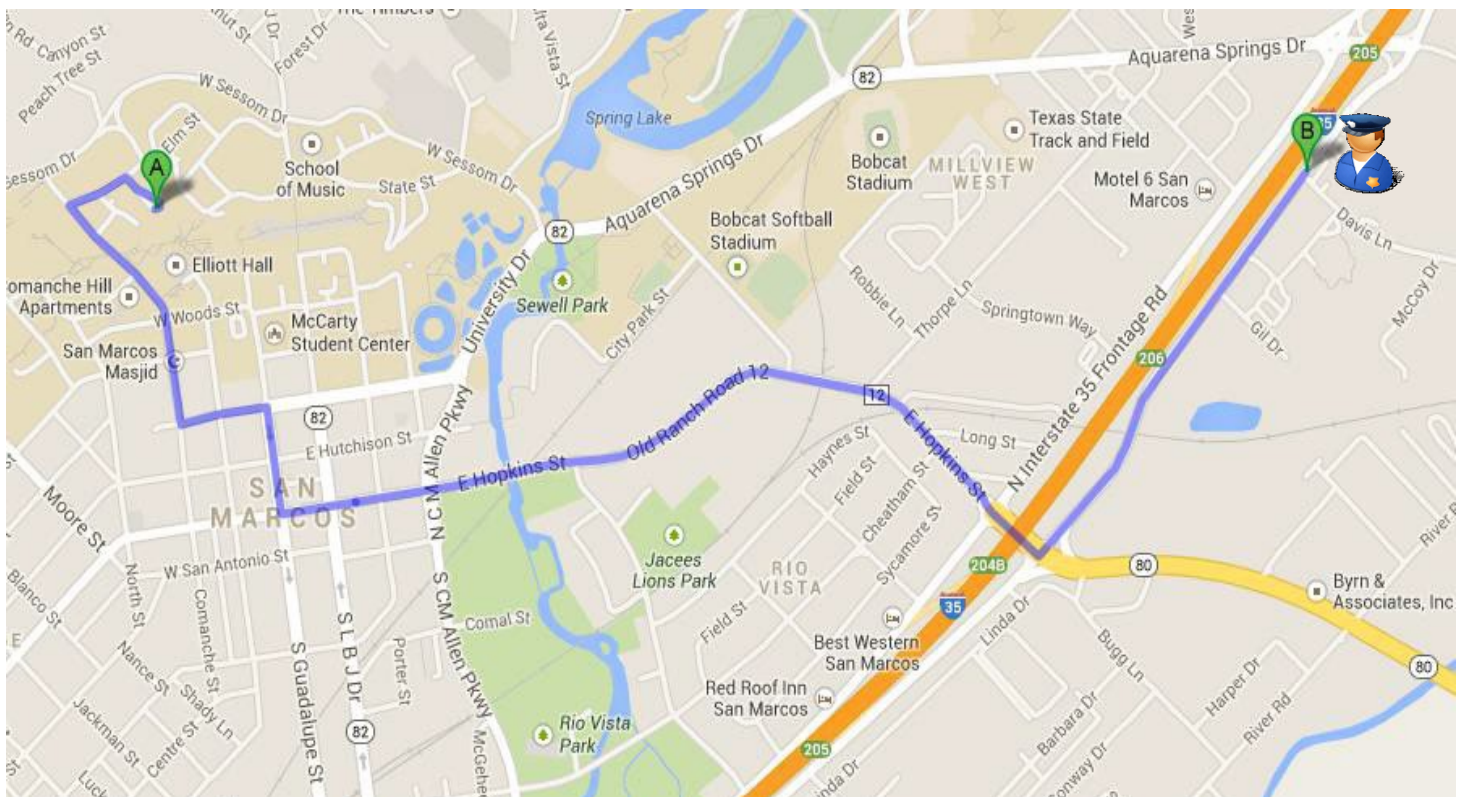
**Tuesday** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Wednesday** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Thursday** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Friday** 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**Saturday** Closed



# SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

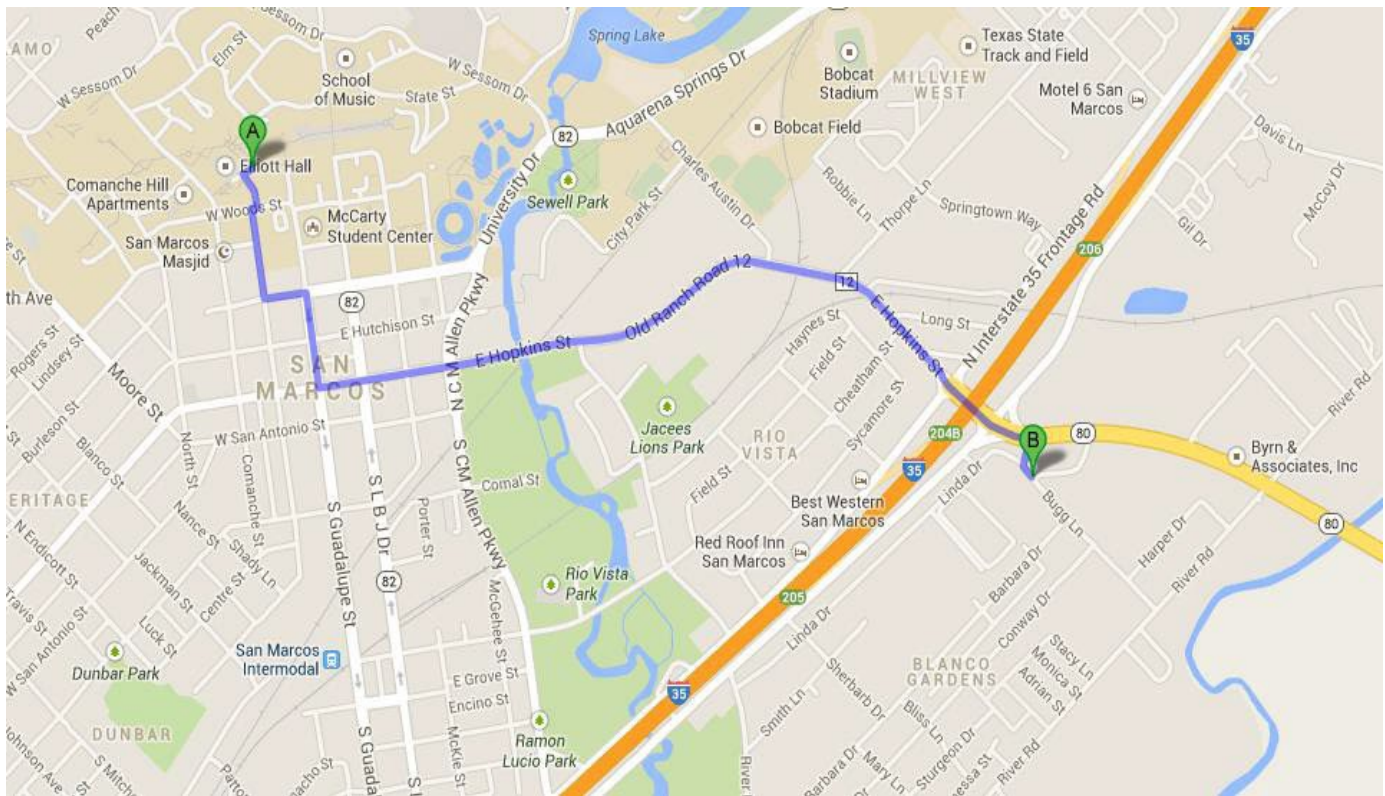
To apply for a Social Security card, you will need to take the following documents with you to the Social Security Office: the hiring letter from your department, your DS-2019, I-94, visa, and passport.

**Address:** 900 Bugg Lane Suite 200, San Marcos, TX. 78666

**Phone:** 1-866-388-8515

**Hours:**

<b>Monday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
<b>Thursday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Friday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Saturday</b>	Closed
<b>Sunday</b>	Closed



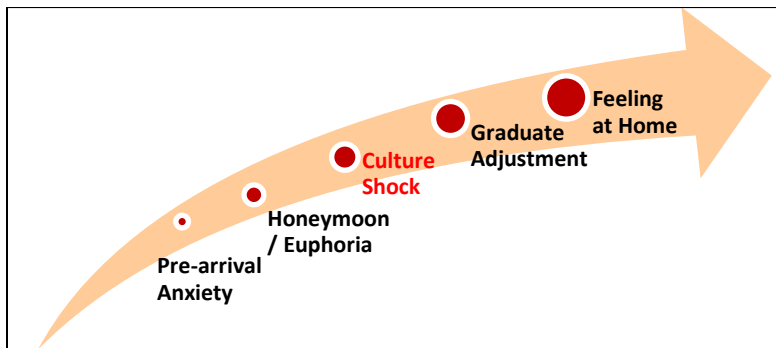


# Cultural Adjustment

Living, working, and or studying in the U.S for the first time can be challenging. Exchange Visitors are reminded to understand the different stages of “culture shock” and to allow for self-growth, self-discovery, and openness to a different and unfamiliar environment.

When visiting a new country, you may experience different levels of cultural adjustment based on cultural differences, norms, and expectations. Allow yourself enough time to familiarize yourself with your new surroundings, make friends, and become aware of resources.

Remember, you are here to learn, experience, and share your opinion!



## **Strategies to cope with cultural adjustment:**

- Be patient.
- Be open-minded and curious.
- Ask a lot of questions.
- Do not make assumptions.
- Allow yourself to make mistakes but learn from those mistakes.
- Take care of your physical and mental health.
- Make friends and allies that can support your growth.
- Get involved on campus.
- Keep in contact with family and friends back home.

# Drinking in the U.S.

## **Drinking rules in the U.S**

- The legal drinking age is 21 years old in the U.S. (strictly enforced)
- Must show an ID to enter a bar or buy an alcoholic beverage at a store
- Driving with (almost any) alcohol in your system is **ILLEGAL**
- Driving or walking outside with an open container is **ILLEGAL**
- Providing any alcohol to a person under 21 is **ILLEGAL**

## **Identifications Cards**

To go to bars or clubs, you're most likely going to need to bring your passport. Most places do not accept any forms of national IDs or driver's licenses of other countries. If you don't want to take your passport out with you, think about getting a Texas ID or a driver's license (ask International Student and Scholar Services what you need to do to apply for one.

Fake IDs will get you in trouble. You may be charged a substantial amount, going to jail, and having your immigration status revoked.

**Open Container Laws** The term "open container" refers to the laws that prohibit consuming alcohol in public (except for bars which have a "liquor license") or even carrying an open drink with you. An "open container" also means a bottle of liquor with a lid. If it has been opened, it is illegal to carry it outside or to transport it in a car (except in the trunk).

**Public Drunkenness** If you're visibly intoxicated in public, the police may take you to the police station and/or to the hospital to sober up. Generally, they would only do this if they believe you are too intoxicated and you may be a danger to yourself or others. This offense is a Class C Misdemeanor.

**Underage Drinking** if you're not 21, you shouldn't be drinking at all because it's illegal. If you are under 21, bars will not allow you in and you cannot purchase alcohol at a store. You cannot even carry alcohol. If you are with a friend who's 21 and he has a 12-pack of beer and asks you to carry it, you can be fined up to \$300, go to jail, and/or have your driver's license suspended if the police stop and ID you.

## **Providing Alcohol to Minors**

It is illegal to purchase for or give alcohol to minors unless the minor is your spouse.

## **Tips when drinking**

- Always know what you are drinking and who are you drinking with
- Always have a safe way to get home
- Always have a taxi number saved, and the Police's number (911 for emergencies)
- Never leave your drink unattended
- The legal Blood Alcohol Limit (BAC) is 0.08%

## Additional Texas State Resources

### Texas State University ID Card

1. Ask your department to issue a PCR using the title “Program Faculty”
2. Submit the PCR to Faculty and Academic Resources records and indicate that it is for the purpose of obtaining a picture ID.
3. This should allow ID Services to create you a picture ID.
4. Contact ID Services for further clarification.

Refer to the **ID Services** website for more information:

<https://www.auxiliaryservices.txstate.edu/idservices/>.



### University Library

The Alkek Library located on the San Marcos campus lends materials to students, staff, and faculty with a Texas State ID. There is also a Round Rock Campus Library which provides many services and resources. If you do not have a Texas State ID, please refer to the library’s website for Non- University Borrower Lending Policy: <https://www.library.txstate.edu/services/visitors-alumni.html>

#### **The Alkek Library Collection Includes:**

- More than 1.5 million printed volumes
- 99,700+ electronic journals
- 506,000 e-books
- 625+ databases
- Over a half-million microform & audio-visual materials

### Parking Services

Contact Parking Services to request a parking permit: <http://www.parking.txstate.edu/>

For all inquiries visit Parking Services attached to the Mathews Street Garage, email [parking@txstate.edu](mailto:parking@txstate.edu), or call (512) 245-2887 Monday through Friday, 8a.m. to 5p.m.

### Transportation Options

- **Texas State Shuttle Bus:** Check bus routes and schedule: <http://www.shuttle.txstate.edu/>
- **CARTS City Bus:** Check bus routes to and from surrounding cities: <http://www.ridecarts.com/services/country/san-marcos>
- **Texas State Bike Cave:** Learn about bike co-op on campus. Rental bikes available.
- **Uber or Lyft:** Rideshare phone applications to download

More transportation options here: <https://www.international.txstate.edu/help/transportation0.html>

# Texas State University Police Department (UPD)

512-245-2890

<https://www.police.txstate.edu>

UPD deals with everything from minor to serious crimes on campus. The blue light poles scattered across campus are emergency phones linked to the police station. If you are in danger while on campus, use these to immediately contact them. UPD also offer a variety of services including:

**Bobcat Bobbies:** After dark, Bobcat Bobbies will pick you up at one location on campus and drive you to another. Call the Bobcat Bobbies and they will pick you up in their golf carts. The number should be stored in your phone: 512.245.7233

**Crime Stoppers:** If you see a crime around campus, call the number anonymously (512.245.7867) and give the police a tip. You can receive cash rewards for helping the police stop crime. <http://www.thetexascrimestoppers.org/>

**Bobcat Guardian App:** This app allows your trusted contacts to check in on you during periods when you've set a safety timer (such as walking across campus after dark or going on a first date). If the timer runs out before you deactivate it, the app will notify UPD and your "guardians" using info that you've already chosen to provide, along with your GPS location. You can also instantly call UPD directly from the app. <https://www.police.txstate.edu/campus-safety/bobcat-guardian.html>



## Wilberforce Pamphlet

Download and read the **Wilberforce Pamphlet on the Rights and Protections for Temporary Workers.**

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html>

## **Tax & Payroll Responsibilities**

All International Students, Faculty or staff Employees **employed by Texas State University** must comply with U.S. tax laws. The Payroll and Tax Compliance Office can assist with the following:

- Determine their correct tax status for federal Income tax purposes- Resident Alien or Nonresident Alien
- Complete their W-4 form- which is different than the form completed by US citizens or US Permanent Residents
- Determine eligibility for possible Tax Treaty Benefits – possible reduction in the amount of federal income tax withheld from their paychecks

For more information review the Payroll and Tax Compliance website:

<https://www.txstate.edu/payroll/Are-you-a.../international-EMPLOYEE.html>.

- Bring the following documents: passport, visa, I-94 and for F-1 visa holders: I-20 or for J-1 visa holders: DS-2019 or for H1-B visa holders: I-797
- As a reminder, the employer portion of their I-9's should be completed by the hiring department and submitted with the PCR hiring packet

**Payroll and Tax Compliance Office JCK 582 – 5<sup>th</sup> floor**

**Call:** 512-245-9292

**Email:** [payroll@txstate.edu](mailto:payroll@txstate.edu)

**Website:** [www.txstate.edu/payroll](http://www.txstate.edu/payroll)

## **Dining on Campus**

**There are food courts & restaurants around campus.** See a complete list here:

<https://dineoncampus.com/txstate/>.

### **West Campus:**

- Harris Dining Hall (buffet)

### **Central Campus:**

- Commons Dining Hall (buffet)
- Student Center: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Multiple restaurants- Including Pizza Hut, Starbucks
- Jones Dining Hall: Multiple Restaurants- including Panda Express, Dunkin Donuts

**East Campus:** The Den: Multiple restaurants- including Papa Johns, Einstein Bagel Brothers

Dining locations accept meal plans, major credit cards, Bobcat Bucks, and cash. **A 40 block commuter meal plan is available for purchase from any dining location cashier and online at the auxiliary services page.**