

# Pre-Arrival Guide for New International Students



**PennState**  
Lehigh Valley

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## Welcome Letter from the Office of Global Education and Inclusive Excellence

Dear New International Student,

Congratulations on your acceptance to Penn State Lehigh Valley! Global Education and Inclusive Excellence Office at Penn State Lehigh Valley welcome you and wish you only the success in your academic journey in the United States. Global Education and Inclusive Excellence Office will assist you in achieving your personal and academic goals while you pursue your studies at Penn State Lehigh Valley. We will advise you on immigration regulations as well as cultural and academic adjustment. We are here to help you once you arrive at Penn State Lehigh Valley. Included in this guide you will find information on the following:

- New International Student Checklist
- Understanding Your Visa Status
- Preparation for Arrival to Penn State Lehigh Valley
- New International Student Welcome and New International Student Orientation
- Penn State Lehigh Valley Student Life and Student Organizations
- Penn State Learning Center and Disability Services
- Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus Directory
- Lehigh Valley and Surrounding Cities

We especially look forward to meeting you at the New Student Welcome, Orientation and Engagement week where your attendance is mandatory.

Sincerely,



Dr. Angela Jeon-Huh

Global Education and Inclusive Excellence Consultant and Adjunct Professor

Global Education and Inclusive Excellence Office

## New International Student Checklist

Below checklist has been created to assist you in completing both important mandatory and recommended action items you must to take during your first 30 days at Penn State Lehigh Valley. Any questions about the checklist can be directed to Dr. Angela Jeon-Huh ([akj113@psu.edu](mailto:akj113@psu.edu)).

Item	Page	Action Item	Information	Mandatory/ Optional
1	5	Obtain I-20 and F-1 Visa	On or Before August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
2	5	I-94 Card	On or Before September 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
3	6	Immunization	On or Before August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
4	6	Find Off-Campus Housing	On or Before August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
5	7	Register for New Student Welcome	On or Before August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
6	7	Sign up for Airport Pick Up	On or Before August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Recommended
7	7	New International Student Welcome	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
8	7	New International Student Form	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
9	7	SEVIS Registration	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
10	7	Open Up a Bank Account	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Recommended
11	7	Sign Up for a Cell Phone Account	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Recommended
12	7	Go Furniture Shopping	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Recommended
13	8	New International Student Orientation	August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
14.	8	New International Student Engagement	August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory
15	8	Fall Registration	On or Before August 16 <sup>th</sup>	Mandatory

## Understanding Your Visa Status

### F-1 International Student Visa

The F-1 Visa allows you to enter the United States (U.S.) as a full-time student at a United States accredited university. In order to maintain your status, you must adhere to what is listed on your form I-20. As an F-1 visa holder and on an I-20 status, you must be enrolled in a program or course of study that culminates in a degree, diploma or certificate. This status allows you to remain in the U.S. until the completion of studies date listed on your I-20. You can bring your spouse and children to live with you in the U.S. as long as you provide proof of sufficient financial resources. Spouses and children cannot work while in the U.S. To maintain full-time status, undergraduates must register for at least 12 credits each semester. If you are already in the United States on an active I-20 status, you must follow steps to transfer your SEVIS records to Penn State University. More information on this will be provided in the next section of the guide.

### Request Certificate of Eligibility to Obtain Student Visa (I-20)

Once you have been admitted to Penn State Lehigh Valley and you have confirmed your admission offer by paying your acceptance fee, you must then get ready to apply for your I-20. You will receive an email from [international@psu.edu](mailto:international@psu.edu). This email will be sent to you once a month until you complete your request for form I-20. While you wait for your email and for more information on how to obtain your I-20 as well as transfer your I-20 record, please visit: (<https://global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/students/pre-arrival-advising/how-request-certificate-eligibility-obtain>).

### Mandatory SEVIS (I-20) Fee and Visa Interview

Now that you have successfully requested for and received your form I-20, you are now required to pay your SEVIS (I-20) fee in order to schedule an interview appointment with United States Embassy in your home country in order to receive your F-1 visa for admission to the United States. For more information on this please visit: (<https://global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/students/pre-arrival/visa-application-sevis-i-901-fee-visa-application-fee>).

### I-94 Entry Admission Requirement

When you arrive at a port of entry in the U.S., you will be required to present your form I-20 along with your passport and financial documents. You can retrieve your I-94 by visiting this website: (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>).

## Preparation for Arrival to Penn State Lehigh Valley

### Tuition and Billing

As an international student, it is important to familiarize yourself with tuition cost and how to pay your tuition and fees before your arrival to the United States. For more information on how to pay your tuition please visit: (<http://www.bursar.psu.edu/>).

## Financial Aid Information for New International Students

There are limited number of aid and scholarship that is available for international students, however you can visit the following website for more information: (<https://global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/financial-aid-information-prospective-students>).

## Health Insurance

Health care in the United States can get very expensive and it is required that all international students studying at Penn State have active health insurance. For more information on how to sign up for health insurance prior to arriving to the United States, please visit: (<https://global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/students/pre-arrival/insurance-mandate>).

## Immunization

Penn State Lehigh Valley requires you to complete immunization before arriving to the United States. This is very important and must be completed before arriving to Penn State Lehigh Valley. You can find important information on how to complete this requirement by visiting: ([https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/immunizations/imm\\_submission.shtml](https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/immunizations/imm_submission.shtml)).

## Off-Campus Housing

Committing to studying in a foreign country is exciting however there are key items that must get completed before or soon after you arrive in the United States. Finding a place to stay is one of those important items that must get done. Penn State Lehigh Valley does not have dormitory on campus. However we have many safe and convenient off-campus housing options nearby campus. You will find many great off-campus housing options on this website listed below. If you are interested in looking for a roommate, you must first create an account and a roommate profile by going to the website: (<http://lehighvalley.psu.edu/campus-housing-commuting-campus>).

If for some reason, you are not able to find off-campus housing prior to your arrival, you can arrange to stay at a local hotel and you can find this listing on the below website:

(<http://www.discoverlehighvalley.com/category/stay/hotels-motels/>).

## Transportation from Philadelphia International Airport

New international students have the option to fly into many surrounding airports such as Philadelphia International Airport, Newark International Airport and etc. **However, Penn State Lehigh Valley will only offer free shuttle service from Philadelphia International Airport to Penn State Lehigh Valley campus only on August 14<sup>th</sup> for flights landing anytime between 8am-10am.** Our Penn State Lehigh Valley faculty and staff will be available to greet you at the arriving terminal at the Philadelphia International Airport and the shuttle will depart the airport no later than 10am to arrive to Penn State Lehigh Valley campus before 12pm. If you are not able to arrange your flight for arrival to Philadelphia International Airport on August 15<sup>th</sup> between 8am-10am, be sure to take advantage of safe and

convenient transportation systems listed below. In order to reserve your free shuttle service, please email [akj113@psu.edu](mailto:akj113@psu.edu) before August 4<sup>th</sup> with your arrival time and arrival terminal letter information.

It is your responsibility to arrive on campus on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Therefore it is recommended that you plan your arrival to Penn State Lehigh Valley campus prior to your departure. Unfortunately there is not that many options to arrive on campus via train or bus and therefore it is recommended you look into the following options.

#### *Taxis*

Taxis can be picked up in Zone 5 of the International Philadelphia Airport at the Commercial Transportation Roadway by the baggage claim area.

#### *Uber Philadelphia*

For information on Uber please visit: (<https://www.uber.com/cities/philadelphia/>).

## **New International Student Welcome and New International Student Orientation**

### **New International Student Welcome**

All new international students at Penn State Lehigh Valley are required to attend New International Student Welcome on August 14<sup>th</sup>. We will start this day with airport pick up, provide opportunity for you to complete your SEVIS (I-20) Registration, New International Student Form, open up a bank account, sign up for a cell phone account and go to furniture shopping. Penn State Lehigh Valley will offer you free lunch and refreshments. You will be receiving an email about this event and therefore be sure to regularly check your PSU email account.

### **Social Security Number**

You cannot apply for a social security number until you have been in the U.S. for at least 10 days and until you have an on-campus or off-campus job. It takes approximately 2-3 weeks to receive a social security number after you submit the application. For more information applying for a social security number, please visit: (<https://www.ssa.gov/>). The closest social security office to Penn State Lehigh Valley campus is listed below:

Social Security Administration  
Address: 41 N 4<sup>th</sup> St. Allentown, PA 18102  
Phone: 1-877-405-6746

## Driver License and State ID

Information on obtaining a Pennsylvania Driver's License can be found here:

[global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/students/drivers-license-state-id](http://global.psu.edu/info/internationals-psu/students/drivers-license-state-id). The closest Drive License and State ID center is list below:

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation- Photo License Center, Allentown  
Address: 5 American Pkway, Allentown PA 18101  
Phone: 1-800-932-4600

## New International Student Orientation

Your attendance for New International Student Orientation is mandatory on August 15<sup>th</sup>. On this day, you will get to learn more about Penn State Lehigh Valley. You will learn about academic standards, how to register for classes, Student Life information as well as introductory to immigration regulation on maintaining your I-20 status as well as any other benefits as an international student. You will be receiving an email about this event and therefore be sure to regularly check your PSU email account.

## New International Student Engagement

Attend a movie and dinner night with your fellow new perspective students and also meet current international students on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Great opportunity to meet new people and get adjusted to the campus. You will be receiving an email about this event and therefore be sure to regularly check your PSU email account.

## Penn State Lehigh Valley Student Organizations and Activities

On our campus, we have many fun and exciting events and organizations you can join to make sure that you take full advantage to get to know the campus while you are studying at Penn State Lehigh Valley. For more information on joining a student organization or events that are happening on campus please visit: (<http://www.lv.psu.edu/StudentLife/studentlife.htm>).

## Penn State Learning Center and Disability Services

Student interested in learning center as well as disability services, please visit this website: (<http://lehighvalley.psu.edu/learning-center>).

## Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus Directory

You can find important contact information to your faculty and staff at Penn State Lehigh Valley by visiting following website: (<http://lehighvalley.psu.edu/campus-directory/results>).

## Lehigh Valley and Surrounding Cities

Penn State Lehigh Valley campus is only one hour drive away from major cities such as Philadelphia and New York. Lehigh Valley city and surrounding cities such as Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton are only 15 minute drive away. Please visit the following websites for more information.



Discover Lehigh Valley: <http://www.discoverlehighvalley.com/travel-tip/>

Visit Philadelphia: <http://www.visitphilly.com>

I LOVE NY: <http://www.iloveny.com/>