

# U.S. Rescinds New Restrictions on Student Visas

July 15 2020, Wednesday

We are pleased to report that the federal government has rescinded a policy that would have stripped international students of their U.S. visas if their coursework was entirely online.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) policy would have put international students at an unnecessary risk of COVID-19 and potentially displaced them if their home countries have closed their borders. The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai proudly joined educational institutions across the nation in opposing the policy as soon as it was announced on July 6. And yesterday we joined in filing an amicus brief in support of a suit that was brought by Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts—calling the policy “arbitrary and capricious.” Scores of universities also supported the suit, as well as organizations representing international students.

During a short hearing today in Boston, the district judge made the sudden and welcome announcement that the new guidelines had been rescinded by the government. This reinstates a policy implemented in March amid the COVID-19 pandemic that gave international students flexibility to take all their classes online and remain legally in the United States.

The ability of international students to study and conduct research at Mount Sinai is of great importance to us, and their contribution to our community enriches us all. Today’s battle was won, but the struggle continues. Therefore, as always, we stand in steadfast support of the rights and well-being of international students.

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