

International Phone Number Guidance

Requirements for BU Pre-College Programs students

All students must bring a working cell phone that operates in the United States.

This rule is in place for students' safety, especially when they are off campus. Students need to be able to reach program staff in case of emergency, and program staff need to be able to reach students wherever they are at any time.

- "A working cell phone that operates in the United States" means that while in Boston they can both make and receive calls from US numbers for the duration of the program *without using Wi-Fi or a VoIP application, such as WhatsApp, FaceTime, Skype, Google Voice, etc.*
- To fulfill this requirement, students often purchase a **US e-SIM for travel that comes with data, text, and call capabilities for use in their existing phone**
- If at any point during the program a student (*who does not have a US-working cell phone*) plans to travel off campus, **they MUST**:
 - Be with another BU pre-college student who has a US-working phone.
 - Inform their PA of the other student's name and US-working phone number (in addition to their destination and return time).

Options to obtain a cell phone number that operates in the US

1. **Contact your cell phone plan provider** (e.g., T-Mobile) to inquire about options they can provide for your cell phone to **make AND receive US phone calls** for the duration of the program *without using Wi-Fi or a VoIP application, such as WhatsApp, FaceTime, Skype, Google Voice, etc.*
2. **Purchase a U.S. e-SIM for travel with data, text, and call capabilities** through a provider, such as Airalo.
 - a. [Airalo eSIM Installation Directions](https://summer.bu.edu/resourceDownload/2026_Airalo_eSIM_Installation_Directions.pdf)
https://summer.bu.edu/resourceDownload/2026_Airalo_eSIM_Installation_Directions.pdf

- b. **Students often need to troubleshoot eSIMs with the Airalo (or other provider) customer support or chatbot to get an eSIM to work.**
 - c. ***This process takes time and patience.***
- 3. **Purchase a physical US SIM Card for your cell phone.**
 - a. Program staff will accompany students at 3:00pm EDT today from the Phone Help Table to Star Market, where students may purchase a physical SIM card.
 - b. Please note that not all cell phones allow the SIM card to be changed easily.
 - c. We recommend you do a quick Google search to see if this is possible for your cell phone.

Next steps for today and tomorrow:

- 1. **If you plan to purchase a physical SIM card** and would like to go to Star Market with a PA, come back to the Phone Help Table at 3:00pm today.
- 2. **Update your PA tonight before curfew check** about the status of your cell phone number.
 - a. Your PA can assist with troubleshooting issues, testing your new US number, etc.
- 3. **If you are still not able to obtain a US-working cell phone number by the end of your afternoon seminar tomorrow (Monday at 3pm)**, please go to the Summer Term Pre-College Programs Office at the address below:

Questrom School of Business, Room 204 (*next to the 2nd floor Starbucks*)

595 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215