



## Important Information about J-1 Status

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### About J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa Status

The general purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program is to promote international educational and cultural exchange to develop mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and other countries. At U-M, there are three types of J-1 exchange visitors: students, scholars, and professors. An exchange visitor must not be a candidate for a tenure-track position.

- J-1 students must be admitted to a degree program for a full course of study or be engaged full time in a non-degree course of study.
- J-1 research scholars primarily conduct research, observe, or consult in connection with a research project. The scholar may also teach or lecture.
- J-1 professors primarily teach, lecture, observe, or consult. The professor may also conduct research.
- J-1 short term scholars can be professors, research scholars, specialists, or persons with similar education or accomplishments coming to the U.S. on a short-term visit for the purpose of lecturing, observing, consulting, training, or demonstrating special skills.
- J-1 specialists are individuals who are expert in a field of specialized knowledge or skill who come to the U.S. for observing, consulting or demonstrating those special skills.

### Entering the U.S. (DS-2019 and J-1 Visa)

As a J-1 exchange visitor, you will need a U-M issued DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange

Visitors and a valid J-1 visa (the visa stamp in a passport) issued by the U.S. embassy or consulate abroad to enter the U.S. Canadian citizens need a DS-2019 but do not need a U.S. visa. You should also carry proof of SEVIS I-901 Fee payment. Please be advised that you **may not enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the begin date on your DS-2019 (item #3) and not later than 15 days after the begin date.** When you enter the U.S., you will receive an I-94 Arrival/Departure Record card marked "J-1" and "D/S" (duration of status).

## **Mandatory Immigration Check-In at the University of Michigan**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires you to complete an immigration check-in within 5 business days of your arrival. Failure to complete the mandatory immigration check-in will cause your J-1 program to be terminated automatically and end your immigration status.

[Mandatory Check-In for J-1 Students](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

[Mandatory Check-In for J-1 Scholars and Professors](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

## **Maintaining Legal J-1 Status**

As a J-1 exchange visitor, you must meet certain obligations to maintain legal immigration status. Maintaining status is necessary to receive the benefits of J-1 status in the future, such as applying for a change of status, if needed. Failure to maintain your non-immigrant status can result in serious problems with immigration and could lead to deportation from the U.S.

### **J-1 Students**

To maintain legal status, a J-1 student must:

- Attend the mandatory immigration check-in program at the U-M International Center.
- Attend the university you are authorized to attend.
- Complete immigration school transfer procedure when necessary.
- Be in good academic standing and make progress towards an academic program.
- Extend your DS-2019 prior to its expiration date if you are unable to complete your academic program by original expiration date.
- In the event of change of academic program or level, update your DS-2019 in a timely fashion in accordance with immigration regulations.
- Maintain full-time enrollment during the academic year.
- Undergraduate students must enroll for 12 credit hours per term while graduate students must enroll for 8 credit hours (or number of credit hours defined by the specific graduate program) per term. During any given term in which you have been officially appointed by the department as a Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA) or Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), you may enroll for 6 credit hours.
- Limit on-campus employment to 20 hours per week during academic year.
- Not accept unauthorized employment and not work off campus without authorization.
- Keep your passport valid at all times. The passport must be valid for at least 6 months into the future on the day you return to the U.S. from a trip abroad.
- Maintain required health insurance coverage.
- Complete the U-M International Center departure form if you leave the program 30 days or more before the end date of DS-2019.

- Update your current and permanent address information in [Wolverine Access](#) [3] **within 10 days of moving.**

## **J-1 Scholars and Professors**

To maintain legal J-1 status, a J-1 scholar or professor must:

- Complete the Mandatory Check-In Process which consists of two online immigration trainings and a physical presence check-in at the International Center.
- Have a valid DS-2019. Extensions can be completed with your J-1 sponsor.
- Have a valid passport. The **passport must be valid for at least 6 months into the future.**
- Conduct employment only as indicated on the DS-2019.

**NOTE:** Departments must contact the U-M International Center if they would like the exchange visitor to engage in collaborative work outside of U-M or if the exchange visitor wishes to participate in occasional lectures at another institution.

- File timely and appropriate transfer and extension notification to the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) through the sponsoring agency.
- Maintain required health insurance coverage.
- Update your current and permanent address information in [Wolverine Access](#) [3] **within 10 days of moving.**

## **Health Insurance Requirement**

All exchange visitors and their accompanying dependents at the University of Michigan **are required to have health insurance coverage that meets the University's standards.** You will be automatically enrolled in the University's Blue Care Network (BCN) International Student/Scholar Health Insurance Plan after you attend the mandatory immigration check-in program. Your insurance coverage will begin on your DS-2019 program start date (Item 3). If your government or program sponsor is providing you with health insurance, you can apply for a waiver of the mandatory health insurance [by submitting an insurance waiver request form](#) [4] and attaching a copy of your health insurance policy. In order for a waiver to be granted, you must apply within 30 days of your check-in and your health insurance coverage must meet [specific mandatory standards](#) [4]. **U.S. Health insurance is not an option - it is a requirement.**

For more information, refer to [Health Insurance](#) [5].

## **Travel Outside the U.S. and Re-entry**

When traveling outside the United States, you will need to have the proper documents to return including:

- Passport valid 6 months into the future
- Valid DS-2019 with travel signature less than 1 year old
- Valid J-1 visa (for citizens of certain countries, reentry from Canada, Mexico, and the adjacent islands may be allowed with an expired visa see [Automatic Revalidation](#) [6].
- For more information, consult our [Travel Advisory](#) [7].

## Two-Year Foreign Residency Requirement (212[e])

Under specific circumstances, a J-1 exchange visitor may incur a Two-Year Foreign Residency Requirement. The J-2 dependents are subject to this same requirement if the J-1 visa holder is subject to the requirement. This means that neither the J-1 nor the J-2 may change immigration status to H, L, or Permanent Residency without first returning to his/her country for two years or obtaining a waiver of this requirement. If the Two-Year Foreign Residency Requirement applies, change of status to another non-immigrant classification, such as F-1, in the U.S. is prohibited. If the individual is subject to this requirement, the J-1 visa stamp or DS-2019 form will indicate that the bearer is subject to "212(e)".

For more information about 212(e), refer to [Two-Year Foreign Residency Requirement and Waiver](#) [8] or to the [U.S. Department of State](#) [9] web site.

## Employment

### J-1 Students

U.S. government regulations require J-1 students to be in the U.S. for the primary purpose of attending school. In general, employment in the U.S. is restricted. The following employment possibilities exist for J-1 students:

- **On-campus employment:** Limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session and available as full time during school vacation and holidays. On-campus employment is defined as work done on the premises of the school who issued DS-2019.
- **Off-campus employment:** Under certain conditions you may be eligible for off-campus employment either based on economic need or academic training. You may not begin the employment unless you have received official authorization from the U-M International Center.

For more information, refer to [Employment Options for J-1 Students](#) [10].

### J-1 Scholars and Professors

In addition to employment at the University of Michigan, J-1 scholars and professors are only eligible to be authorized for incidental employment, such as providing occasional lectures or consulting. Incidental employment must be approved by the U-M International Center prior to the activity. For more information, refer to [Incidental Employment for J-1 Scholars and Professors](#) [11].

## Dependents

Dependents are defined as a spouse and minor children (under age 21) of the J-1 exchange visitor. Dependent spouses and children enter the U.S. on J-2 dependent visas. Each dependent is required to have an individual DS-2019 to obtain a J-2 visa stamp from a U.S. embassy or consulate and to enter the U.S. (Canadians are exempt from the visa requirement). For more information, refer to [Dependents](#) [12].

Having J-2 status does not enable a J-2 dependent to work, but it gives the person the ability to apply for permission to work from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office through an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) (Form I-766). The J-2 dependent does not have legal permission to work until the EAD is approved by USCIS. For more information, refer to [J-2 Dependent Employment Authorization Document](#) [13].

## Taxes

All J-1 exchange visitors must file federal tax forms every year that they are in the U.S. The deadlines to file the forms are April 15, if U.S. money is earned, and June 15, if no U.S. money is earned. **Exception:** For the year 2020 only, the deadline to file tax forms is July 15, 2020.

For more information, refer to [Taxes and Social Security](#) [14] or consult with an advisor at the U-M International Center.

## Grace Period

When a J-1 exchange visitor completed his or her program, a 30-day grace period begins. During these 30 days he/she may remain in the U.S. and prepare to leave. It is not permissible to work during the grace period. Nor may one exit the U.S. and reenter as a J-1 during the grace period.

## Department of State Exchange Visitor Program

The J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is administered by the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of United States Department of State. Our J-1 Program is overseen by the Academic and Government Division.

Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation  
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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/important-information-about-j1-status>

### Links

- [1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/events/student-checkin>
- [2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/events/scholar-checkin>
- [3] <http://wolverineaccess.umich.edu/>
- [4] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/healthins/waiver>
- [5] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/healthins>
- [6] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/travel-visa#reval>
- [7] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/travel-advisory>
- [8] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/j-two-year-requirement>
- [9] <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor.html>
- [10] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/j1-students/employment-options>
- [11] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/scholars/j1-scholars/occasional-lectures>
- [12] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/j2-dependents>
- [13] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/j2-dependent-employment-authorization-document>
- [14] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax>
- [15] <mailto:jvisas@state.gov>