

YOUR J-1

International Faculty &
Scholar Services

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INFORMATION FOR EXCHANGE VISITORS

Important Things to Know About Being a J-1 Scholar

IFSS

The International Faculty and Scholar Services office is here to assist you with attaining and maintaining the proper immigration status. If you have questions about your current immigration status or about changing to another status, please contact us.

You can find helpful information at our website, <http://ifss.tamu.edu>.

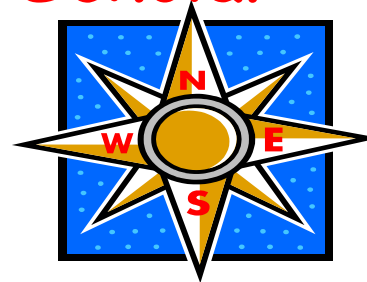
SEVIS

SEVIS is the **S**tudent and **E**xchange **V**isitor **I**nformation **S**ystem. It is a government mandated database with the purpose of maintaining and managing data on foreign students and exchange visitors while they are engaging in authorized activities in the U.S.

Your DS-2019 was issued through SEVIS, and any changes or updates to your information will be reported through SEVIS.

J-2s (Dependents)

Dependents of J-1s are known as J-2s. Before J-2s can begin employment, they must be issued an Employment Authorization Card (EAC). The EAC can be obtained by completing the form I-765. J-2s can get this form, along with instructions and recommendations, from the IFSS office.



Authorized Activities

As a J-1 scholar, your activities are limited to the objectives set forth in the offer or invitation letter that brought you here. If you must change departments within the university, please consult with us first. If you desire to change universities, we will work with your new institution to arrange for a transfer of your J-1 program.

You are allowed, with the approval of IFSS, to engage in occasional, short-term collaborations or lectures with other institutions. You must consult with us before undertaking something of this nature.

Time Limits

There is a definite period of time that you are allowed to remain in J-1 status. If you entered the U.S. under the Research Scholar or Professor category, you can stay in J-1 status for a maximum of 5 years from your date of entry. If you entered under the Short-Term Scholar category, then your maximum stay is limited to 6 months from your date of entry.

If you need an extension of your stay, your department must submit a request in writing. Upon our approval, we will issue a new DS-2019 showing your extension.

The Grace Period

J-1 Exchange Visitors are entitled to a 30-day grace period after the completion of their program. This period of time is to allow you to make preparations for leaving the country.

If you end your program early, you are not entitled to the grace period.

During the grace period, you cannot extend your program or transfer to another one.



The 2-year Home Rule

Some J-1 visitors will be subject to the 2-year home rule. Your DS-2019 and visa will be annotated to show whether or not you are subject. If you have a question as to whether you are subject, please visit with one of our immigration specialists.

If you are subject to this rule, you will have to fulfill the requirement or obtain a waiver before you can change your status to H-1 or become a permanent resident. For information on how to obtain a waiver, visit the U.S. Department of State's website at, <http://travel.state.gov/jvw.html>.

Departing the U.S.

When you complete your J-1 program or if you decide to depart earlier than planned, it is critical that IFSS is informed. Your department must submit a Departure Notification to our office with information about your departure. When you leave, your SEVIS records will become inactive. As a result, you will not be authorized to continue your J-1 program with Texas A&M University nor will you be authorized to transfer to another J-1 program.

The Insurance Requirement

All J-1 scholars are required to carry medical insurance for themselves and each dependent for the entire duration of their program. *If you willfully fail to provide coverage for yourself and your dependents, your J-1 program will be terminated and you will have to leave the U.S.*

Proof of coverage must be provided to IFSS within 10 days of arrival. If you do not have insurance when you arrive or if you will not have insurance through employment at the university, you must obtain coverage from an independent carrier. Our office can provide you with brochures for several different independent providers.

Reminder

Please remember to keep our office informed of any changes in your physical address, telephone number, or email address.

Having accurate contact information will allow us to keep you informed of important immigration announcements concerning your immigration status.

***Most importantly, failure to update your address will jeopardize your J-1 program!*