



IntealthTM
Advancing the Global Health Workforce



Exchange Visitor
Sponsorship Program (EVSP)

Reference Guide for J-1 Physicians

Introduction & Contact

WELCOME TO THE EXCHANGE VISITOR SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM (EVSP)!

This booklet was designed to provide you with basic information about the J-1 physician program, EVSP, and your responsibilities as a J-1 program participant.

If you have questions about any of the information offered in this booklet, please do not hesitate to contact EVSP.

CONTACT EVSP

TELEPHONE INQUIRIES: (215) 823-2121

EVSP is always available to provide assistance. EVSP advisors are available Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time in the United States. Outside of these hours, please call to receive information about EVSP's emergency phone line.

E-MAIL INQUIRIES: evsp-support@ecfmfg.org

WEBSITE: www.ecfmfg.org/evsp

If you are mistreated and/or your rights are violated, and we are not providing the help you need, contact the U.S. Department of State for assistance: <https://j1visa.state.gov/contacts/>.

CONTACT ECA

The BridgeUSA Exchange Visitor Program is administered under the oversight of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). ECA contact information follows.

J-1 Visa Emergency Hotline: 1 (866) 283-9090

This line is for use by Exchange Visitors and third parties in the case of urgent situations.

Regular Communications or Questions: jvisas@state.gov

This e-mail address is to communicate non-emergency issues, questions, and concerns.

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs:

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State, SA-5,
2200 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20522-0500

In a serious emergency that threatens life or property, call 911 to be connected to your local police department, fire department, or emergency medical services.

The contents of the *EVSP Reference Guide* are subject to change. J-1 physicians are encouraged to regularly review the most current version, available at www.ecfmfg.org/evsp/evsprfgd.pdf. In addition, J-1 physicians should regularly review the information posted on the EVSP pages of the ECFMG website at <https://www.ecfmfg.org/evsp>. All J-1 physicians are responsible to comply with the most current J-1 regulations (22CFR§62) and Intealth™, ECFMG®, and EVSP policies and procedures.

Contents

Defining Roles	1
Role of ECFMG	1
Role of the J-1 Exchange Visitor	1
Exchange Visitor Dependents	2
Training Program Liaisons (TPLs)	2
Sponsorship Overview	2
J-1 Physician Category	2
Basic Eligibility Requirements for J-1 Physicians	3
Initial ECFMG Sponsorship	3
Federal Requirements	3
U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (J-1): 22CFR§62	3
Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)	4
Selected Federal Regulations	4
Applying for Sponsorship	6
Statement of Need	6
Sponsor Rules	6
During Sponsorship	7
Form I-94: Arrival and Departure Record	7
Travel and Visa Issuance	7
Maintenance of Lawful Status	8
Maintaining Accurate Contact Information	8
Moonlighting	8
Incident Reporting	8
U.S. Laws	10
Resources	11
Helpful Links	11
Glossary of Selected Terms	11

Defining Roles

ROLE OF ECFMG

ECFMG, a division of Intealth, is authorized by the U.S. Department of State (DoS) to sponsor foreign national physicians as “Exchange Visitors” in the J-1 physician category for participation in accredited clinical training programs and/or their directly associated fellowships. Upon application approval, foreign national physicians sponsored by ECFMG are issued Form DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1 Visa) Status*.

The DoS’ BridgeUSA J-1 visa program aims to enhance international educational and cultural exchange and to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries through the interchange of persons, knowledge, and skills. In addition to being educationally and professionally rewarding,



<https://j1visa.state.gov/>

it is the DoS’ expectation that each J-1 physician’s stay in the United States will include enriching cross-cultural experiences. Through such cross-cultural experiences, J-1 physicians gain insight into U.S. customs, communities, and people while sharing their own cultures, traditions, and views with the American people.



ROLE OF THE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR

Each ECFMG-sponsored J-1 physician has a responsibility to know and understand the requirements for securing and maintaining J-1 visa status. J-1 physicians also have a responsibility to:

- Maintain a valid passport
- Secure and maintain required health and accident insurance for themselves and their J-2 dependents; see more on [page 5](#)
- Report any address changes within ten days to Intealth
- Engage in full-time training at the host institution identified on Form DS-2019
- Notify Intealth of any proposed changes to their training plan (e.g., training levels, training dates, resignation, etc.)
- Report any incident or allegation involving the J-1 or a J-2 dependent within 24 hours to Intealth
- Adhere to all U.S. laws

J-1 physicians are required to obtain and remain in valid J-1 visa status throughout the duration of their stay in the United States. J-1 physicians who wish to extend their stay in this country beyond the end date on the most recent Form DS-2019 must work with the hospital that issued the training contract to file the appropriate application with EVSP well in advance of the current sponsorship/program end date. Each Form DS-2019 is issued to reflect specific training dates, training levels, and training programs. The Form DS-2019 is not transferable and is to be used exclusively for training at the institution listed on Form DS-2019.



EXCHANGE VISITOR DEPENDENTS

ECFMG is authorized to sponsor the spouse and unmarried minor children of J-1 Exchange Visitors for entry to the United States under J-2 visa status. A minor child is defined as one under the age of 21. A J-1 physician's parents, siblings, extended family members, and nannies/caregivers are not eligible for sponsorship as J-2 dependents. Physicians already sponsored by ECFMG may request a Form DS-2019 for a dependent. A copy of the dependent's passport biographic page and evidence of the family relationship (i.e., marriage, birth, or adoption certificate) with English translation, if applicable, must be submitted to Intealth in support of any dependent sponsorship request. Issuance of the Form DS-2019 alone does not automatically grant J-2 status. Applicants for J-2 status need to apply for a J-2 visa either at a U.S. consulate or through United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), if eligible. Once in the United States, J-2 dependents must reside with the J-1 physician.

J-2 dependents are eligible to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card through USCIS. Once an EAD card is issued, the J-2 dependent is eligible to apply for a Social Security number through the Social Security Administration. If employed, income derived from the spouse's employment cannot be used to support the J-1 physician and/or the family.

PLEASE NOTE:

Physician couples are encouraged to carefully consider and coordinate their plans for U.S. training. Eligibility for J-1 sponsorship following a period of stay in the United States in J-2 status (and vice versa) should not be presumed. As with all applicants to EVSP, sponsorship eligibility cannot be determined until a complete review of an individual's U.S. visa history has been conducted.

TRAINING PROGRAM LIAISONS (TPLS)

Each U.S. teaching hospital at which a J-1 physician trains designates an individual to serve as the institution's TPL. The TPL is responsible for coordinating the sponsorship application process with prospective and current J-1 physicians in training at the institution and to have knowledge of the J-1 regulations. The TPL works with both EVSP and J-1 physicians to ensure that the host training site and its J-1 trainees are in compliance with federal requirements for participation.

Sponsorship Overview

J-1 PHYSICIAN CATEGORY

ECFMG is authorized by the DoS to sponsor foreign nationals who are graduates of medical schools in clinical training programs of U.S. graduate medical education.

Physicians sponsored as Exchange Visitors for participation in accredited clinical programs or directly associated fellowship programs of graduate medical education or training are categorized as J-1 "alien" physicians.



The U.S. Code of Federal Regulations defines the **J-1 "alien" physician** as a "foreign national who is a graduate of a school of medicine who comes to the United States under a program in which he or she will receive graduate medical education or training conducted by accredited U.S. schools of medicine or scientific institutions" [22CFR62.4(h)(1)]. **Graduate medical education or training** "generally consists of a residency or fellowship program involving health care services to patients, but does not include programs involving observation, consultation, teaching or research in which there is no or only incidental patient care. This program may consist of a medical specialty, a directly related medical subspecialty, or both." [22CFR62.2].



BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR J-1 PHYSICIANS

Foreign national physicians applying for J-1 visa sponsorship to participate in clinical programs of graduate medical education (GME) must:

- Hold a valid Standard ECFMG Certificate, if applicable. (Note: Graduates of LCME-accredited U.S. and Canadian medical schools are not required to be ECFMG Certified. Individuals who graduate from Canadian medical schools on or after July 1, 2025 will require [ECFMG Certification](#) in order to be eligible for sponsorship as J-1 physicians, as these schools will no longer be accredited by LCME.)
- Hold a signed contract or official letter of offer for a position in an approved clinical training program.
- Provide an original Statement of Need from the Ministry of Health of the country of most recent legal permanent residence. This statement must provide written assurance that the country needs specialists in the area in which the Exchange Visitor will receive training and that the Exchange Visitor will return to the country upon completion. If permanent residence is in a country other than that of citizenship, the Statement of Need must come from the country of most recent legal permanent residence. (See *Statement of Need* on [page 6](#).)

Duration of Stay: ECFMG's sponsorship for GME participation is limited to the time "typically required to complete a program," as defined by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and/or one of the specialty boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Per the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, duration is further limited to a maximum stay of no more than seven years.

INITIAL ECFMG SPONSORSHIP

Once EVSP issues Form DS-2019 for sponsorship following application approval, an applicant has two options for obtaining J-1 status. If the individual is in the United States in a visa status other than J-1, the individual may apply for a change of status through USCIS by filing Form I-539 (see the USCIS website at <http://www.uscis.gov>). If the applicant is physically outside of the United States, Form DS-2019 should be used to schedule an appointment to apply for a J-1 visa with the U.S. embassy or consulate in the home country. Physicians can contact [embassies and consulates](#) directly for information on the application process and processing times, or visit www.ustraveldocs.com.

Additional information about applying for U.S. visas is available at: <https://www.usembassy.gov/>. Physicians seeking a change of status within the United States may want to consult professional immigration counsel. **Physicians should not undertake any training with host hospitals until they are in J-1 visa status or have alternative employment authorization. Physicians must maintain current status while a change of status is pending.**



PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR IMPORTANT PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION.

www.ecfm.org/evsp/applying-pre-arrival.html

<http://www.uscis.gov>

<https://www.usembassy.gov/>

www.ustraveldocs.com

Federal Requirements

U.S. CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (J-1): 22CFR§62

Exchange Visitor physicians and host institutions must be familiar with guiding principles of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. Applicants, TPLs, and program directors are encouraged to review a complete copy of the J-1 regulations (22CFR§62) at the link to the right.

The *General Provisions* for all J participants are outlined at 22CFR§62.1 - §62.17; regulations specific to the J-1 physician category are provided at 22CFR§62.27.



More information is available on the **Electronic Code of Federal Regulations** website at:

www.ecfr.gov/current/title-22/chapter-I/subchapter-G/part-62

STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS)

SEVIS is a U.S. government system that provides tracking and monitoring functionality, with access to accurate and current information on nonimmigrant students (F and M visas) and Exchange Visitors (J visa), and their dependents. SEVIS enables J-1 program sponsors, including ECFMG, to transmit electronic information and event notifications to both the DoS and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) throughout an Exchange Visitor's stay in the United States. SEVIS is informed of all status events including, but not limited to, entry/exit data, changes of current U.S. address (residence), program extensions, employment notifications, and changes in program of study.

DHS requires all *initial* applicants to pay a \$220 SEVIS fee prior to appearing for a visa interview. (Canadians must pay the SEVIS fee and present the receipt at the port-of-entry.)

SELECTED FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Following is a summary of several pertinent regulations pertaining to J-1 physicians.

CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCES: It is the U.S. DoS' expectation that each J-1 physician's stay in the United States includes enriching cross-cultural experiences. Most residency programs provide multiple opportunities for cultural exchange throughout the course of a training year.

DURATION OF STAY: The duration of stay for J-1 physicians is limited to the time "typically required to complete a program," as defined by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and/or one of the specialty boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Per the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, duration is further limited to a maximum stay of no more than seven years.

J-1 CATEGORY CHANGE: Exchange Visitors may not, as a matter of course, change from one J-1 category designation to another. The categories most often used by foreign national physicians are: "research scholar," "professor," "student," and "physician." Currently, there is no provision for a J-1 physician who has participated in any clinical training under ECFMG sponsorship to request a change of category from the J-1 physician category to the J-1 research scholar category. However, a change in category from research scholar to physician is possible under certain circumstances. This requires pre-approval from the DoS and must be initiated by EVSP. Applicants seeking a change in J-1 category through the DoS must allow adequate time for both EVSP and DoS to review and make a decision.

CHANGE OF SPECIALTY: J-1 physicians may once, within the first two years of J-1 sponsorship, change their designated medical specialty, as defined by the ABMS Member Boards. EVSP is authorized to issue a change in program specialty before commencement of the third year of sponsorship. Once a J-1 physician enters the third year of sponsorship, a change in specialty is no longer permitted.



More information and SEVIS payment instructions are available on the **Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) I-901 SEVIS Fee Processing Website:**
www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html



More information about Change of Category is available on our website at:
www.ecfm.org/evsp/evspcocomemo.pdf

TWO-YEAR HOME PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT:

In accordance with Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, all Exchange Visitors sponsored in the J-1 physician category (and all accompanying J-2 dependents) are required to return to their country of most recent legal permanent residence for an aggregate of at least two years before becoming eligible for a change or adjustment in certain U.S. visa statuses.

MANDATORY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS: Federal Regulations require that Exchange Visitors and dependents obtain health, accident, medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains insurance. Insurance must provide the following coverage:

1. **Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness;**
2. **Deductible that does not exceed \$500 per accident or illness;**
3. **Co-insurance paid by J-1 not to exceed 25% of covered benefits per accident or illness;**
4. Minimum repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000;
5. Minimum medical evacuation expenses in the amount of \$50,000.

PLEASE NOTE:

J-1 physicians have a responsibility to ensure that they and their J-2 dependents have health and accident insurance that, at minimum, meets requirements #1, #2, and #3 above. **ECFMG provides repatriation of remains and medical evacuation insurances (#4 and #5) to all J-1 physicians and J-2 dependents under its sponsorship.**

TRAINING AUTHORIZATION / EMPLOYMENT: The primary objective of J-1 Exchange Visitors is to receive graduate medical **training** in the United States that will ultimately enhance their skills in a specialty field of medicine. Visa sponsorship, which is documented by Form DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1 Status)*, and issued by ECFMG, authorizes a specific training activity and associated financial compensation. Federal regulations do not permit activity and/or financial compensation outside of the defined parameters of the training program. Therefore, employment outside of approved residency or fellowship training is not permitted. Refer to the “moonlighting” section on [page 8](#) for more information.

J-2 dependents are eligible to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Once an EAD card is issued, the J-2 dependent is then eligible to apply for a Social Security number through the Social Security Administration. If employed, income derived from the spouse’s employment cannot be used to support the J-1 physician and/or the family.

REPEAT TRAINING: Exchange Visitors are expected to advance through **progressive** levels of training that are required by their chosen specialty/subspecialty boards. Repetition of any portion of training is discouraged. Requests for repeat training of up to 12 months will only be considered upon strong recommendation by the Program Director.



For additional information, see *Mandatory Medical Insurance Requirements* on our website: www.ecfm.org/evsp/applying-general.html#insurance



To request an EAD, you must file Form I-765, “Application for Employment Authorization.” Visit the USCIS website for more information: www.uscis.gov/i-765

Applying for Sponsorship

STATEMENT OF NEED

U.S. Public Law 94-484, effective January 10, 1978, requires that J-1 physician applicants provide a letter of need from the Ministry of Health of the country of their nationality or **most recent legal permanent residence**.

The Statement of Need (SoN) is required for all **INITIAL** applicants or if *any* of the following apply:

- The applicant is entering a new specialty or subspecialty
- The letter on file with EVSP will expire
- The letter on file with EVSP is institution-specific and a change in host institution is proposed

It is important to note that the source country for the SoN cannot be changed once an applicant acquires J-1 status. Any/all subsequent statements of need must be issued by the same source country.



For more information, including sample SoN text and FAQs, visit our website:

<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/applying-general.html#need>

SPONSOR RULES

SPONSORSHIP DECISIONS: The decision of J-1 visa sponsorship eligibility rests solely and exclusively with Intealth. Intealth's decision-making authority, including the decision to terminate sponsorship, is ongoing. There may be requirements under the federal regulations that prohibit ECFMG from providing J-1 sponsorship to an applicant. Intealth reserves the right to deny the application or reapplication for J-1 visa sponsorship of any prospective, current or returning applicant or terminate sponsorship for any reason, including but not limited to: the withholding of pertinent information from Intealth related to an application or participation in a U.S. program of graduate medical education (GME); the submission of false information or documents to Intealth by an applicant or current J-1 physician or by a third party on behalf of an applicant or current J-1 physician; or any other action that could or would subvert or attempt to subvert any of Intealth's policies or procedures. In addition, Intealth might deny an applicant's request for or otherwise terminate J-1 visa sponsorship if certain documentation is not available or does not meet application or regulatory standards; the applicant has previously resigned or been dismissed from a program of GME after a finding of a deficit in one or more of the ACGME-identified core competencies (e.g., patient care and procedural skills, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, professionalism, interpersonal and communication skills, etc.); or there is a significant incident or allegation concerning the applicant. Denial decisions are within Intealth's sole discretion.

By submitting an application to EVSP, an applicant certifies that it is true, correct, and complete. Also, by submitting an application to EVSP, an applicant gives permission for Intealth to obtain additional information from others pertinent to the application.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION: Per [ACGME's Institutional Requirements](#), ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institutions are required to:

- Have a policy that requires each of its ACGME-accredited programs to determine the criteria for promotion and/or renewal of a resident's/fellow's appointment.
- Ensure that each of its programs provides a resident/fellow with a written notice of intent when that resident's/fellow's agreement will not be renewed, when that resident/fellow will not be promoted to the next level of training, or when that resident/fellow will be dismissed.
- Have a policy that provides residents/fellows with due process relating to the following actions regardless of when the action is taken during the appointment period: suspension, non-renewal, non-promotion, or dismissal.
- Have a policy that outlines the procedures for submitting and processing resident/fellow grievances at the program and institutional levels and that minimizes conflicts of interest.

Disciplinary actions by a host institution/training program are expected to follow all ACGME requirements for Sponsoring Institutions. Intealth defers discretion for disciplinary actions related to the training program and/or trainee performance to the host institution. Intealth does not intervene in institutional contractual issues. As with termination from a training program, J-1 physicians who resign in lieu of termination may not be eligible for future sponsorship.

During Sponsorship

FORM I-94: ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE RECORD

Form I-94 is the Arrival/Departure Record issued by a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer to foreign visitors entering the United States. As of July 2021, all Arrival/Departure records are generated automatically at all U.S. ports of entry (air, sea, and land) except in limited circumstances.

J-1 physicians entering the United States for GME are issued Form I-94 reflecting J-1 “Duration of Status (D/S).” If the foreign national physician is already present in the United States in another visa status, the DHS Form I-539 “*Application to Extend or Change Non-Immigrant Visa Status*,” must be filed and Form I-797: *Notice of Action* will be issued upon approval.

Form I-94 or Form I-797 issued by USCIS provides the following information:

- **Date of Entry** to the United States/Change of Status Approval Date
- **Visa Status** granted
- **Length of Authorized Stay** in the United States

TRAVEL AND VISA ISSUANCE

All J-1 physicians must be in possession of a valid J-1 visa stamp affixed in their passports for reentry to the United States. J visa stamps may only be issued by U.S. embassies and consulates *outside* of the United States. The visa stamp must be valid if the physician is physically outside of the United States and wishes to reenter in J-1 status. Typically, J visas are issued by consulates for the duration indicated on the Form DS-2019 submitted at the time of the visa interview. Information on applying for a J visa at a particular U.S. consulate is available at the [U.S. consulate website](#).

In addition to possessing a valid J visa stamp and an unexpired passport, J-1 physicians and their J-2 dependents who depart the United States temporarily are required to hold a travel-endorsed Form DS-2019 for reentry. The Form DS-2019 must be signed by an EVSP Regional Advisor, otherwise known as a “Responsible Officer” in the lower right hand box marked “TRAVEL VALIDATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER.” Additional information on travel while in J-1 status under ECFMG sponsorship and instructions to request a travel endorsed Form DS-2019 are available at <https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/during-travel.html>.

Canadian citizens are not required to have J visa stamps affixed in their passports and are therefore not required to apply for a visa at a U.S. consulate. However, upon reentry to the United States, Canadian citizens must be in possession of a travel endorsed DS-2019 from EVSP and an unexpired Canadian passport.



Read more on our website at:
<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/applying-pre-arrival.html#arrival>

Get your I-94 record and additional information from the I-94 website at:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>



Visit the U.S. Consulate website:
<https://www.usembassy.gov/>

For travel information:
<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/during-travel.html>

MAINTENANCE OF LAWFUL STATUS

All J-1 physicians must maintain full-time participation in the EVSP-approved training program as listed on the Form DS-2019. Evidence of lawful J-1 status is maintained through possession of *both* a valid Form DS-2019, reflecting the EVSP-approved training, and Form I-94 or Form I-797. Form I-94 or Form I-797 marked with “J-1, Duration of Status (D/S)” is valid until the end date shown on Form DS-2019. If training with the host institution concludes prior to the end date shown on Form DS-2019, sponsorship terminates on the last day of training rather than the end date shown on Form DS-2019. Any attempt to use the Form DS-2019 after termination or resignation from the training program, regardless of validity dates on the Form DS-2019, is considered a violation of visa status.

Please note that DHS grants a 30-day grace period of lawful status from the expiration date on Form I-94 or Form I-797, if it is finite, or from the expiration date on the Form DS-2019, if Form I-94 or Form I-797 is marked D/S. This additional 30-day period, applicable only to J status, is for the purpose of making final arrangements before departing the United States. **There is no employment or training authorization during this 30-day grace period.** Remaining in the United States beyond the grace period can have serious repercussions for future immigration or visa applications. The 30-day grace period may not apply in instances of early departure due to termination. Consult with EVSP if early departure from a training program is being considered.

It is the Exchange Visitor’s personal responsibility to maintain lawful J-1 visa status.

MAINTAINING ACCURATE CONTACT INFORMATION

Maintenance of accurate and up-to-date contact information with Intealth, including a U.S. residential address, cell phone number, and e-mail address, is solely the responsibility of an applicant/J-1 physician. It is a regulatory requirement to report any address change within ten days to Intealth. Applicants are advised to add EVSP contact information to their e-mail client “safe senders” list to ensure that e-mail communications from EVSP are not marked as spam.

MOONLIGHTING

The U.S. Code of Federal Regulations governing the Exchange Visitor Program clearly states that the primary objective of Exchange Visitor physicians’ training in the United States should be to enhance their skills in the field of medicine. Visa sponsorship, which is documented by Form DS-2019 and issued by ECFMG, authorizes a specific training activity and associated financial compensation. A final requirement for sponsorship/status as an Exchange Visitor physician involves the signing of the Form DS-2019. This certifies that the Exchange Visitor physician understands that they “...shall be permitted to perform only those activities described on this form.”



Federal Regulations do not permit activity and/or compensation outside the defined parameters. Therefore, working outside of the sponsored program, or “moonlighting” is *not* permitted. This includes opportunities at your host institution that fall outside of the sponsored program, and any external opportunities outside of the host institution and sponsored program.



For more information on regulatory citations related to J-1 participants’ activities and compensation, read this memo:

<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/evspemot.pdf>

INCIDENT REPORTING

As a J-1 program sponsor, ECFMG, a division of Intealth, must monitor the well-being of J-1 program participants and report to the DoS incidents involving J-1 physicians and/or their accompanying J-2 dependents. Therefore, Intealth must be notified of any serious matter involving a J-1 physician or J-2 dependent. The DoS has indicated that any incident or event that impacts the health, safety, or welfare of J visa holders or that could bring the DoS J-1 program “notoriety or disrepute” is reportable.



Find the incident reporting form and more information on our website here:

<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/incident-report-physician.pdf>

Reporting is not limited to only those incidents that occur within the training institution. Incidents that occur outside of the training environment must also be reported to Intealth.

The following list was adapted from a rubric developed by the DoS and is meant to serve as a general guideline for reporting to Intealth.

REPORT INCIDENTS OR ALLEGATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING NATURE:

- Death of a J-1 physician or J-2 dependent
- J-1 physician or J-2 dependent is missing
- J-1 physician or J-2 dependent sustains a serious illness or injury (i.e., brain injury, severe burn, major surgery, serious mental health incident, any condition requiring hospitalization of 48 hours or more, etc.)
- Litigation (in which the J-1 physician or J-2 dependent is named a primary party, including malpractice)
- Incident involving the criminal justice system (i.e., arrest, charges, law enforcement, etc.)
- Sexually related incidents or abuse (an incident or allegation involving sexual exploitation, harassment, or abuse)
- Negative press involving a J-1 physician and/or J-2 dependent(s)
- Foreign government involvement (including embassy officials)
- Other situations impacting a J-1 physician's or J-2 dependent's safety (i.e., natural disaster, civil unrest, outbreaks of violence)

J-1 physicians and/or J-2 dependents must report any serious incident or allegation to their TPL *immediately*. The TPL and/or J-1 physician must then report the matter to Intealth. All reporting is expected to take place within one business day of incident occurrence. Failure to do so may be considered to be a violation of the physician's J-1 status. Please be assured that any/all privacy issues will be respected.



U.S. LAWS

It is important that J-1 physicians and J-2 dependents become familiar with United States federal laws, in addition to your state and local laws, which may vary. The following list is not comprehensive, but may act as a general primer for your reference.

SUBSTANCES

- **Alcohol:** U.S. legal drinking age is 21.
 - » Driving under the influence (DUI/DWI) is a felony, and has serious repercussions for non-immigrant visa holders. See the [Department of State's Guidance Directive on Visa Revocation](#) for additional information.
 - » While alcohol laws vary by state, most states prohibit drinking in public (e.g.; public parks) and/or public intoxication.
- **Drugs:** It is the responsibility of those who prescribe controlled substances to fully comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. In addition:
 - » The sale, possession, production, and distribution of both medical and recreational marijuana remains illegal under U.S. federal law. Crossing an international border or arriving at a U.S. port of entry with marijuana may result in seizure, fines, and/or arrest, and may impact admissibility.
 - » Using or distributing drugs that are not prescribed to you is a felony offense.
 - » Generally, employers may drug test and terminate employees based on usage.

FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- **Domestic Violence:** Strict laws govern intimate partner relationships in the United States (partner, spouses, etc.) to protect individuals from physical, sexual, emotional, and other forms of abuse. For more information on what falls under the scope of domestic violence in U.S. law, visit the Domestic Violence page on the United States Department of Justice website: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>.
- **Child Abuse or Neglect:** If you have children, you are responsible for ensuring their health, safety, and well-being. The United States defines child abuse differently than many other countries. Examples include disciplining a child with physical force, and leaving a child alone in a car or otherwise unattended.

OTHER

- **Taxes:** File annually with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by the designated date (usually around April 15); consult a professional tax preparer for support.
- **Driving:** The law in most U.S. states dictates that drivers (and passengers) wear their seatbelts, follow posted rules and speed limits, and refrain from distracted driving. Examples of distracted driving include texting or talking on your cell phone, eating, or other activities that take your eyes off the road while you are driving.



See the **DoS Guidance Directive on Visa Revocation** for additional information on the consequences of driving under the influence:

https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2016-03-GD_Visa_Revocation_FINAL_Sept_2016.pdf



For more on tax obligations, visit **our website** here:

<https://www.ecfm.org/evsp/applying-pre-arrival.html#taxes>

COMPLIANCE WITH U.S. LAW IS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN YOUR J STATUS

SERIOUS PROBLEM OR CONTROVERSY (22CFR 62.13(d))

Engaging in any "...activity or serious problem or controversy that could be expected to bring the Department of State, the Exchange Visitor Program, or the sponsor's exchange visitor program into notoriety or disrepute, including any potential litigation related to a sponsor's exchange visitor program, in which the sponsor or an exchange visitor may be a named party" may be deemed a violation of J status.

Resources

HELPFUL LINKS



Pre-Arrival Information

<https://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/applying-pre-arrival.html>

The Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure

<https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Brochure-The-Exchange-Visitor-Program.pdf>

U.S. Embassies and Consulates

<https://www.usembassy.gov>

Visa Appointment and Processing Wait Times

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>

Wilberforce Pamphlet on the Rights and Protection of Temporary Workers

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html>

GLOSSARY OF SELECTED TERMS

ABMS	American Board of Medical Specialties: A not-for-profit organization that sets professional standards for medical specialty practice.
ACGME	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education: Responsible for the accreditation of graduate medical education programs in the United States.
AMA	American Medical Association: Major physician membership organization in the United States; instrumental in establishing standards that support graduate medical education.
DHS	Department of Homeland Security: Comprised of divisions responsible for immigration policies, procedures, and enforcement including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.
DoS	United States Department of State: U.S. government agency responsible for the administration of all Exchange Visitor Programs.
D/S	Duration of Status: Contingent upon valid Form DS-2019.
ECFMG	Through its program of certification, assesses whether international medical graduates are ready to enter graduate medical education in the United States.
EVSP	Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program: Inhealth department responsible for J-1 sponsorship.
Exchange Visitor	J-1 visa holder
Form DS-2019	Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status: The legal document necessary to obtain/maintain J-1 status.
GME	Graduate medical education

Host Institution	United States hospital or medical center that provides graduate medical education training to the Exchange Visitor.
I-94	Record of arrival to/departure from the United States; it documents an Exchange Visitor's visa status.
I-797	Notice of Action, received when an <i>Application to Extend or Change Non-Immigrant Visa Status</i> is filed with USCIS.
Intealth	A private, nonprofit organization that brings together the expertise and resources of its divisions, ECFMG and FAIMER.
J-1	Visa status assigned to Exchange Visitors for the purpose of education and/or training in the United States.
J-2	Visa status assigned to dependents of Exchange Visitors.
Non-standard Training	Advanced clinical subspecialty disciplines or paths for which there is no ACGME accreditation and/or ABMS Member Board certificate available.
SEVIS	<i>Student and Exchange Visitor Information System:</i> Government database that tracks immigration activities of all non-immigrant students and Exchange Visitors.
SEVIS fee	A U.S. government fee charged to initial applicants for issuance of specific visas, including the J-1 visa. Fee is part of visa application process at U.S. consulates.
TPL	<i>Training Program Liaison:</i> Person at the host institution who coordinates the administrative details of the Exchange Visitor's training program.
USCIS	<i>United States Citizenship and Immigration Services:</i> Division of DHS responsible for the administration of immigration and naturalization adjudication functions and establishing immigration services policies and priorities.
Visa Stamp	Issued by a United States embassy or consulate and affixed to a page of a passport. Allows a foreign national to enter and/or reenter the United States (may be issued to allow single or multiple-entry; must include a valid end date). Should not be confused with Form I-94; the visa stamp does not document authorized duration of stay; it is an entry document only and does not confer visa status.
Visa Status	Controls the length of authorized stay and associated privileges with each visa class. The visa status of J-1 physicians is documented by possession of both a valid Form DS-2019 and a valid Form I-94 confirming "J-1, D/S."