

Pre-Arrival Information



607 Dakota ave.
Rivedale, ND, 58565

Contents

Welcome

Pre Arrival Checklist & SEVIS fee

Applying for J-1 Visa

Maximum Stay & Entering the United States

Two Year Home Residence Requirement

Arrival Information

Mandatory J-1 Orientation

Responsible Officers

Medical Insurance

Social Security Card

Welcome

We are pleased that you chose ICEI for your Exchange Visitor Program and hope that you will find your stay in the U.S. rewarding and enjoyable.

This Pre Arrival Orientation Guide contains critical information about immigration regulations, programs, and services for J-1 participants. Please read this guide carefully.

The U.S. government established the Exchange Visitor (J-1) Program to facilitate participation of educational and cultural programs for international scholars and visitors. The purpose of the program is to increase cultural exchange between the U.S. citizens and the Exchange Visitors. Increase in exposure to another culture will deepen the understanding of that culture. J-1 participants will get exposure to American culture personally and professionally, and have a lot of opportunities to learn cultural diversity and globalization.

Our goal is to promote highly motivated individuals from all over the world to take advantage of the international exchange program. Through internship, we provide the forum for them to learn American way of living and working as well as exchanging ideas and insights.

ICEI and host companies will provide intensive cultural exchange internship programs adaptable to the individual's needs and enhance his/her skills and expertise in occupational fields through our guided and structured internship programs.

International Cultural Exchange Institute is in complete concordance with the NACE definition of a "legitimate internship" and ensures that the following criteria are met in the internship opportunities afforded to our J-1 exchange visitors:

- A learning experience that provides for practical application of theoretical knowledge
- The program is not intended to advance the operation of the host company
- Skills and knowledge gained through the program must be transferrable to other employment settings
- The program duration, description, objectives & goals are clearly defined
- There is supervision

PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

- Verify that the information on your DS-2019 is correct.
- Notify your travel plan to ICEI
- Pay SEVIS fee online.
- Apply for a J-1 visa at the appropriate U.S. Consulate or Embassy.
- Purchase or indicate that you want purchase medical insurance via ICEI.
- Arrange your housing. If you need help, please contact ICEI.
- Schedule your mandatory J-1 Orientation with ICEI for a date shortly after your arrival.
- Arrange for transportation from the airport to your place of stay. If you need help, please contact ICEI.

SEVIS FEE

The SEVIS fee must be paid at least three business days before your scheduled visa application interview. Please print the electronic receipt immediately after payment has been made. You must bring the receipt to the visa interview. Spouses and dependents do not have to pay this fee.

APPLYING FOR A J-1 VISA

A valid J-1 visa is required for you to enter the United States. Please read below very carefully. For more information, please visit the US embassy website in your country.

Overview

The exchange visitor program's J visa is designed to promote the interchange of persons, knowledge, and skills in the fields of education, arts, and sciences. Participants include students at all academic levels; trainees obtaining on-the-job training with firms, institutions, and agencies; teachers of primary, secondary, and specialized schools; professors coming to teach or do research at institutions of higher learning; research scholars; professional trainees in the medical and allied fields; and international visitors coming for the purpose of travel, observation, consultation, research, training, sharing, or demonstrating specialized knowledge or skills, or participating in organized people-to-people programs.

The Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) Committee in the Philippines, through the [Commission on Filipinos Overseas \(CFO\)](#) requires Filipino exchange visitors (J-1 visa holders) to attend a Pre-Departure Registration and Orientation Seminar. The seminar aims to inform the participants about the conditions and requirements of the EVP as well as the participants' responsibilities as J-1 visa holders. [Please visit the CFO website for further information.](#)

Dependents

Spouses or unmarried children under the age of 21 who wish to accompany or join the principal visa holder of a J-1 visa to the United States for the duration of his/her stay must have J-2 visas. Spouses or children who do not intend to reside in the United States with the principal visa holder, but who will visit for vacations only, may be eligible to apply for [visitor \(B-2\) visas](#). The spouse and/or child of an exchange visitor in the U.S. may not work while holding a J-2 visa unless they have filed Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) must have reviewed the Form I-765 and given permission to the J-2 holder to work. The USCIS website has a PDF document titled "[Employment Authorization](#)" that has more details.

Application Items

To apply for a J visa, you must submit the following:

- A Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application (DS-160) Form. Visit the [DS-160 webpage](#) for more information about the DS-160.
- A passport valid for travel to the United States with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States (unless [country-specific agreements](#) provide exemptions). If more than one person is included in your passport, each person desiring a visa must submit an application.

- One (1) 2"x2" (5cmx5cm) photograph. [This page](#) has information about the required photo format.
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present a receipt showing payment of your US\$160 non-refundable nonimmigrant visa application processing fee, paid in local currency. [This page](#) has more information about paying this fee. If a visa is issued, there may be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, depending on your nationality. The Department of State's [website](#) can help you find out if you must pay a visa issuance reciprocity fee and what the fee amount is.
- An approved DS-2019 from your U.S. program.
- Original DS-7002
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present your Form I-901 SEVIS fee receipt indicating you paid the SEVIS [fee](#). The SEVIS [website](#) has more details.
- Supporting Document Listed Below under “Supporting Document”

In addition to these items, you must present an interview appointment letter confirming that you booked an appointment through [this service](#).

How to Apply

Step 1

Pay the visa application [fee](#).

Step 2

Complete the Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application (DS-160) [form](#).

Step 3

Schedule your appointment on [this web page](#). You will need three pieces of information in order to schedule your appointment:

- Your passport number
- Your MRV fee payment receipt number
- The ten (10) digit barcode number from your DS-160 confirmation page

Step 4

Visit the [U.S. Embassy/Consulate](#) on the date and time of your visa interview. You will need to bring a printed copy of your appointment letter, your DS-160 confirmation page, one recent photograph, your current passport and all old passports. Applications without all of these items will not be accepted.

Supporting Documents

Supporting documents are only one of many factors a consular officer will consider in your interview. Consular officers look at each application individually and consider professional, social, cultural and other factors during adjudication. Consular officers may look at your specific intentions, family situation, and your long-range plans and prospects within your country of residence. Each case is examined individually and is accorded every consideration under the law.

Caution: Do not present false documents. Fraud or misrepresentation can result in permanent visa ineligibility. If confidentiality is a concern, you should bring your documents to the Embassy in a sealed envelope. The Embassy will not make your information available to anyone and will respect the confidentiality of your information.

You should bring the following documents to your interview:

- Documents demonstrating strong financial, social, and family ties to your home country that will compel you to return to your country after your program of study in the U.S. ends. Examples: Residency registration, proof of family ties, residency registration, proof of you owning assets (car, house, lease, etc..) in your country, school enrollment proof, prospective employment letter after completing US internship, etc.
- Financial and any other documents you believe will support your application and which give credible evidence that you have enough readily-available funds to meet all expenses for the first year of study and that you have access to funds sufficient to cover all expenses while you remain in the United States.
- Photocopies of bank statements will not be accepted unless you can also show original copies of bank statements or original bank books.
- If you are financially sponsored by another person, bring proof of your relationship to the sponsor (such as your birth certificate), the sponsor's most recent original tax forms and the sponsor's bankbooks and/or fixed deposit certificates.
- Academic documents that show scholastic preparation. Useful documents include school transcripts (original copies are preferred) with grades, public examination certificates (A-levels, etc.), standardized test scores (SAT, TOEFL, etc.), and diplomas.

Supporting Documents for Dependents

If you have dependents, you must also provide:

- Proof of the your relationship to your spouse and/or child (e.g., marriage and birth certificates.)
- Each spouse or child must have their own Form DS-2019. This form is used to obtain the visa required for the spouse/child to enter the U.S. with you as the principal holder of an exchange visitor visa, or to join you in the U.S. at a later date.

More Information

For more information about visas for exchange visitors, visit the Department of State's [website](#).

VISA APPLICATION, ONE MORE TIME

- A Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application (DS-160) Form. Visit the [DS-160 webpage](#) for more information about the DS-160.
- A passport valid for travel to the United States with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States (unless [country-specific agreements](#) provide exemptions). If more than one person is included in your passport, each person desiring a visa must submit an application.
- One (1) 2"x2" (5cmx5cm) photograph. [This page](#) has information about the required photo format.
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present a receipt showing payment of your US\$160 non-refundable nonimmigrant visa application processing fee, paid in local currency. [This page](#) has more information about paying this fee. If a visa is issued, there may be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, depending on your nationality. The Department of State's [website](#) can help you find out if you must pay a visa issuance reciprocity fee and what the fee amount is.
- An approved DS-2019 from your U.S. program.
- Original DS-7002
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present your Form I-901 SEVIS fee receipt indicating you paid the SEVIS [fee](#). The SEVIS [website](#) has more details.
- A Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application (DS-160) Form. Visit the [DS-160 webpage](#) for more information about the DS-160.
- A passport valid for travel to the United States with a validity date at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States (unless [country-specific agreements](#) provide exemptions). If more than one person is included in your passport, each person desiring a visa must submit an application.
- One (1) 2"x2" (5cmx5cm) photograph. [This page](#) has information about the required photo format.
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present a receipt showing payment of your US\$160 non-refundable nonimmigrant visa application processing fee, paid in local currency. [This page](#) has more information about paying this fee. If a visa is issued, there may be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, depending on your nationality. The Department of State's [website](#) can help you find out if you must pay a visa issuance reciprocity fee and what the fee amount is.
- An approved DS-2019 from your U.S. program.
- Original DS-7002
- Unless your J program is sponsored by the United States Government (with a program code beginning with a "G"), you must present your Form I-901 SEVIS fee receipt indicating you paid the SEVIS [fee](#). The SEVIS [website](#) has more details.
- Supporting Documents Below
 - Documents demonstrating strong financial, social, and family ties to your home country that will compel you to return to your country after your program of study in the U.S. ends.

Examples: Residency registration, proof of family ties, residency registration, proof of you owning assets (car, house, lease, etc..) in your country, school enrollment proof, prospective employment letter after completing US internship, etc.

- Financial and any other documents you believe will support your application and which give credible evidence that you have enough readily-available funds to meet all expenses for the first year of study and that you have access to funds sufficient to cover all expenses while you remain in the United States.
- Photocopies of bank statements will not be accepted unless you can also show original copies of bank statements or original bank books.
- If you are financially sponsored by another person, bring proof of your relationship to the sponsor (such as your birth certificate), the sponsor's most recent original tax forms and the sponsor's bankbooks and/or fixed deposit certificates.
- Academic documents that show scholastic preparation. Useful documents include school transcripts (original copies are preferred) with grades, public examination certificates (A-levels, etc.), standardized test scores (SAT, TOEFL, etc.), and diplomas.

FOR VISA INTERVIEW

Please review all materials and be familiar with the information contained in DS-7002 and 2019. Especially, regarding internship placement plan and host company. Please be ready to answer the questions such as “how long will you be in the U.S.?” “what are you planning of doing after completion of J-1 internship and return?” “what is your major/focus of study?” “how many hours per day are you going to intern?” “how can I believe that you will return to your country after completion?” “who support you financially during your stay in the U.S.?” etc. Some tricky questions have been asked by the embassy officials. Even when there is nothing to hide, no lies, some visa applicants gave bad responses simply out of nervousness or confusion. Please take your time to answer the questions in a calm and confident manner.

Please make copies of all application and supporting documents for your record, and have them with you when you enter the U.S.

MAXIMUM STAY & ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

Maximum Stay

Your maximum period of stay under this program is 6 months under ICEI J-1 sponsorship. Upon completion of your J-1 program, you have a 30-day grace period to prepare for departure.

Entering the United States

Please present the following items to the U.S. Custom and Border Protection officer at the U.S. port of entry:

- Passport containing a J-1 visa
- Signed form DS-2019
- Recommended: any of the documents that you provided at your visa interview
- Other documents depending on an individual

Home Country Physical Presence Requirement

Depending on the participant's country of origin and the field of their internship, the participants may be subject to the 2 year home country residence requirement.

If you are subject to this rule, you are not eligible to change your visa status. You are required to return to your home country and reside there at least for two years. You may apply for a waiver from the U.S. Department of State. The information is available at

<http://j1visa.state.gov/participants/current/adjustments-and-extensions/>

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Shuttle

SuperShuttle provides airport transportation in the form of shared vans. Please contact your host company for more information.

Taxi

Many available taxis await at the airport. Depending on where your stay, it can be very expensive. Please check the map first.

Hotel Shuttle

If you book a hotel in the airport area, free shuttle service is normally available between the airport and hotel. Please check with your hotel.

Upon Your Arrival

Please inform ICEI that you have arrived safely.

Note: If you arrive Saturday or Sunday, ICEI office may be closed. Please try on Monday or email us at: inquiryICEI@gmail.com

MANDATORY J-1 ORIENTATION

Part of a J-1 status requirement is to attend an orientation and complete “check-in”. J-1 participant must attend the orientation no later than two weeks after arrival to the U.S. Orientation will provide participants and any accompanying family members information to assist them in settling in. “Check-in” can be done **in person or Skype**. After ICEI receives your travel plan, we will schedule your check-in date.

Please check the blow for necessary documents for “check-in” before attending the orientation.

Required Immigration Documents for the “check-in”

1. DS-2019
2. Passport
3. U.S. Visa
4. All of them for your accompanying family members

Orientation Schedule

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (CA)

* If you fail to complete the “check-in”, it may result in revocation of your status and visa. That requires you to depart the United State.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS

Sponsors appoint individuals as responsible officer and alternative responsible officer to advise and assist exchange visitors. These officers issue the Certificates of Eligibility (Form DS-2019), and communicate with Department of State and Department of Homeland Security.

Rules and Regulations

It is important that you understand and follow the Exchange Visitor Program regulations, U.S. laws and sponsor rules. Regular contact with your responsible officer will keep you current of any changes.

Maintenance of Status

You are required to have a valid and unexpired Form DS-2019. ICEI may terminate an exchange visitor's program for violating U.S. laws, Exchange Visitor Program regulations, or the ICEI rules governing your particular program.

Notification

You must inform your responsible officer or alternative responsible officer if you change your address or phone number, withdraw from your program or complete the program early.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

All J-1 participants must have adequate health insurance while you are in the U.S. for the programs. The coverage requirements are as follow:

- A minimum of \$ 50,000 per person accident/illness
- A minimum of \$ 75,000 for repatriation coverage
- A minimum of \$ 10,000 for medical evacuation coverage
- A deductible not exceeding \$ 500 per accident/illness
- Either

Be underwritten by an insurance company with one of the following ratings:

- a. An A.M. Best rating of “A-“ or above
- b. An Insurance Solvency International Ltd. (ISI) rating of “A-“ or above
- c. An Standard & Poor’s Claims-Paying Ability rating of “A-“ or above
- d. A Weiss Research Inc. rating of “B+” or above
- e. An corresponding rating from the United State Information Agency

OR

Be backed by the full faith and credited by the government of your home country

OR

Be offered through or underwritten by a federally qualified Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) or eligible Competitive Medical Plan (CMP), as determined by the Health Care Financing Administration of the U.S Department of Health and Human Service.

If you purchased the insurance policy through us, all requirements are confirmed and requirements are met. The insurance information is enclosed. If you purchased the insurance in your country, please provide us the copies of the insurance policy and detailed coverage plan.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

In order to work in the U.S., you will need to obtain the Social Security Number (“SSN”) and it will be issued at the Social Security Administration. Please have the following items when you visit the Administration office.

- A valid passport
- I-94 record
- J-1 visa

For participants in California: participants do not need a SSN to get a driver’s license in California or open a bank account. However, landlords and utility, cable and cell phone companies may request a SSN to determine the amount of deposit they will require to secure housing or to activate services.

Please find the brochure from the Social Security Administration office included here.