

Frequently Asked Questions for J-1 Visas

When can a J-1 visa holder begin travel to the U.S.?

The Department of Homeland Security regulations require that all J exchange visitors and their spouses or dependents (J-2) enter the U.S. 30 days or less in advance of the applicant's program start date as shown on the From DS-2019.

*This does not apply to current exchange participants who are returning to continue with their exchange program.

How long can a J-1 visa holder stay after their program ended?

After your program has ended you can stay no longer than 30 days. This time period is used for domestic travel and/ or to prepare and depart from the U.S. and for no other purpose.

After a J-1 visa holder has completed their degree program, are they eligible for any academic training?

- After completion of a PhD program, one can apply for academic training and will be eligible to work in this training for 36 months.
- After completion of a Master's program, one can apply for academic training and will be eligible to work in this training for 18 months.

What is the two-year residence requirement?

Some Exchange Visitors are subject to what is called the two-year home country physical presence requirement. This "two-year residence" requirement applies to you if you receive any funding (including nominal travel grants) from your home government or a U.S. government agency. It also applies to you if trained personnel in your field are identified by your home government as being in short supply and your field has consequently been included on the U.S. government's "Exchange Visitor's Skills List." The two year residence requirement also applies to persons receiving graduate medical education or training. The two-year home country physical presence requirement is explained on the reverse side of the DS-2019 form. An exchange visitor who is subject to this requirement must reside for an aggregate of two (2) years in his or her country of nationality or last legal permanent residence or have the requirement waived before being eligible for other U.S. immigration statuses, including H, L or permanent resident status. For information about the process of applying for a waiver of this requirement, [check this web site at the Department of State](#).

What is the mandatory health insurance requirement?

All Exchange Visitors and their dependents must have health insurance in effect which covers them for sickness or accidents during the period of time when they are in J status. If a J-1 or J-2 visa holder fails to maintain health insurance coverage, his/her visa may be terminated.

Where can additional information regarding J visas be found?

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html