



Penn Global
International Student and Scholar Services

Welcome to the University of Pennsylvania from International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)!

PURPOSE OF THE EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

The J-1 exchange visitor visa is for educational and cultural exchange programs designated by the Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Its mission, to increase mutual understanding between Americans and people of other countries, remains vital to building people-to-people connections around the world. All exchange visitors are expected to return to their home country upon completion of their program to share their exchange experiences with their fellow countrymen.

ACTION TO TAKE NOW

1. Review the Form(s) DS-2019 for yourself and any accompanying J-2 dependents.

- Report any errors to your host department who will request updates from ISSS.
- SEVIS number (N000xxxxxxx), is located in the top right corner.
- Read terms of sponsorship on page 2 and sign bottom of page 1.

2. Apply for a J Visa *

- Pay the [I-901 SEVIS Fee](https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html)** (\$220) at <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>
- Schedule a visa appointment and pay the visa application fee at a [US Consulate](https://www.usembassy.gov/) <https://www.usembassy.gov/> or via [USTravelDocs](https://www.ustraveldocs.com/) <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/>
- The application/visa interview will require your DS-2019 form, copy of I-901 receipt and visa fee. Consult the Consulate for further items required for the application and/or interview.

****Citizens of Canada** are not required to obtain a U.S. visa; however, they must pay the SEVIS fee to enter the U.S.*

*** J-2 Dependents do not need to pay the I-901 SEVIS fee but must pay a visa application fee.*

Please note:

If you are already in the U.S. and are eligible and plan to change your non-immigrant status from within the U.S., you should consult with an ISSS advisor. This is a lengthy process that could impact your J-1 program start date. Visit www.uscis.gov for information on the change of status process and current U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services processing times.

TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

- Check out the *Prepare for Penn and Getting Started: Scholars* website at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/prepare>
- Do not enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the start date on Form DS-2019.
- Keep your immigration documents such as your passport and DS-2019 form on your person during travel. Do NOT pack them in your luggage as you will need to present them to U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officers at the U.S. port-of-entry.

ARRIVAL TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

- On-line Check in with ISSS.
 - Complete the J-1 Scholar Orientation and arrival form at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/ipenn>
 - Follow the instructions to upload:
 - Form I-94 (arrival/departure record) www.cbp.gov/I94
 - Copy of your J-1 visa as issued by the US Consulate (not applicable to Canadian citizens)
 - Once ISSS validates your arrival in SEVIS, a new DS-2019 with a valid travel signature will be emailed to you.

- Social Security Numbers: You may request a SSN letter from ISSS at the time you submit your arrival information but you are only eligible for a SSN if you are employed and receiving payment from the university. Further information is available at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/ssn>

MAINTENANCE OF J-1 STATUS WHILE IN THE U.S.

- **Required documents:** 1) Form DS-2019 issued by the University of Pennsylvania with future end date, 2) Form I-94 card marked *J-1, D/S*, 3) unexpired passport.
- **Program activity:** Engage only in activities for which you have been granted J-1 sponsorship as indicated on your Form DS-2019 or which have otherwise been approved by ISSS.
- **Changes in terms and conditions of your J-1 program:** Any changes in the terms and conditions of your J-1 program, should be reviewed, and approved by ISSS in advance.
- **Mandatory address reporting:** Always maintain current and active contact information in your iPenn account, including 1) a U.S. residential address, 2) an active email address and 3) a U.S. telephone number.

GETTING SETTLED IN PHILADELPHIA

➤ Housing

Costs, locations and housing options vary throughout the University of Pennsylvania campus and the city of Philadelphia. Further information is available at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/housing> and <https://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/offcampusservices/>

➤ Health Insurance

All J-1 exchange visitors and their J-2 dependents are required to purchase and maintain health insurance that meets the J-1 Federal Regulations. Further information is available at: <http://global.upenn.edu/iss/j1scholar-status> and <https://clients.garnett-powers.com/vs/upenn/>

➤ Driver's Licenses

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) requires a J-1 exchange visitor's DS-2019 be valid for one year or more to be eligible for a Pennsylvania ID card or Driver's License. ISSS recommends obtaining a PA driver's license within your first month of arrival. <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/pennDOT>

➤ Banking

Information on opening a bank account and other financial services is available at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/finances>

➤ Transportation

See the "Getting Around" section of the ISSS website at <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/transportation>

BARS/LIMITATIONS FOR J-1 EXCHANGE VISITORS

➤ **Two-year home residency requirement, (§ 212 (e) of the INA, as amended)**

Being subject to the two-year home-country physical presence requirement makes you ineligible for H, K, L or US permanent residence status until you have returned to and been physically present in your home country for a minimum of two years. Two ways J-1 exchange visitors can be subject to the home residency requirement include the two bulleted items below. U.S. Consular Officials will notate your DS-2019 form in the lower left-hand corner if you are subject to the home residency requirement.

- The exchange visitor's funding is financed in whole or in part directly or indirectly by the U.S. government or the government of the exchange visitor's nationality or last residence, OR
- The J-1 exchange visitor is a national or permanent resident of a country which has deemed the field of specialized knowledge or skill necessary to the development of the country, as shown on the Exchange Visitor Skills List. **Review the Exchange Visitor Skills List 2009**. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor/exchange-visitor-skills-list.html>

➤ **12-Month Bar and 24 Month Bar**

J-1 Federal Regulations restrict participation as a J-1 Research Scholar or Professor based on prior J-1 or J-2 status. Review the following website for further information: <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/j1scholar>

➤ **J-1 Short Term Scholars**

Per J-1 Federal Regulations, the maximum duration of stay as a Short-Term Scholar is 6 months. A Short-Term Scholar may extend his or her stay up to the six-month maximum or transfer to another program within that period, but extensions beyond 6 months are not permitted.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- **International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)** <https://global.upenn.edu/iss>
- **Life at Penn:** <https://www.upenn.edu/life-at-penn>
- **Family Center at Penn:** <https://familycenter.upenn.edu/>
- **Penn Off-Campus Services:** <https://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/offcampusservices/>
- **Health Insurance: Garnett-Powers Insurance Portal:** <https://clients.garnett-powers.com/vs/upenn/>

IMMIGRATION

- J-1 Exchange Visitor Program/Bridges USA <https://j1visa.state.gov/>
- U.S. Visas: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html>
- U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs <https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau/organizational-structure/office-private-sector-exchange>
- US Department of State Welcome Brochure: <https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Brochure-The-Exchange-Visitor-Program.pdf>

WORKER'S INFORMATION

- Wilberforce Pamphlet: <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce/Wilberforce-ENG-100116.pdf>
- PA Workers' Compensation: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Compensation/WC/claims/wcais/Pages/default.aspx>

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