

St. Mary's College of Maryland Guidelines for J-1 visa holders
J VISAS EXCHANGE VISITORS PROFESSORS/RESEARCHERS/SCHOLARS

St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) is pleased to host students and scholars in its Exchange Visitor program.

The overall purpose of the Exchange Visitor program, administered by the United States Information Agency (USIA), is to increase mutual understanding through educational and cultural exchanges between the people of the U.S. and the people of other countries. The exchange programs at SMCM seek to do this through a variety of formats, including, but not limited to, study, instruction and research.

J VISA PROFESSORS, RESEARCHERS, AND SCHOLARS

While in the United States, you must follow certain rules and regulations to maintain legal status. The points given below are intended to give you brief information about regulations that apply to your J visa status. For more complete information, please contact the Office of Human Resources at extension 4309.

Check-in and Orientation: All Exchange Visitors must check in at their department and with the Office of Human Resources. Each Exchange Visitor will receive an individual orientation from the Office of Human Resources.

Health Insurance: Exchange Visitors are required, as a condition of their J-1 status in the U.S., to carry health insurance for themselves and their accompanying family members in J status. By government regulation, minimum insurance coverage must provide the following:

- \$50,000 per accident or illness;
- \$ 7,500 for repatriation of remains;
- \$10,000 for medical evacuation to the home country;
- a deductible (the amount you pay before the insurance begins to pay) not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness;
- co-insurance not to exceed 25% payable to the Exchange Visitor or sponsor; and
- a specific rating of the insurance carrier's ability to pay insurance claims.

Failure to comply with the government's health insurance regulation may result in termination of the Exchange Visitor's program.

Important Documents, Terms and Procedures

- **Visa:** A visa is your permission to apply for entry into the U.S. As long as the Exchange Visitor stays in the U.S., it does not matter if the visa has expired. There are several kinds of visa (e.g., F-1, F-2 J-1, J-2). The visa status of your dependents is usually linked to the type of visa you have.
- **DS-2019:** Certificate of Eligibility used to obtain your J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa.
- **I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record):** The small white card issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) upon entry to the U.S. It is normally stapled in your passport on the page opposite your visa. The I-94 is your permit to stay in the U.S.
- **Admission Number:** Upon admission to the U.S., the immigration officer issues each Exchange Visitor a unique 11-digit admission number. The number is intended to keep

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- track of the Exchange Visitor's arrivals, departures, permission to work, and other matters. This number is found on the I-94.
- Duration of Status (D/S): The Exchange Visitor's permission to stay is defined as "Duration of Status". It appears on the I-94 as D/S and relates to the expected date of program completion (check item #3 on the DS-2019). Exchange Visitors must file for an extension of program at least one month before this date.
- Length of Stay: The visiting professor, researcher, or scholar on a J-1 Exchange Visitor visa is admitted to the U.S. for a specific period of time. The length of the Exchange Visitor's stay is determined by the dates recorded in item #3 of the Form DS-2019. If more time is needed to complete the purpose of the Exchange Visitor's stay as indicated on the DS-2019, he/she should contact the Office of Human Resources at least one month prior to the expiration date.

The maximum total period of time allotted to scholars in Exchange Visitor status is 36 months. An additional 6-month extension to tie up loose ends is possible with the Responsible Officer's approval.

For more information on the procedures for extending your stay, contact the Office of Human Resources.

- Program Transfer: If Exchange Visitors are transferring from another institution in the U.S., they must have an endorsement from the Responsible Officer (RO) at the former institution on the new DS-2019.
- Travel and Re-entry to U.S.: Exchange Visitors leaving the U.S. for a temporary visit abroad must have the following documents in order to re-enter the U.S. in Exchange Visitor status:
 1. A valid passport (unless exempt from passport requirements, e.g. Canadians);
 2. A valid visa (unless visiting Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days). If the visa in your passport has expired, contact the RO at least one month prior to departing the U.S. You will need to get a new visa before re-entering the U.S.;
 3. A current pink copy (page 3) of Form DS-2019 signed by the RO (less than 6 months old at the time of re-entry); and
 4. Verification of financial support.

If you are traveling to a country other than your home country, you may need a visa to enter that country. You should call that country's embassy in Washington D.C. for visa requirements well in advance of your trip.

- Employment: Professors and research scholars may engage in occasional lectures and short-term consultations as long as they are incidental to the Exchange Visitor's primary program activities. Professors and research scholars interested in information about this possibility should contact the Office of [Human Resources](#) for details.
- Employment of Dependents: Dependents of Exchange Visitors on J-1 visas entering the U.S. on J-2 visas may work after obtaining authorization from the INS if they demonstrate that funds earned from employment will not be used for the support of the J-1 Exchange Visitor. It generally takes the INS about two months to approve an employment authorization request.