

Carnegie Mellon University

Office of International Education

5000 Forbes Ave, Cyert Hall Suite 101, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: (412) 268-5231 • Email: oiie@andrew.cmu.edu • Web: www.cmu.edu/oiie

J-1 Immigration Information

Immigration Documents

Passport: The passport is the legal document issued by your country of citizenship. It must be kept valid at all times during your stay in the U.S. It must be valid at least 6 months into the future to re-enter the U.S. or to apply for a visa. Passports can usually be renewed by your home country's Embassy or Consulate in the U.S.

DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility): The DS-2019 is issued by Carnegie Mellon's Office of International Education (OIE). It must be presented to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad to obtain an entry visa and to immigration officials to enter the U.S. in J-1 status. Please review it carefully to ensure that all information is accurate and up to date. **This form must be valid at all times while you are in the U.S., and it must accurately reflect the institution where you are working and the activity in which you are engaged.** If you stop working as a scholar, you are no longer considered to be maintaining status, even if the dates on your DS-2019 are still valid. Extensions or updates may be made by having your department contact OIE. After your initial entry, a travel signature less than 12 months old is required in order to re-enter the U.S. in J-1 scholar status.

J-1 scholars who need additional time to complete their teaching or research activity will need to have their DS-2019 extended prior to the expiration date on the current DS-2019. The host department should send the extension request to OIE along with evidence of financial support. Professors and Research Scholars may extend their document for a maximum of 5 years; extensions beyond 5 years are not possible. Short-term scholars can extend their document for a maximum of 6 months; extensions beyond 6 months are not possible.

I-94 Record: Upon entry to the U.S., a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer stamped your passport with the arrival date, J-1 classification, and expiration date of your status. The expiration should be D/S, or duration of status, not an actual date. J-1 scholars are permitted to remain in the U.S. as long as they have a DS-2019 with valid dates, are engaged in the activity described on the form, and have otherwise maintained their immigration status. You will then be directed to www.cbp.gov/i94 to print a copy of your I-94 Arrival/Departure Record. Check the website, verify that the information is correct, and print or save a copy for your records. Contact your OIE advisor for assistance if the information is incorrect. If you enter the U.S. at a land crossing you will receive a paper I-94 (from Canada or Mexico) stamped with the date and port of your entry. Check this document for accuracy and contact OIE if the information is incorrect.

Entry Visa: The U.S. entry visa is a sticker on a page of your passport which permits you to enter the U.S. Scholars will have a J-1 entry visa, usually with an expiration date that matches the expiration date on your DS-2019. **This is an entry document only and does not state how long you may legally remain in the U.S.** The visa may expire while you are in the U.S. A new entry visa will only be required if the original expires, and you travel outside and then wish to re-enter the U.S. in legal J-1 status.

Additional Issues

Repeat J-1 Participation: J-1 Research Scholars and Professors whose J-1 exchange program in the U.S. has ended, as indicated on the program end date on the DS-2019, are barred from returning to the U.S. again in J-1 Research Scholar or Professor status for two years from the previous program end date. Scholars who are subject to this 2 year/24 month bar can re-enter the U.S. in J-1 Short term scholar category, which is limited to 6 months and in narrow circumstances, or they may enter the U.S. in another non-immigrant status such as H-1B. Scholars who anticipate repeat trips to the U.S. in J-1 status are advised to consult with an OIE advisor early in their stay here.

Two-Year Foreign Residency Requirement - 212(e): Some individuals in J-1 status will be subject to a two-year foreign residency requirement. This depends on source of funding, country of citizenship or primary residence, and field of study or research. If subject to this requirement, individuals are prohibited from returning to the U.S. as an immigrant or in H or L status until the requirement has been met or a waiver of the requirement is obtained. Questions about the two-year foreign residency requirement should be directed to OIE.

Address Information: Immigration regulations require you to report your residential living address to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) within 10 days every time you move or change your address within the U.S. J-1 visiting scholars and family members should report residential address *AND* email address (both J-1 and J-2) changes to ois@andrew.cmu.edu, and this information will be reported by OIE to DHS. Individuals in H-1B or other statuses should update OIE when they change address and are required to update [DHS directly](#) online or by email.

Health Insurance: All J-1 exchange visitors and their J-2 dependents are required by federal regulations to have health insurance meeting minimum standards. To meet the minimum standards, the health insurance selected by scholars in J status must:

- Include medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness.
- Include at least \$25,000 worth of “repatriation” coverage to send a body back to the home country if the insured should die.
- Include at least \$50,000 for “evacuation” expenses coverage to send the insured to hospitals in the home country.
- Include deductibles that do not exceed \$500 per accident or illness.

In addition to the regulations governing J Exchange Visitors, another U.S. law requires health insurance coverage. Under the “Affordable Care Act (ACA),” individuals who do not maintain “minimum essential healthcare coverage” must make an additional payment to the Internal Revenue Service when they pay their taxes. Visitors in J status are exempt from this additional tax payment if they are nonresidents for tax purposes but would still be required to maintain health coverage that meets the J regulations. CMU’s student and employee insurance policies meet the ACA minimum healthcare coverage requirement.

J-1 exchange visitors who will not receive benefits from CMU may purchase health insurance that meets these minimum standards from the University Health Service. ALL J-1 exchange visitors must read, sign and submit OIE’s J-1 Scholar [Health Insurance Agreement](#) to verify that they will comply with the insurance requirement.

Purchase health insurance for yourself and your dependents, if applicable. Full-time faculty and staff who are paid by CMU are typically eligible for benefits and insurance through the university. Visiting scholars who will not receive health insurance benefits from the university may purchase the student health insurance from University Health Services, in Morewood Gardens, 1st floor, (corner of Forbes and Morewood Avenues). This [insurance](#) may only be purchased during the first 31 days of your appointment at CMU.

Incidental Employment: Short-term, [incidental employment](#) by outside organizations is permitted as long as the work is directly related to the activity listed on the DS-2019 and the scholar receives [written permission in advance by OIE](#).

J-2 Dependents: J-1 exchange visitors must report the email address for each accompanying spouse and dependent to OIE. In addition, the J principal must report if their J-2 dependents depart the United States prior to the exchange visitor’s final departure date by sending an email to ois@andrew.cmu.edu. J-2 dependents may apply to immigration services for work authorization. Refer to the handout “How to Apply for J-2 Work Authorization” from the OIE website or OIE office.

Travel: Refer to the OIE handout, [Travel Information for J and H](#), for detailed information regarding travel and re-entry to the U.S. **Note that if you plan to be outside the U.S. for more than 30 days, you must** make an appointment with your OIE advisor as there may be an impact on your immigration status and ability to re-enter the U.S.

30-Day Grace Period: Following completion of the activity on the DS-2019, J-1 scholars may legally remain in the U.S. for up to 30 days. By the end of the 30 day period, they must leave the U.S. or apply for a change of status to another immigration status. Travel and re-entry into the U.S. during the grace period is not permitted in J status.

U.S. Department of State Contact Information:

Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/AG - SA-5, Floor C2, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20522-0582. Email: jvisas@state.gov. Scholars who have concerns about their rights as employees in the U.S. should review the [State Department website](#) - or call the 24-hour hotline: 1-888-373-7888.

Information on many of the above topics can be found on [OIE’s website](#).