

# J-1 PARTICIPANT

## J1 Visa Application Information

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*Once you have accepted employment, a Department of State designated sponsor will review your application and employment offer. If you have received your forms DS2019, the next step is to apply for your J1 visa. This guide will assist you in the process. If you are working with a recruiting agent, they will assist through the process and may even schedule the appointment on your behalf. Although embassy procedures vary slightly by country, we have outlined what you can typically expect when applying independently. Links have been provided for you to access specific information about embassy procedures.*

*Please note that Canadian citizens need not interview at a US embassy and can process their visa at the port of entry by presenting their forms DS2019 and SEVIS payment confirmation.*

## Applying For Your J-1 Visa

If you are working with a recruiting agency, they will assist you through the process. You, however, are ultimately responsible for obtaining your visa and for assuring that your papers are processed correctly when entering and exiting the United States of America (USA), so please be sure to read through the information carefully. If you have any questions about the process after reviewing this information, contact your recruiting agency or email us at [visa@dealwithaces.com](mailto:visa@dealwithaces.com).

### **Review the embassy procedures for the US embassy nearest you.**

Detailed information regarding the visa processing procedures can be obtained through <http://usembassy.state.gov/>

### **Inspect your DS 2019 form for errors.**

Inspect your DS 2019 for accuracy. Slight errors in biographical information can be corrected but can delay the process if incorrect forms are submitted to the embassy. All information must exactly match your passport information.

### **Pay the SEVIS fee.**

If you are working with a recruiting agency, check with them to see if the SEVIS fee is paid on your behalf as part of their services. If it is not, you can pay this fee online at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com). A credit card is required. Be sure to print a copy of your receipt (I-901) and keep it with your DS2019 at all times.

### **Complete the electronic visa application DS160.**

This is an electronic form that you will complete. A printed copy of this submitted form will need to be presented at the time of interview. Before beginning the application, be sure you have your passport, your form DS2019, a photo to upload satisfying the required criteria and your SEVIS fee receipt.

### **Schedule an interview.**

Unless your recruiter schedules your appointment for you, you will need to call to make an interview appointment. Please follow the scheduling process for the embassy nearest you.

### **Pay the Embassy Application Fee.**

Applicants will be required to pay the nonimmigrant MRV application fee. Most embassies require payment to be made in advance of the embassy appointment with receipt presented at the time of your interview. Be sure to check the embassy website for specific payment information.

**Attend your Interview On Time and Be Prepared.** Be sure that you have all documents you need and that they are properly filled out. For your convenience we have provided you with a list with links to all of the documents you need.

### **What you need to take with you to the embassy.**

- **DS2019 forms**, also known as Sponsorship Verification Forms (You will need these to apply for your visa AND for entry into the USA) Be sure to keep both pages.
- **I-901** form is a credit card confirmation page confirming the receipt of SEVIS fee payment. Keep this with the Ds2019 forms.
- **Valid Passport**, a Machine Readable Passport with biometric identification
- **Letter of Support & Medical Insurance Confirmation.**
- **Proof of sufficient funds.** This is not typically asked for but, so we would like you to be ready for any situation. Although lodging and meals are provided during your program, bring to the embassy proof that you will have sufficient funds to maintain yourself in the United States in case of an emergency and before you obtain your first paycheck. (This may include bank statements, credit card access, etc)

- **Proof of ties to your home country.** Another requirement, but that is not always asked to present at interview. To prove your social, economic, family, and financial ties to your country of residence. (Proof of student status and enrollment for next term, car payments, rental agreement, etc.)
- **Pre-paid envelope.** Most embassies request that the applicant bring to the interview a self-addressed pre-paid envelope for the delivery of your visa passport and visa. Specific information can be found on <http://usembassy.state.gov/>.
- **Embassy Letter of Appointment.** Some embassies send you a formal letter confirming your appointment. If you received a confirmation letter, be sure to also bring this to your appointment and be sure to follow ALL of its instructions.
- **J-1 Visa Embassy Application Form DS-160,** <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/> This is the online application you completed. The printed form with bar code must be submitted at interview.

You will present the required documentation during your embassy interview unless your embassy has indicated otherwise. Your left and right index fingers may be scanned at the time of the interview.

#### **Processing time:**

Process times can vary according to the time of the year the application is made. A typical wait time to make a visa interview appointment is 10 days and it typically takes 4 days to process the application. For up to date information regarding processing times, go to [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/tempvisitors\\_wait.php](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/tempvisitors_wait.php). Once your J-1 visa is granted, the DS 2019 form and your passport will be mailed back to you.

#### **Visa Denials:**

If the consular officer should find it necessary to deny the issuance of your visa, you may apply again if there is new evidence to overcome the basis of the refusal. In the absence of new evidence, consular officers will probably not reexamine such cases.

***Please note:** In all instances, your PERIOD OF ADMITTANCE INTO THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED AT THE PORT OF ENTRY by Customs and Border Protection. The validity of the visa does not indicate the length of time you may stay in the U.S. It represents the date by which you must use the visa to apply for entry.*

#### **Make your Final Arrangements.**

Now that you have been approved and have obtained your visa, you can go ahead and make the final arrangements.

- Book your Round Trip Ticket
- Be sure all necessary supporting documents have been submitted including: a copy of your police background check, medical screening and three references.

The Department of State provides its own [Exchange Visitor Welcome Brochure](#) and [Welcome Letter](#) for Summer Work Travel participant outlining the program purpose and rules and regulations.

ACES offers all participants access to our resource page. The resource page includes links to letters and forms as well as helpful links: <http://www.dealwithaces.com/j1-participant-resource-page>.

## **A CULTURAL EXCHANGE SERVICE (ACES)**

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