

J-1 Travel Information

To all countries except Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean Islands

You must always maintain a valid passport. Be sure that you have all of the documents required by the country that you are intending to visit.

In addition, make sure that you have a valid, unexpired J-1 entry visa in your passport. If you do not, you should contact the American Consulate or Embassy in the country in which you are planning to visit to inquire about visa(s) to enter the United States (<http://usembassy.state.gov/>). Be sure to ask whether they will allow visa applications from third country nationals. Find out whether you need an appointment, how long it takes to get a visa, and which documents they will want to review. Book a flight that allows sufficient time for you to obtain a visa. Additional new security or technology checks are in place, as well as requirements for in-person interviews, which can result in delays of 30 additional business days or more. For more information on visa applications, go to http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html.

Please also note that a new SEVIS fee has been implemented to be collected at the American Consulates. However, as an NIH-sponsored J-1 Exchange Visitor (i.e. your Form DS-2019 was issued by NIH), you are exempt from this fee. Include with your visa application a copy of our SEVIS fee exemption notice; this notice and information about the SEVIS fee can be found at <http://dis.ors.od.nih.gov/advisories/visaadvisories.html>

The documents required vary from country to country so please inquire at the American Consulate in the country you plan to visit before you leave the U.S. to determine whether they will allow you to apply for a visa, the specific documents required and the length of time needed for visa processing. Neither the Department of State (DOS) nor the Division of International Services (DIS) can expedite your visa application, so please plan your travel carefully.

As a cautionary note, those who have applied for a waiver of INA Section 212(e), the J-1 2-year foreign residence requirement, or have applied for a change of immigration status, should consult with DIS directly on this issue prior to making travel plans.

You should travel with your valid SEVIS Form DS-2019 with travel signature and your passport.

Please let the DIS know that you are planning to travel at least 2 weeks in advance so that we can endorse your SEVIS Form DS-2019 for travel. Please notify the DIS if you will be applying for a new entry visa while you are abroad.

When reentering the U.S., the minimum required documentation you must present is:

- 1) valid passport
- 2) valid visa
- 3) original, valid DS-2019 with travel validation signature

Additionally, we also recommend that you present:

- 4) ID badge
- 5) current letter of verification to confirm your award / assignment / appointment with NIH (request such letter from your Institute/Center).

Upon your re-entry to the U.S., you must fax a copy of your new I-94 and new visa (if applicable) to the DIS.

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