

The Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure *

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

United States Department of State

The Department of State welcomes you to the United States. We are pleased to receive you as an exchange visitor. This brochure is designed to help you understand the purpose and operation of the Exchange Visitor Program and to introduce you to some of the major requirements of the Exchange Visitor Program regulations that are most relevant to you.

THE EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE administers the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended. The Act promotes mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange. The Exchange Visitor Program provides foreign nationals with opportunities to participate in exchange programs in the United States and then return home to share their experiences.

Sponsors

The U.S. Department of State designates sponsors to administer individual exchange visitor programs. Sponsors are U.S. organizations such as government

agencies, academic institutions, educational and cultural organizations, and corporations. They screen and select exchange visitors participating in their programs, provide them with pre-arrival information, an orientation, and monitor their activities.

Sponsors offer exchange visitors cross-cultural activities that will expose them to American society, culture, and institutions. Exchange visitors are encouraged to voluntarily participate in activities that provide them with an opportunity to share their language, culture, and history with Americans.

Responsible Officers

Sponsors appoint individuals as responsible officers and alternate responsible officers to advise and assist exchange visitors. These officers issue the Certificates of Eligibility (Form DS-2019, formerly IAP-66), and conduct official communications with the Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on your behalf. Should you have questions about the regulations or any aspect of your exchange program, your initial and primary contact is the responsible officer whose name you can find in Block 7, at the bottom right of the DS-2019 form.

Exchange Visitors

An exchange visitor is a foreign national selected by a sponsor to participate in an exchange program, and is issued a J-1 visa. An accompanying spouse and any unmarried children under 21 years of age, may apply for J-2 visas, with the permission of your sponsor.

RULES — REGULATIONS

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU understand and abide by the Exchange Visitor Program regulations, U.S. laws and sponsor rules. Regular contact with your responsible officer will help you keep current of any changes which may affect your J status. Some requirements of the Federal regulations and where to find them are indicated below.

Activities and Program Provisions

You entered the United States in one program category, and are required to engage in that category and subject/field of activity listed on your form DS-2019 (formerly the IAP-66). You must comply with the specific program provisions of the regulations relating to your program category.

Insurance

You are required to have medical insurance in effect for yourself and any dependents in J-visa status for the duration of your program. Some sponsors provide the required insurance for their participants. Other sponsors may allow you to make your own arrangements or may help to identify insurance carriers. Consult with your responsible officer before the start of your program.

- a. **Minimum Coverage** — Insurance shall cover:
(1) medical benefits of at least \$50,000 per person per accident or illness; (2) repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500; and (3) expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of \$10,000.

* Provisions included in this brochure are written as a general statement covering all divisions of the J1 Exchange Visitor Program. Please be aware that some sections may not apply to the specific J1 program in which you are participating.

- b. **Additional Terms** — A policy secured to fulfill the insurance requirements shall not have a deductible that exceeds \$500 per accident or illness, and must meet other standards specified in the regulations.
- c. **Maintenance of Insurance — Willful failure on your part to maintain the required insurance will result in the termination of your exchange program.**

Transfers

Exchange visitors may transfer from one sponsor to another only if they are released by the first sponsor as required by the regulations. A transfer must be clearly consistent with the intent and purpose of the original program objective and category. A transfer does not extend the length of the maximum program duration of the category. Insurance may be obtained with the new sponsor.

Extensions

An exchange visitor's program may be extended at the sponsor's discretion to the extent permitted by the regulations. Sufficient funds must be available to support you and any dependents if a new Form DS-2019 (formerly IAP-66) is to be issued. Insurance is also required.

Maintenance of Status

You are required to have a valid and unexpired Form DS-2019 (formerly IAP-66). Sponsors may terminate an exchange visitor's program for violating U.S. Laws, Exchange Visitor Program regulations or the sponsor's rules governing their particular program.

Notification

You must inform your responsible officer if you change your address or telephone number, or complete or withdraw from your program early. Doing so assists your sponsor in complying with their notification and reporting requirements to the U.S. Department of State.

Current Regulations

The Exchange Visitor Program regulations are located in the Code of Federal Regulations, (22 CFR, Part 62 — formerly Part 514). The regulations are generally available for review at the offices of responsible officers, universities, law schools, or large public libraries. They are also available on the Internet at:

<http://www.exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges>

For Further Information

Additional requirements that may apply to you are set forth in the Exchange Visitor Program Regulations.

Review a copy of the current regulations and consult with your responsible officer.

The address, telephone and fax numbers and web site address of the Exchange Visitor Program, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, United States Department of State is:

SA-44, Room 734

301 Fourth Street, SW

Washington, DC 20547

TEL: 202-401-9810 FAX 202-401-9809

Internet address:

<http://www.exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges>