

# **J-1 Research Scholars**

UNMC International Studies and Programs

The primary purpose of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program is to foster the exchange of ideas between Americans and foreign nationals and to stimulate international collaborative teaching and research efforts. [22CFR 514.20(b)]

## **Insurance Requirements**

J-1 Scholars and their J-2 dependents are required to maintain health insurance and medical evacuation insurance for the duration of the J-1 program. Most UNMC sponsored J-1 researchers are employees of UNMC and are therefore eligible for UNMC health insurance. However, in addition, J-1 researchers are required to purchase medical evacuation and repatriation of remains insurance. This should be purchased at time of arrival at this office. Government regulations stipulate that if you willfully fail to carry health insurance for yourself and your dependents, your program will be terminated and your termination reported to the U.S. Department of State.

### *To pay for Health Insurance for J-1 Scholars*

Visit the homepage of International Studies and Programs at [www.unmc.edu/isp](http://www.unmc.edu/isp). Click on health insurance; select no for sports rider coverage; select yes for on-line fulfillment; click on get quote. Choose \$0 for the deductible and choose \$100,000 for maximum coverage. Apply for coverage (country of citizenship should be the same as home country); after confirming order, print out the confirmation and mail a copy to International Studies and Programs to campus zip 5735.

### *To pay for MedEvac Only for J-1 Scholars*

Visit the homepage of International Studies and Programs at [www.unmc.edu/isp](http://www.unmc.edu/isp). Click on medevac insurance; select yes for scholastic plan; apply for coverage; after confirming order, print out the confirmation and send a copy to International Studies and Programs at campus zip 5735.

## **Maintenance of Status**

J-1 researchers are responsible to maintain legal status while in the U.S.

Maintaining status primarily includes:

- Maintaining insurance
- Never engaging in employment without USCIS authorization
- Maintaining a current passport
- Maintaining a current Form DS-2019
- Performing the objective that is listed on Part 4 of the DS-2019
- Notify International Studies & Programs of address change within 10 days

## **Time Limit**

J-1 researchers may be employed by UNMC for a maximum of five years after the beginning date on the DS-2019. If your DS-2019 expires before the five-year limit, your department must send us a request form to extend your DS-2019. This should be done 15-90 days before the expiration date.

## **Transferring**

J-1 researchers are eligible to transfer their J-1 program to a new UNMC department or to a new program sponsor if they continue to follow the same program objective stated on the DS-2019 and if they are currently maintaining legal status at UNMC. Transferring does not extend the five-year time limit. J-1 scholars should contact International Studies and Programs when considering a transfer to a different department or a different program sponsor. Our office must approve any transfer before it can take place.

## **Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement [212.e]**

When completing their J-1 program, many exchange visitors are required to return to their home country for at least two years before they are eligible to change to an H employee visa or to permanent residency. J-1 scholars and J-2 dependents may be subject to the requirement for any of three reasons:

- Receiving government financing from the U.S. or scholar's home country government.
- Skills are critically needed by scholar's home country
- J-1 Visa is currently sponsored by ECFMG

It is sometimes possible to obtain a waiver of this two-year requirement. This process is started by contacting the U.S. Department of State and will require a statement of no objection from home country government. The entire process takes three to eight months. More information can be found on the web at <http://travel.state.gov/>. It is important to remember that once a waiver has been approved by the U.S. Department of State, we can no longer extend the DS-2019 form and the J-1 scholar will not be eligible to transfer J-1 status to a new sponsor.

## **12 Month Bar**

Individuals who have spent six months or more in the United States in any J status must wait 12 months from the end of their J program before beginning a new program as a research scholar.

## **Temporary Departure from the U.S.**

Before temporarily departing the U.S., exchange visitors are required to bring their DS-2019 to our office for a signature. If the visa has expired, a new one must be obtained from a U.S. consulate before re-entering the U.S. unless the J-1 scholar is traveling to Canada or Mexico. J-1 scholars and J-2 dependents may re-enter the U.S. from Canada or Mexico if their stay is less than 30 days.

## **J-2 Work Authorization**

J-2 dependents are eligible to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (work permit). They are granted for one year and can be extended. Application packets can be obtained from International Studies and Programs.

## **Appointments**

For questions or to schedule an appointment to meet with the International Advisor, please contact us at [international@unmc.edu](mailto:international@unmc.edu) or by calling 559-6414.