**Process and Procedures for Inviting J-1 Exchange Visitors**

The J-1 Exchange Visitor visa category is carried out under the provisions of U.S. law through the U.S. Department of State, to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by educational and cultural exchanges. Texas State works through an organization in Austin called Texas International Education Consortium **(TIEC)** which is authorized by the Department of State to administer the J-1 Exchange Visitor program. The process involves six parties:

1) The Department of State (DOS),

2) The Department of Homeland Security (DHS),

3) Responsible Officers (TIEC),

4) The Texas State International Office,

5) J-1 Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors (you),

6) Exchange Visitors (your invited scholar or student (and their dependents, if any)),

**Related Estimated Costs**

TIEC processing fee (can be paid by Sponsor or Exchange Visitor) $295

SEVIS fee (paid by Exchange Visitor online to DHS) $180

Nonimmigrant visa application processing fee (paid by Exchange Visitor to DOS) $140

**Nonimmigrant visa issuance fee** (paid by Exchange Visitor to DOS) varies by county, see http://www.usembassy.gov/

Estimated living expenses for J-1 Scholar $1200/month (suggested minimum)

Estimated living expenses per dependent (if applicable) $500/month (suggested minimum)

Estimated costs for fulltime J-1 Student accepted into a degree program consult with International Office

**Responsibilities of Sponsors**

• Communicate with your prospective Exchange Visitor and obtain required information and documents from them. It is recommended that this process begin at least three months before the anticipated arrival of the Exchange Visitor to the U.S.

• To invite your prospective Exchange Visitor, please submit the following required documents to the International Office:

**Documentation for Professor, Research Scholar, Short-term Scholar, Student Intern and Non-degree Student Categories:**

**1. A completed and signed TIEC J-1 Exchange Visitor Information Sheet** (see attachment B);

**2. A copy of an invitation letter from the sponsor or department addressed to the scholar** (see attachment C);

**3. Proof of current funding/financial support in which the total amount of funds available must be stated;**

These original financial documents should guarantee the equivalent at least $1200 a month for living expenses; this information can be included in the invitation letter.

\_ A letter of support from the scholar’s financial sponsor such as home government, U.S. government, Texas State, or an international organization; and/or

\_ A bank statement or a letter from the scholar’s financial institution.

**4. A copy (scanned or faxed is fine) of the Exchange Visitor’s passport biometrics (identification page) including:**

Name, picture, and expiration page(s) and any extension of validity pages; also copies of biometrics of spouse or dependents under the age of 21 who will accompany the Exchange Visitor, if any.

**5. The scholar's curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé** (not necessary for student categories);

**6. Documentation of the scholar's English proficiency;**

It is required that a method be identified that was used to determine that the English level of the proposed J-1 Exchange Visitor is sufficient for the activities in which he or she will participate. The following are suggested methods of determination provided by TIEC.

* Adequate scores on English proficiency tests such as IBT, IELTS, and TOEIC or other standardized tests in English such as GRE and GMAT
* Interview(s) with the scholar by faculty at your institution who determine that the scholar has sufficient English proficiency. This could be by phone, Skype, etc.
* Evidence from the scholar's professional experience and accomplishments that indicates a sufficient level of English proficiency, such as their publications written in English, number of courses taught in English or number of presentations given using English, etc.

**7.** *(Only applicable if the Exchange Visitor has previously been in the U.S. in J-1 Exchange Visitor status)*

**Copies of previous DS-2019s for J-1/J-2 status issued by any other U.S. institutions;**

**Dependents of J-1 Exchange Visitors (J-2 Dependent)**

Prospective Exchange Visitors should indicate whether or not they plan to have any family members accompany them. If so, they must complete the relevant section on the second page of the TIEC J-1 Exchange Visitor Information Sheet and supply copies of the passport biometrics pages for each dependent. In addition to the $1200 per month for living expenses for the Exchange Visitor, proof of financial support is required for each J-2 Dependent. (Minimum $500 per dependent per month)

**The International Office and TIEC**

After gathering the above required documents, please email them to international@txstate.edu or fax them to the office to 245-8264. Upon receipt of all of the documents, the International Office will forward them to TIEC in Austin. TIEC will produce a DS-2019 which is a form that will be used by your Exchange Visitor to apply for their J-1 Exchange Visitor visa.

**TIEC charges a fee of $295 per Exchange Visitor to provide these services.** This is a one-time fee. No additional fees will be charged except for express mail service when requested. TIEC, which is a vendor in SAP, will forward an invoice to your office or bill the Exchange Visitor. However, the fee may be paid prior to issuance of the DS-2019 by check, money order, or credit card. TIEC can usually process DS-2019s and mail them to the International Office within one week of receipt of all required information. You will be contacted when the DS-2019 is ready for pickup at the International Office. You will be responsible for sending the DS-2019 to your Exchange Visitor or you can request that TIEC FedEx it directly to the Exchange Visitor and bill you or the Exchange Visitor.

***Important:* Notify the International Office immediately if an Exchange Visitor cannot arrive within 30 days of the program start date. TIEC will have to amend the Exchange Visitor’s DS-2019 by deferring the start date and issuing a revised DS-2019, which has to be mailed to the Exchange Visitor.**

**Prior to Arrival of the Exchange Visitor to the United States**

• The International Office will provide Exchange Visitors with arrival information to help them know what to do and where to go upon arrival in the U.S., including contact information for TIEC (name and telephone number of the RO/ARO) and other points of contact.

• The sponsor should arrange health insurance for Exchange Visitors if they are eligible to receive health insurance through Texas State, or make sure that they will arrange it in their home country. All J-1 Exchange Visitors are required by law to have health insurance for themselves and accompanying family members in J-2 Dependent status.

**Medical Insurance Requirements for J-1 Exchange Visitors**

To be eligible to participate in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program in the United States, Exchange Visitors are required by law to obtain **and maintain** appropriate medical insurance throughout the duration of their program. If the Exchange Visitor is benefits eligible at Texas State, he or she will only need medical evacuation and repatriation insurance. Information about this additional insurance may be obtained at the International Office.

MINIMUM INSURANCE COVERAGE REQUIRED

Major Medical Coverage......................................................................... $50,000

Medical Evacuation................................................................................. $10,000

Repatriation of Remains......................................................................... $ 7,500

Maximum Deductible per Accident/illness............................................. $ 500

MINIMUM POLICY RATING

(Must Comply With One)

A.M. Best rating of “A-” or above;

Insurance Solvency International Ltd., rating of “A-” or above;

Standard and Poor’s rating of “A-” or above

Weiss Research, Inc. rating of “B+” or above.

The cost of medical insurance is often based on age of the Exchange Visitor and varies with the provider. It usually ranges from $100-200 dollars per month. There are many companies that specialize in J-1 Exchange Visitor medical insurance. Below are some companies that offer plans which suit Exchange Visitor’s needs. The International Office does not endorse any company and provides these links for informational purposes only.

<http://www.macori.com/index.asp>

<http://www.gatewayplans.com/gw_usa/index.cfm>

<http://www.betins.com/Products/Educational/LongTerm.aspx>

<http://www.medexassist.com/Individuals/Products/travmedchoice.aspx>

<http://www.psiservice.com/psiweb/index.jsp>

[http://www.nriol.com/insurance/exchange-Exchange Visitor-insurance-overview.html](http://www.nriol.com/insurance/exchange-visitor-insurance-overview.html)

<http://www.isoa.org/default.aspx>

<http://www.compassbenefits.com/>

<http://www.hginsurance.com/>

<http://www.hthstudents.com/insurance.cfm>

<http://www.lewermark.com/Default.aspx?tabId=124395>

<http://www.culturalinsurance.com/>

<http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/>

<http://www.cmi-insurance.com/>

<http://www.rustassoc.com/>

<http://www.wallach.com/>

<http://www.internationalsos.com/en/>

<http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/>

<http://www.renaissance-inc.com/>

<https://www.gatewayconnexions.com/Individuals/StudentTravel/GatewayUSA.aspx>

<https://www.sevencorners.com/insurance/HW7C6YH>

<https://www.mnui.com/quotes.asp>

<http://buymembership.internationalsos.com/compare/wizard>

**Upon Arrival of the Exchange Visitor in the United States**

**Check-in**

J-1 Exchange Visitors and any J-2 Dependents must report to the International Office as soon as they arrive in the United States, and bring the following:

1. The DS-2019
2. The passport with J visa
3. The I-94 Arrival/Departure Record (small white card stapled in the passport by the Immigration Officer at the port of entry)
4. Proof of health insurance
5. Health Insurance Statement Form for J Visa Holders

The International Office will forward a copy of these documents to TIEC. TIEC must validate the visitor’s program participation in SEVIS within 30 days after the program start date. To do this, TIEC must have these documents as well as a U.S. address for the exchange visitor in a timely manner. Failure to validate the visitor’s record within 30 days of the program start date listed in SEVIS will result in automatic cancellation of the record.

**Orientation**

Federal law requires that J-1 Exchange Visitors be provided with an orientation that upon arrival. The International Office will provide Exchange Visitors and accompanying family members with an orientation that focuses on immigration and cultural issues and includes, but is not limited to:

* Life and customs in the United States.
* Local community resources, such as public transportation, medical centers, recreational centers, and banks.
* Available health care, emergency assistance.

The International Office will provide this orientation however it may also be combined with one that the department provides.

**Cross-cultural Activities**

Federal law requires that cross cultural activities be provided for J-1 Exchange Visitors. The International Office can make recommendations to the sponsor regarding these activities. These could consist of attendance at on or off campus events, outings, etc.

**The sponsor and/or the Exchange Visitor must:**

* Report any changes in the Exchange Visitor’s address to the International Office or TIEC within 10 days of a move.

TIEC must update the address in SEVIS within 21 days.

* Report immediately to the International Office or TIEC any changes in the Exchange Visitor’s program, especially changes related to the source of funding, program length, and research content.
* Submit extension requests to the International Office or TIEC at least one month before the end date of the current DS-2019. Extension requests are not routinely approved by the DOS. The situation must be unique and exceptional. There are no extensions for Short-term Scholar.
* Submit “Out of Country” requests to the International Office or TIEC in advance if the Exchange Visitor will be outside the U.S. during his or her program.
* Notify the International Office or TIEC immediately if the Exchange Visitor or any of his or her dependents leave the U.S. permanently before the program end date on the exchange visitor’s DS-2019.
* Inform the International Office or TIEC when Exchange Visitors complete their program and leave the U.S.
* When Exchange Visitors want to travel outside the U.S. they must first obtain a “travel signature” on their DS-2019 to facilitate re-entry. They should submit their original DS-2019 to the International Office or TIEC one month before the travel along with an email from their sponsor stating approval to travel, and an email from themselves answering the following questions:

 a. “How long will you be out of the country?”

 b. “What is the purpose of your travel?”