

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION FOR VISITING J-1 PROFESSORS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Welcome to Georgetown University! This packet contains pre-arrival information compiled by the Office of International Programs (OIP) to assist you with your move to Georgetown. Additional logistical and immigration information is available on our website at: <http://oip.georgetown.edu/iss/>

VISA APPLICATION

Enclosed is a DS-2019 Form, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status, which indicates that Georgetown University will sponsor your immigration status in the United States. Please read the Instructions on page 2 of the form and sign the Exchange Visitor Certification on page 1.

After receiving the DS-2019 Form, you will need to pay a one-time fee required by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to fund the operation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). This fee is assessed in addition to the visa application fee. The SEVIS fee should be paid directly to DHS at least 3 business days prior to your visa interview. J-2 dependents are not subject to the SEVIS fee.

To pay the SEVIS fee, visit www.fmjfee.com and complete Form I-901 (be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your DS-2019 Form) and either:

- (a) submit electronically with your credit card payment (Visa, MasterCard or American Express) OR
- (b) mail the I-901 to the DHS address on the form along with the SEVIS fee paid by check, money order, or foreign draft drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in U.S. dollars.

If paying online, be sure to print your receipt for inclusion with your visa application. If paying by mail, the receipt will be mailed to you. For an additional fee, you may request express mail. You will need this receipt to apply for your visa. Please note that another person may make the payment on your behalf. It is recommended that you carry the payment receipt with your DS-2019 Form to show to the immigration officials at the port of entry, as well.

Tips for Completing Form I-901: Your SEVIS Identification Number can be found at the top right corner of your DS-2019 Form. It starts with an "N," which is followed by a 10 digit number. The Program Number can be found in Box 2 (P-1-01850).

Following payment of the SEVIS fee, you will need to schedule an appointment at the U.S. embassy or consulate abroad for a visa interview. When you apply for the visa, take the DS-2019 Form, the SEVIS fee payment receipt, passport, and any correspondence received from Georgetown regarding your stay. If you will not be financially supported by Georgetown University or if Georgetown is only providing a portion of your financial support, you must be prepared to show the Visa Officer at the U.S. Consulate proof of your financial support in the form of original documents. If your family members will be traveling with you, they should apply for their J-2 visas at the same time. If OIP has not already issued separate DS-2019 Forms for them, please notify your International Scholar (IS) Advisor in OIP immediately as they must have individual DS-2019 Forms. Please contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate nearest you for information regarding the application procedures and fees for that post (<http://usembassy.state.gov/>).

Intent to Return: You will not be given a J-1 visa unless you can demonstrate to the U.S. Consular Officer that you intend to return to your country of citizenship or legal permanent residence after you have completed your J-1 program. Any statements made during the visa interview with the American Consul which cast doubt on your intentions of returning home may result in the denial of the visa. Although some consulates permit applications from third party nationals, it may be difficult to prove your non-immigrant intent if you do not apply for a visa in your home country.

TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES

You may enter the United States up to 30 days prior to the start date on your DS-2019 Form. At the U.S. port of entry, you will be asked to present your DS-2019 Form, passport, and visa to the U.S. Immigration Inspector. You will be given a small white card called an I-94 card which will usually be stapled into your passport. Be sure to examine this card before leaving the Immigration Inspector's desk to verify that it has been marked "J-1" and "D/S." These markings indicate that you have entered in J-1 immigration status (or J-2 immigration status for your accompanying dependents) for the duration of your status. As part of the US-VISIT program, an entry-exit tracking system, you will also be

fingerprinted and photographed at the immigration desk at the airport. For more information on US-VISIT, please visit the DHS website (<http://www.dhs.gov>).

If you will arrive in the United States 30 days or more beyond the start date of the DS-2019 Form, please contact OIP as your start date will require amendment prior to your entry.

In addition to your immigration-related documents, we also advise that you bring certified copies of the following documents:

- Birth certificates for yourself and each member of your family.
- Marriage certificate, if you are married.
- Copies of diplomas and/or professional licenses in your home country.
- Copies of vaccination records for yourself and your family, especially for any children who will attend school.
- Another form of identification other than the passport.

If these documents are not in English, they must be translated and, in some cases, may require translation certification. They may be certified by the American Embassy.

SCHOLAR ORIENTATION

New J-1 scholars are required to attend an orientation at OIP within 30 days of the start date of the DS-2019 Form. If you are unable to attend an orientation within that period, please contact your IS Advisor. Orientations are held every Tuesday from 10:00-11:00 am at OIP on the 2nd floor of Poulton Hall. Please try to attend the Tuesday session following your arrival. You should bring your passport and visa documents to this meeting as well these same documents for any dependents. Topics covered in the orientation include regulations governing J-1 visa status, Social Security numbers, work, travel, health insurance and living in Washington. *Please make plans to arrive on time as the session must cover many topics in a short period of time.*

OIP must confirm your arrival with Immigration within 30 days of the start date of your DS-2019 Form in order for you to remain legally in the United States. You must attend this session in order for your arrival to be confirmed.

Please note: if you intend to travel outside of the United States after your arrival, you will need to obtain your IS Advisor's signature on the DS-2019 Form in order to re-enter the United States.

RESTRICTIONS/OBLIGATIONS OF J-1 STATUS

By entering the country in J-1 visa status, you accept the responsibility of meeting the terms and conditions stated on the DS-2019 Form. You will be admitted into the United States for the sole purpose stated in section 4 of the DS-2019. Please notify OIP if any of the following occur:

- < the source of your funding changes
- < the nature of the work that you are doing changes
- < the end date of your work changes
- < your sponsoring institution changes
- < your U.S. address changes (must be reported within 10 days of the change)

Failure to notify OIP of any of these changes may invalidate your immigration status and affect your legal permission to stay in the United States. Please read page 2 of the DS-2019 Form carefully.

Georgetown University admits J-1 Exchange Visitors in the following categories: Professor, Research Scholar, Short-term Scholar and Specialist. The following rules governing these categories should be given consideration prior to participation:

1. The Professor and Research Scholar categories limit participation to five years in the United States in J-1 status. The Short-term Scholar category is limited to six months. The Specialist category has a limit of one year.
2. Participants in the J-1 Research Scholar or Professor categories may not request a change to the J-1 Student category without special permission from the U.S. government. It also may be impossible to transfer J-1 status to the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) to conduct a medical residency.

3. Participants in the J-1 Research Scholar or Professor categories are subject to a 24 month bar on repeat participation in either category, regardless of the length of time spent in J-1 status.
4. Participants in J-1 Exchange Visitor categories other than Research Scholar, Professor, or Short-Term Scholar are subject to a 12 month bar before beginning a new J-1 program in the Professor and Research Scholar categories. Exception: A J-1 Exchange Visitor in any category other than the three listed above who remained in the United States for less than six months is not subject to the 12 month bar.

It is extremely important that you consult your IS Advisor on these issues so that she may advise you appropriately.

WORK REGULATIONS

All visiting scholars in J-1 visa status sponsored by Georgetown University must understand and abide by the laws governing this particular non-immigrant status. Please call (202) 687-5867 to make an appointment to speak with your IS Advisor or submit your query to her via email *any time* employment opportunities arise. In order to maintain your legal status in the United States, it is important to consult an expert on all matters of payment, reimbursement, and employment. The information listed below is only a general guide.

Non-immigrants holding a DS-2019 Form that was issued by Georgetown University may teach or do research only in the field or area listed in box 4 of the DS-2019 and only for Georgetown University. Any payment received from Georgetown University that is in an unrelated field would be considered **unauthorized employment**. The Visiting Researcher program, affiliated with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, does not allow its participating researchers to receive payment of any kind from Georgetown University. Any payment received from an outside entity (even if the work is performed on the Georgetown campus) is unauthorized employment unless you are granted specific, written permission from an IS Advisor (see below). **It is the responsibility of all non-immigrants in the United States to know and follow immigration regulations related to employment.** The responsibility of accepting any type of employment that does not meet regulatory requirements, *even if offered by a Georgetown University department or faculty member*, will fall solely on the J-1 visiting scholar.

According to the regulations governing the J-1 visa status, Professors and Research Scholars may participate in occasional lectures and short-term consultations outside of Georgetown University if allowed by the Responsible Officer of the J-1 program at Georgetown. More details on this type of authorization may be found at: <http://oip.georgetown.edu/iss/j-1work.pdf>

TWO-YEAR HOME RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

Individuals in J-1 and J-2 status will be subject to the two-year home residence requirement [also known as 212(e)] if any of the following apply:

1. Participation in the exchange program is financed, directly or indirectly, by the U.S. government or a foreign government;
2. The skills the Exchange Visitor is coming to develop or exercise are in a field which the Exchange Visitor's home government requested be included on the State Department's skills list (skills in short supply in the home country);
3. The Exchange Visitor comes to the United States to receive graduate medical education or training.

Those who are subject must return to the home country for two years before they are eligible for the more permanent visa categories (H-1B temporary worker, L-1 intra-company transfer, and Legal Permanent Resident status). It also prohibits subject individuals from requesting a change in immigration status from within the United States. At the time of the visa interview, the Consular Officer will indicate whether or not a prospective J-1 or J-2 is subject to this requirement, both on the DS-2019 Form and on the visa stamp.

MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE

Federal regulations require Exchange Visitors to obtain health insurance for themselves and any J-2 dependents for the entire length of stay in the United States. Please be sure to include the costs of this insurance in all financial calculations. The requirements are:

1. You and any dependents in J-2 status must have health insurance for the entire period of stay.
2. The minimum requirement for coverage is at least \$50,000 per accident or illness.
3. Insurance coverage for medical evacuation is required with a \$10,000 minimum. This is used in the unlikely event

that you or a family member must return to your home country for medical treatment.

4. Insurance coverage for repatriation of remains is required with a \$7,500 minimum. This is used in the event that you or a family member should die in the United States and the remains must be returned to your home country.
5. The maximum deductible on the health insurance may not exceed \$500 per accident or illness.

An acceptable insurance policy may require a reasonable waiting period for pre-existing conditions. It may also include provisions for co-insurance payments of up to 25%. It may not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent to the activities of the exchange program. Any insurance policy must be underwritten by an insurance corporation having an A. M. Best rating of "A-" or above, an Insurance Solvency International Ltd. rating of "A-I" or above, a Standard & Poor's Claims-Paying Ability Rating of "A-" or above, or a Weiss Research Inc. rating of "B+" or above. Insurance backed by the full faith and credit of the Exchange Visitor's home government, insurance that is part of a group health benefits program offered to employees or enrolled students by the University, and insurance that is underwritten by a federally qualified HMO or CMP do not require a rating.

You may use insurance coverage from your home country if it meets these criteria. If you use insurance from your home country:

1. The insurance company must have a U.S. contact and telephone number.
2. You should have written documentation in **English** for the dates of coverage and the benefits covered, including the amount covered per day for hospitalization as well as proof of coverage in U.S. dollars. This information may be especially important if you are hospitalized.

Please make sure that any coverage you choose meets the requirements outlined above. You may also wish to verify that the insurance policy covers the birth of children in the United States. **Note:** If you will not be paid by Georgetown and you or your spouse is pregnant, you are advised to purchase health insurance in your home country. Most insurance companies in the United States consider pregnancy a pre-existing condition and will not cover the related expenses if you or your spouse is pregnant upon arrival in the United States.

If you choose to purchase insurance after your arrival at Georgetown, information on insurance plans is available at OIP and may be obtained at orientation. Since insurance obtained in the United States after your arrival may not cover you right away, it is recommended that you obtain sufficient travel insurance to cover you during your first month at Georgetown. Medical expenses in the United States can be extremely costly.

Please note: if you are paid by Georgetown, you may be eligible to participate in one of the insurance plans offered by the University for its employees. If you wish to sign up for one of these insurance plans, you must do so within 30 days of beginning work. Otherwise, you must wait until the following January.

Failure to maintain health insurance will prevent the issuance of any documents for travel, extensions, or transfer of your J-1 status.

TAXES

U.S. tax laws require that approximately 30% of the U.S.-based income of a foreign national be withheld in the form of taxes. You may, however, reduce this tax burden by taking advantage of certain tax benefits to which your J-1 status may entitle you.

Tax Treaties: The United States has negotiated income tax treaties with some countries which may exempt you from paying U.S. income tax altogether. Your eligibility for tax treaty benefits will depend upon the following factors:

1. The existence of a tax treaty with your country;
2. Your activity in the United States;
3. The length of time you may have already been in the United States, if any.

Social Security Taxes: Generally, J-1 status holders are exempt from paying U.S. Social Security taxes for two calendar years. Please be sure to note that these are calendar years, not years counted from the date of arrival. For example, a scholar who arrived on December 30, 2007 was exempt from Social Security taxes in 2007 and 2008, even though s/he was only in the United States for two days in 2007.

Lowering Your Tax Obligation: Please make an appointment to meet with Lawrence Smith in the GU Tax Office (202-687-5448) to obtain more information on taxes. This office is located at 2121 Wisconsin Ave, 4th floor. Mr. Smith will assist you in determining your eligibility for Tax Treaty benefits as well as filling out all necessary tax documents.

All J-1 scholars will be required to complete at least one tax form by April of next year, whether or not they have received U.S. source income. Visit our website in February for details and information about Tax Workshops for international students and scholars.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

In order to work in the United States, you must obtain a Social Security number (SSN). All individuals in J-1 status are eligible to apply for an SSN even if they are not currently employed in the United States. This number serves as your unique taxpayer identification number. Please wait until 10 days have passed since your arrival in the United States to apply for an SSN to ensure timely processing of your application. To obtain a Social Security number, you must:

1. Submit an application to the Social Security Administration (SSA) in person. Copies of the related application form (SS-5) are available at the SSA and online (<http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf>). In Question 3 (“Citizenship”), please mark that you are a “Legal Alien Allowed to Work.”
2. Bring your passport, I-94 card, DS-2019 Form and job offer letter (if applicable).

Please note: The SSA will not issue an SSN if the passport is less than one year old. If you have a new passport, you must also bring a second source of identification (identification card issued in your home country, old passport, etc).

Processing Time: The SSA may take two weeks to three months to process the application. The Social Security card will be sent to the address written on your application form. After accepting your application, the SSA will give you a receipt notice.

If you will be paid by Georgetown University and do not receive the Social Security card within two weeks of your application, please contact Lawrence Smith in the GU Tax Office. Based on the receipt notice from SSA, he will create a temporary number for your payroll record so that you may begin receiving payment from the University. You should then update both your department and the Tax Office with the actual number once you receive the card. Without a Social Security number or the temporary number created by the GU Tax Office, you may not be paid by the University.

If you are an unpaid J-1 scholar and wish to apply for an SSN, please wait until after you have been registered in the University database and given a University identification number before you apply. Following these steps will help you to avoid administrative delays with on campus access (GoCard, library privileges, etc.).

Social Security Numbers for Family Members: J-2 dependents are eligible for employment in the United States. A J-2 dependent who intends to seek employment in the United States must first apply for work permission from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). After receiving the work permit, s/he must then apply for an SSN. The J-2 dependent is not eligible for an SSN until s/he has received the work permit.

SSA Office Locations: The SSA office closest to Georgetown is located at: 2100 M St. NW, Washington, D.C. and is open 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. While the M Street office is the closest to Georgetown, there are other SSA offices that may be more convenient for you. More local SSA office addresses are available on the SSA website: www.socialsecurity.gov

BANKING & LIVING EXPENSES

Washington, D.C. is one of the most expensive areas in the United States. Therefore, you are required to demonstrate monthly finances of at least \$1,800 to support yourself PLUS an additional \$900 for your first dependent AND \$450 for each additional dependent. Please note that these figures represent the bare minimum of funding needed to support you during your stay and do not allow for any luxuries.

If you do not yet have a U.S. bank account, you will need at least \$2,000 in traveler's checks and \$200 in cash upon arrival. This money will cover initial expenses such as taxi or bus fares, meals, overnight lodging, supplies, initial rent and security deposits and health insurance payments.

Traveler's checks are immediately negotiable. International bank drafts are acceptable, but funds may take longer to become available. We strongly advise against carrying large amounts of cash. Foreign currency can be exchanged immediately at any of the airports in the Washington area and at most large banks. Banks in the area charge service fees for cashing foreign checks.

Bank Accounts: We recommend you open a bank account as soon as you arrive. Using an international bank will facilitate the wiring of money. Service charges and interest rates vary. Foreign checks may require 4-6 weeks before funds become available at a U.S. bank. Traveler's checks are the best way to make initial deposits. Two pieces of identification are generally required to open an account. For more information on banks in the Georgetown area, please see: <http://oip.georgetown.edu/iss/banking.pdf>

Wiring Money from Overseas: After opening a bank account in the United States, you may make arrangements to transfer funds from foreign banking institutions. Wire transfers may take up to 48 hours and require a fee. Please speak with a bank representative for more detailed instructions on wiring money from overseas.

TEMPORARY HOUSING

If you will need temporary housing upon your arrival, please see our guide to hotels and hostels: <http://housing.georgetown.edu/academic/forms/housingalternatives.pdf>

LONG-TERM HOUSING

Due to space limitations, Georgetown does not offer on-campus housing for scholars. We recommend that you DO NOT enter into a contract with any landlord for housing before arriving and viewing the property. However, it is helpful to begin to think about your budget and research properties before you arrive. The University maintains an Off-Campus Housing listing that may aid scholars in their search for housing. Scholars may visit their website prior to arrival (<https://och.georgetown.edu>) to research prices and locations in the D.C. area. To access the database, you may use the guest user name: guest and the password: auxhoya. Upon your arrival at Georgetown, you can visit their office which is located in M31 Darnall Hall within the Office of Auxiliary Services (the annex that connects Darnall Hall to St. Mary's Hall). Additional links to housing search tools as well as tips on finding housing are available on our website at: <http://oip.georgetown.edu/iss/housing.htm>

TRANSPORTATION AND ARRIVAL

We suggest that you plan to arrive in Washington during U.S. business hours, 9:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, when most University offices and area business are open. Detailed information about Washington, D.C. transportation options and additional arrival information are both available on our website at: <http://oip.georgetown.edu/iss/arrival.htm>