

*Washington College*  
**Office of International Programs (OIP)**  
**Maintaining Your J-1 Status**

The Exchange Visitor Program is used to bring people to the United States for a variety of educational and cultural exchange purposes under the sponsorship of a school, an agency, or an organization that has been designated as an exchange visitor sponsor by the United States Department of State (DOS), Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. As a J-1 exchange visitor, you were admitted to the U.S. for “duration of status” (D/S). This means you are permitted to stay in the U.S. as long as you have a valid DS2019 and otherwise maintain your status by fulfilling the requirements pertaining to J-1 exchange visitors. Please keep in mind that there is an important difference between a J-1 visa and J-1 status. The visa is a stamp or sticker placed in your passport by a U.S. Embassy or Consulate and is granted *for entry purposes only*. J-1 status is granted when you enter the U.S. and is regulated by DOS and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE). Even if your visa is valid, you can lose your legal J-1 status if you do not comply with immigration laws regulating your stay in the U.S. *If you fail to maintain your legal J-1 status, you may be considered unlawfully present in the United States and may be subject to deportation.*

**Government Regulations You Must Follow in Order to Maintain Your Legal J-1 Status**

1. Maintain a valid passport at all times, unless exempt from passport requirements.
2. Maintain required documentation: valid DS2019, I-94 marked D/S
3. Attend the college/university that DOS and /or BICE has authorized you to attend. (*This is indicated in section 2 of the DS2019*).
4. Maintain Washington College Accident and Sickness Insurance for International Students, which exceeds the requirements of the Exchange Visitor Program, for yourself *and* dependents.
5. Maintain **full-time student status**, by enrolling in a minimum course load of **12** credit hours per semester, (normal course load is 16 credits per semester).
6. Complete an official transfer whenever you change educational institutions. [Special Note for J-1 Students: Please note that an immigration transfer is a completely separate process from transferring academic credit from one school to another. An immigration transfer is not complete until a Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Office/Advisor at your current institution signs section 8 of your new DS-2019, releasing you to transfer. J-1 students must complete a full course of study during normal enrollment periods. You are not required by DOS and/or BICE to enroll in classes during the summer sessions or other official school breaks.]
7. Apply for an extension if you cannot complete your current program by the expiration date listed in section 3 of your DS-2019. You must apply for the extension *prior* to the expiration of your current DS-2019.
8. J-1 **STUDENTS** must obtain a new DS-2019 prior to changing degree levels or degree programs. This would include changing from a bachelor’s degree to a master’s degree.
9. J-1 **STUDENTS** can **NOT** engage in any type of employment (on-campus *or* off-campus) UNLESS officially authorized by a Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer/Advisor. Employment is limited to part-time (20 hours or less per week) during normal enrollment periods; however, employment may be full-time (more than 20 hours per week) during the summer and other official school breaks.
10. J-1 SCHOLARS can NOT work for anyone other than the program sponsor listed in section 2 of the DS-2019 UNLESS officially authorized by a Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer/Advisor.
11. Before traveling outside the U.S. with the intention of re-entering you must have a Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer from the International Office endorse the front

of your DS-2019, authorizing you to travel. *Remember to do this before leaving for Christmas or Spring Break.*

**12.** Report a change of address to OIP within **10 days** of the change.

**13.** As an Exchange Visitor, you may be subject to the “two-year home country physical presence requirement,” which dictates that you must return to your home country for at least two years upon completion of your J-1 program.

**The information outlined above is not intended to be exhaustive. You also may become subject to additional regulations under the new Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).**

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Office of International Programs at 410-778-7762.

Note: When/if you acquire a Social Security Number (SSN) while present in U.S. under the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program your SSN will track all of your U.S.-based funding. This funding information may be shared with other government agencies (DHS, DOS, etc.)

*“I have read the statements about maintaining my legal J-1 status in the U.S. and understand that I must abide by these regulations in order to remain in legal status while in the U.S.”*

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Print Name Signature Date

**For more information please contact:**

Kelly Keer, *Responsible Officer (RO)*

*Director of International Programs*

*Tel: 410-810-7470 / Fax: 410-810-7451 / email: [kkeer2@washcoll.edu](mailto:kkeer2@washcoll.edu)*

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