



SIU SCHOOL *of* MEDICINE

IMG Orientation

Office of Graduate Medical Education (OGME)

2025-2026



Learning Objectives

The new J-1 physician will be able to:

- Identify the quickest method to process the J-1 visa
- Identify the correct visa status upon entry to the U.S.
- Understand the Validation of Arrival process
- Recognize the importance of filling out employment tax paperwork thoroughly
- Understand the application process for Social Security
- Understand the requirements for traveling abroad
- Identify cross cultural experiences
- Identify who to contact with questions

Visa Processing for Initial J-1

- ▶ **Schedule appointment at U.S. Consulate in home country**
 - ▶ If physician is in U.S., can apply for change of status thru the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Regional Service Center, however processing could take up to 4.5+ months.
- ▶ **Take original DS-2019 to appointment to obtain J-1 visa stamp (slide 4), could take several days to process.**
 - ▶ We have noticed an increase in length of processing and initial J-1 denials. Be sure to convey strong ties to your home country to avoid further delays.
- ▶ **Canadian J-1s: present Form DS-2019 and supporting documents at the U.S. Port of Entry.**

Immigration definitions

“VISA”

- ▶ Issued by U.S. Consulate abroad
- ▶ Serves as an entry permit “stamped” into passport
- ▶ Expiration date only applies to entry (can expire once in U.S.)
- ▶ Typically issued for 1 year (thru end of PGY1 training)



Immigration definitions

“Visa Status”

- ▶ Issued at U.S. Port of Entry (Dept. of Homeland Security/Customs & Border Protection) or USCIS (internal)
- ▶ I-94 shows visa status & period of authorized stay
 - ▶ Electronic I-94 issued at most ports, www.cbp.gov/I94
 - ▶ May still receive a paper I-94 at some land ports.
 - ▶ J-1 I-94's must say “J-1; d/s” *(duration of status)*
 - ▶ **Please check your status before leaving port of entry to ensure it is correct!**

I-94 samples

Entered U.S. by land, air or sea:

Most Recent I-94

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OMB No. 1651-0111
Expiration Date: 11/30/2014

Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number: [REDACTED]

Most Recent Date of Entry: 7/10/2014

Class of Admission: J1

Admit Until Date: D/S

Must say "J-1 D/S"

Details provided on the I-94 Information form:

Last/Surname: [REDACTED]

First (Given) Name: [REDACTED]

Birth Date: [REDACTED]

Passport Number: [REDACTED]

Country of Issuance: Nepal

[Get Travel History](#)

► Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR 6.14(d).

Validation of Initial arrival to the U.S.

- ▶ All initial J-1 applicants must report arrival to ECFMG
- ▶ J-1 physicians must enter the U.S. no more than 30 calendar days before their contract start date
- ▶ Training Program Liaison (TPL) will send Coordinator an arrival form to be completed
- ▶ Prefer to report arrivals once the J-1 has physically arrived to the program vs. vacationing off site.
 - ▶ Exceptions only considered if license has been issued.

Validation of Initial arrival to the U.S.

- ▶ Required documentation sent to ECFMG by TPL/OGME:
 - ▶ Completed Arrival form
 - ▶ I-94 showing “J-1 D/S” or form I-797 for internal change of status
 - ▶ Copy of J-1 visa stamp in passport (latter does not apply to Canadian citizens)
- ▶ ECFMG validates arrival in SEVIS (Dept. of Homeland Security Student and Exchange Visitor Information System)
 - ▶ SEVIS start date = start date for 7 year maximum for training

Onboarding with Employing Hospital

- ▶ Important email sent from Employing Hospital by the end of April regarding the onboarding requirements
 - ▶ If Employing Hospital requires an in-person meeting, be sure to respond ASAP to schedule.
 - ▶ Meet the required deadlines for paperwork
- ▶ J-1 employment taxes
 - ▶ If you aren't sure how to fill out a tax form, it is extremely important that you ask the contact at your employing hospital or consult a tax expert (i.e. H&R Block)
 - ▶ Be prepared to provide a thorough report of all visa statuses in the past 6 years; this will determine your tax status.
 - ▶ A J-1 physician may be FICA exempt when they start training, but it is vital to understand that you will not carry this exemption throughout residency and at some point your paycheck *will* decrease.

Social Security Administration

- You **CAN** start your training without a Social Security number (SS#)
- Apply in person: Wait 10 days after entry to U.S. & arrival has been reported to ECFMG
 - This is important because SSA will need to be able to validate visa information in SEVIS. If they can not validate your information at the time of application, it can cause significant delays.
 - Find the nearest [Social Security Administration office](#) to your program location

Social Security Administration

- Application to SSA - bring required documents
 - Complete Application for a Social Security Card (Form SS-5)
 - “Legal Alien Allowed to Work”
 - Original DS-2019
 - Passport
 - Form I-94
- SSA will issue a letter to the J-1 confirming a SS# application
 - Provide this letter to the program and employing hospital while waiting for the SS card to be mailed.

Travel Abroad

- ▶ Initial DS-2019s are not typically validated for travel
 - ▶ J-1 should never travel outside of the U.S. without a travel-validated DS 2019
 - ▶ Only ECFMG can sign this section

TRAVEL VALIDATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
(Maximum validation period is 1 year*)

***EXCEPT:** Maximum validation period is up to 6 months for Short-term Scholars and 4 months for Camp Counselors and Summer Work/Travel.

(1) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time

Date (mm-dd-yyyy)

Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer

(2) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time

Date (mm-dd-yyyy)

Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer

NOT travel
validated!

Travel Abroad

- Consider potential delays for return.
- Required documents:
 - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the program end date listed on the most recent DS-2019.
 - Valid J-1 / J-2 visa (for re-entry)
 - Original DS-2019 with travel validation

Travel Abroad

- J-1 & J-2 can exit U.S. with an expired visa, but can't reenter*
- If your Visa is expired:
 - Renewing visa at U.S. Consulate prior to reentry:
 - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the program end date listed on the most recent DS-2019.
 - Original DS-2019 with travel validation - only ECFMG personnel can sign!!
 - Application fee
- Remember this can take time (days to weeks)



*Travel to Canada, Mexico, & Adjacent Islands of the U.S.

- J-1/J-2 not required to have a valid (unexpired) visa when traveling to these locations for less than 30 days, as long as hold valid “J status” in SEVIS.
 - This is “automatic revalidation”.
- To qualify for automatic revalidation upon reentry to U.S.
 - Passport must be valid 6 mos. beyond program end date on DS-2019
 - Must have original, travel-validated DS-2019
 - Copy of latest I-94 reflecting status as “J-1, D/S” (or J-2)
- Exceptions:
 - Visa not required for Canadian citizens seeking reentry
 - Citizens of Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria are not eligible for automatic revalidation - must have valid, current visa
 - Not eligible if you have traveled to Cuba

Cross-Cultural Experiences

- Required: to gain insight into U.S. customs, community, people
- Examples: outings to community events, sporting events, local establishments, holiday celebrations, potlucks, department luncheons / gatherings
- J-1 must provide examples in renewal application process
- Only list experiences outside the field of medicine



Other required reporting

- ▶ Notify ECFMG and Dept. of Homeland Security within 10 days of change of address
- ▶ Leaves of absence - in advance of leave
- ▶ Dismissals / Appeals / Resignations
- ▶ Off Site Elective / Required Rotations
- ▶ Letters of Deficiency/Remediation - maximum of 12 months
- ▶ Serious incidents or allegations must be reported within 1 business day.
 - ▶ Serious illness, injury, or death
 - ▶ Missing person
 - ▶ Criminal justice involvement, abuse, or litigation
 - ▶ Negative press
 - ▶ Large scale situations impacting safety, such as a natural disaster or civil unrest

Moonlighting

- Moonlighting is defined as *work at an additional job after one's regular, full-time employment.*
- J-1 Physicians are not allowed to moonlight per federal regulations.



Contacts:

- Your program coordinator
- A Training Program Liaison (TPL) in the Office of Graduate Medical Education:
 - Annelisa Herter, aherter@siumed.edu, (217) 545-3134
 - Jennifer Rodgers, jroddgers@siumed.edu, (217) 545-3846
- Your ECFMG Regional Advisor: Beth Judas, 215-823-2121
- One of the SIU School of Medicine IMG Welcome Ambassadors listed on the next slide.



IMG Welcome Ambassadors



Kayla Adams, MD
Pediatrics
kadams68@siumed.edu
Home Country: Canada



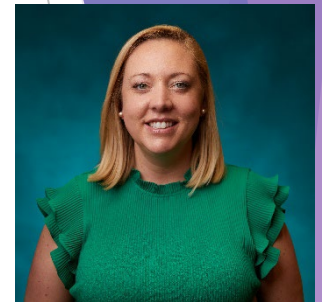
Sana Khan, MD
Family Medicine - Quincy
skhan94@siumed.edu
Home Country: Canada



Kajal Kadam, MD
Springfield Family Med
kkadam22@siumed.edu
Home Country: India



Raveena Karthikeyan, MD
General Surgery
rkarthikeyan53@siumed.edu
Home Country: India



Rachel Osgood-Tannis, MD
Emergency Medicine
Rosgood-tannis21@siumed.edu
IMG - US Citizen



Areesha Satti, MD
Psychiatry
asatti78@siumed.edu
Home Country: Canada



Navnoor Singh, MD
Pediatrics
nsingh76@siumed.edu
Home Country: India



Traveen Singh, MD
General Surgery
tsingh73@siumed.edu
Home Country: Canada



Maria Vides-Sanchez, MD
Pediatrics
Mvides-sanchez91@siumed.edu
Home Country: Guatemala