

## *J-1 Exchange Visitor Program Instructions & Information*

This information is designed for foreign national scholars who have been invited to the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) for teaching, consulting, lecturing, research, or to attend a course as J-1 Exchange Visitors. The steps to properly arrange that status are outlined below:

### **Steps to Obtain a J Visa**

1. Contact the U.S. Consulate's Office closest to you to obtain detailed application instructions specific to your home country. A listing of U.S. Consulates and Embassies is provided on the website of the U.S. State Department <http://usembassy.gov>.
2. Complete the DS-2019 Application Form located here: <http://www.mbl.edu/foreign-nationals/files/2012/12/DS-2019-Application-2018-05-16-Fillable.pdf> and submit it with the necessary documentation to MBL's Foreign National Coordinator. If any information on this form is omitted or unreadable, the entire visa process can be seriously delayed. If any dependents (spouse, children, etc.) will be joining you, complete the Dependent Information section on the form as well.
3. Once the Foreign National Coordinator has all of the necessary information, your DS-2019 form will be processed within three business days and sent to you via Federal Express.
4. The processed DS-2019 form must then be taken to the Consulate's Office for the issuance of the J-1 visa. In some countries, this step may be conducted by mail, while in other countries, a personal interview may be needed. Please refer to Step 1 for information on contacting your nearest office.

### **Time Limits**

For Research Scholars (category used for year-round researchers, employees, long-term consultants, etc.), the minimum length of stay is three weeks and the maximum length of stay is five years, with the actual length of stay determined by the amount of funding available. Research Scholars who have been in J-1 status for five years are not eligible to participate again as J-1 Research Scholars (or Professors) for two years following the end of their five-year period. For Short-term Scholars (category used for course faculty, lecturers, students, etc.), the minimum length of stay is one day and the maximum length of stay is six months with no extensions available. MBL is only able to process visas for foreign visitors who are a) affiliated with an MBL year-round laboratory or b) receiving MBL funding.

### **Two-Year Foreign Residence Requirement**

Some countries have a two-year home country physical presence requirement. The intent of this requirement is to have the home country benefit from the Exchange Visitor's experience in the United States and at the MBL. Exchange Visitors come to the U.S. for a specific objective. The requirement is intended to prevent a participant, who is subject, from staying longer than necessary for the objective, and to ensure that he/she will spend at least two years in the home

country before coming back to the U.S. for a long-term stay. For the terms of the requirement, please see <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>. This link contains information on skills list, and waiver procedures, If you have questions about the requirement, please raise them with the Consulate's Officer when you apply for your visa. It is your Consulate who will determine whether or not you are eligible.

## Canadians

Canadians do not need visa stamps to enter the United States, but they do need to show a DS-2019 form and a passport at the port of entry to obtain status as a J-1 Exchange Visitor.

## I-94 Departure Record Card & DS-2019 Form

When you arrive in the United States, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer will give you these two important documents, which you should keep in your passport. They are the only proof of your J-1 status, and you will need them for such purposes as extending your stay in the U.S. (if eligible) and reentry into the U.S. after temporary trips abroad during the period of validity on your DS-2019 form. You should keep the DS-2019 form *permanently* as it contains information you may need when applying for a future visa. It is also advisable, after your arrival, to photocopy the identification pages of your passport, visa stamp, I-94 card (front and back), and DS-2019 form and keep them separately from the originals, for use in applying for replacements if the originals should be lost or stolen. **Within three days of your arrival at the MBL, you are required to check in with MBL's Foreign National Coordinator and present your passport, visa stamp, I-94 card (front and back), and DS-2019 form for photocopying. The MBL will then notify the U.S. Department of State that you have arrived at your destination. To comply with federal requirements, you must notify the MBL not only of your arrival but also of your unexpected departure (including short trips outside of the US, see below).**

## Tax Implications

If you will be receiving funds from MBL, there may be tax consequences to those funds depending on the type of visa you have and the tax treaties that exist between the U.S. and your home country. Please contact Kate Ahern-Wolseley at [fnational@mbledu](mailto:fnational@mbledu) for further information. You may be asked to fill out your current visa and immigration history through our Foreign National Information System (FNIS).

## Extending your permission to stay in the United States

Your I-94 card should indicate that you can remain in the U.S. for "Duration of Status" or "D/S." This means that your permission to stay will expire 30 days after the date shown in Section 3 of your DS-2019 form as long as you are following the rules of J-1 status. If an extension is necessary, be sure to arrange it ahead of time by contacting MBL's Foreign National Coordinator at least 60 days before the expiration date shown in Section 3 of your DS-2019 form.

## Short trips out of the United States

To come back into the United States in J-1 status, you will need to have your DS-2019 form endorsed by a Responsible or Alternate Responsible Officer at the MBL. This confirms your continued association with this program and the continuing availability of your financial support. If you will be leaving the U.S., you will need a valid visa stamp to reenter this country. Check the

expiration date and number of entries on the visa stamp in your passport. If your visa has expired, you will have to apply for a new one at a U.S. Consulate or Embassy abroad. When applying for a visa, you may present a new DS-2019 form or one recently endorsed for travel.

**For more information and assistance, contact:**

Kate Ahern-Wolseley, Foreign National Coordinator

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