

## J-1 Pre-Arrival Information

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### ***Your J-1 Program Purpose***

International collaboration and exchange has long been central to the way Fermilab operates. Our J-1 Summer Internships provide international students the opportunity to train in a variety of academic fields, gain practical experience, knowledge, linguistic competency, and cross-cultural skills critical to remaining competitive in today's international market. In return, Fermilab has the opportunity to add bright young scientists and engineering to our scientific efforts and strengthen our connections to overseas research institutions.

The dates of your program are listed on the Form DS-2019. Fermilab Visa Office offers continuing support to our J-1 Exchange Visitors. We guide Exchange Visitors and their Fermilab contacts step-by-step through the J-1 visa application process and offer helpful information. As the main contact and support for Exchange Visitors during your program, our role is to ensure your health, welfare, and safety as you transition smoothly into the new environment and integrate into the American culture.

### ***Fermilab as Your J-1 Sponsor***

As your sponsor, we want you to return to your home country with memories of both a productive and useful academic and hands-on experience, as well as a positive American cultural experience.

### **Your J-1 Sponsor – Fermi Research Alliance, LLC:**

Valery Stanley or Kappy Sherman

630-840-3933 / 3811

Fermilab, Pine St & Kirk Rd

Batavia, IL 60510

vstanley@fnal.gov / kappy013@fnal.gov

### **Department of State – Private Sector Programs Division:**

Address: U.S. Department of State Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation Private Sector Programs Division  
ECA/EC/D/PS – SA-4E, Room E-B001 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520.

Phone: 844-300-1824

Email: DesignationIntern@state.gov

### **10-day Requirement for Reporting Changes. When you should contact the Visa Office:**

- Update your phone number, email address, or U.S. address

- Replace lost/stolen DS-2019
- Foreign Travel Validation on the DS-2019
- Nature of your training program has changed
- Not being paid the stipend amount
- Feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or unhappy with your program
- Accommodation problems
- An arrest or legal concern
- Not having daily interaction with Americans or not being exposed to American Culture
- Severe illness or hospitalization
- Any other emergency situation

### ***Know Your Rights***

The Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure will help you understand the purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program, provide you with information on contacting the Department of State, and introduce you to some of the major requirements of the Exchange Visitor Program regulations.

Know Your Rights Brochure is an information pamphlet describing your rights while working in the United States. It is also available in many other languages.

#### **If you are mistreated or your rights are violated:**

1. Talk to the Visa Office; or call
2. J-1 Visa Emergency Hotline: 1-866-283-9090; or
3. National Human Trafficking Resource Center: 1-888-373-7888; or
4. Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force: 1-888-428-7581

#### **If you are in immediate physical danger, call 911**

### ***Home Residency Requirement – 212(e)***

According to the Department of State website: Certain exchange visitors (J-1) are subject to a two-year home-country physical presence requirement which requires you to return to your home country for at least two years at the end of your exchange visitor program. This is also known as the foreign residence requirement under U.S. law, Immigration and Nationality Act, Section 212(e).

Please learn more about the home residency requirement [here](#).

### ***Travel***

#### **Travel within the United States**

Once within the United States, you are allowed to travel within the continental United States and to some adjoining islands freely. If you are traveling outside of Chicagoland, you should take your original passport, DS-2019 and I-94 record.

#### **Travel outside the United States**

To enter the United States after a temporary trip abroad, you will need your:

- Passport (valid for 6 months or longer upon entry)
- Valid J-1 visa (Canadian citizens are exempt from the visa requirement)
- DS-2019 signed for travel within the last 12 months

If you are traveling to a country that is not your country of citizenship, please consult that country's consulate to determine if you require an entry visa. For a list of foreign consulates in the United States, see <http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco>

In order to re-enter the U.S. in J-1/J-2 status you must have your DS-2019 endorsed by Fermilab's responsible officer (Kappy Sherman) or alternate responsible officer (Valery Stanley). **It is your responsibility to keep your endorsed DS-2019 with your passport at all times. If your endorsement dates have expired, you must contact the Visa Office prior to your departure for re-endorsement.**

### ***Housing***

Onsite housing is available for rent only to Users and Employees with term appointments. It is not available for permanent employees or members of the general public.

I want to live onsite

I plan to live offsite

### ***Fees and Potential Costs***

A move to another country may be expensive, but at least there NO fees associated with participation in the Fermilab's J-1 Program.

Other potential costs may include: plane ticket, cost of moving your belongings, first and last months' rent amount to secure an apartment, spending to furnish your apartment, etc.

### ***Social Security***

**Social Security:** The Social Security Number (SSN) is a tax identification number that tracks employees in a payroll system and is required by our Account Department in order to pay your stipend. Beyond payroll, the SSN has become somewhat of a universal identification number used for many purposes around the country, including signing up for utilities, phone service, credit reporting, and banking.

**Applying for SSN:** Upon arrival at Fermilab, you will need to apply for the SSN. To do so, you must visit the SS Office in person. You must bring the following documents: Passport, Invitation or Offer letter from Fermilab, DS-2019, and printed I-94 document. You will then be sent the SSN card to the address you provide on the application.

**Identity Theft:** Keep your SSN card safe and beware of identity theft, which is when someone uses "your personal information to open accounts, file taxes, or make purchases".

### ***Banking***

**Choosing a Bank:** Consider the location of branch offices and automatic teller machines (ATMs) when selecting a bank. Sometime you are charged a fee to use an ATM at a location other than your bank branch. Inquire about fees charged to you since they vary from bank to bank. Sometimes a bank may waive the fee if you arrange direct deposits with them.

**Opening a Bank Account:** Your passport, J-1 documents, and the “Bank Letter” from Fermilab showing your local address are usually acceptable. Most banks offer online banking, allowing you to pay bills and to monitor your bank account on-line, but you will need to set up the service.

**Debit Cards:** Most banks issue a debit card with the opening of a checking account. When you use a debit card, the money is directly taken from your bank account. Most businesses accept debit cards. You may be limited to a certain amount of daily cash withdrawals.

**Credit Cards:** Most banks offer credit cards. Please take some time to research and compare your options before deciding on a credit card. In most cases students may be required to have a SSN to apply for a credit card.

### ***Phone***

As you are staying in the United States for more than a month, you should consider purchasing a cell phone through one of the major telephone carriers, such as Verizon, AT&T, TMobile, or Sprint. Your personal cell phone may work in the U.S., but keep in mind that it may be costly to use. Use a Google search to find a low cost carrier, but make sure to check that the company is reputable.

If you are calling to a foreign country, [click here](#) to find the calling code.

### ***Life and Customs in the US***

**Culture:** The United States is made up of a diverse array of cultures. Each cultural group has its own history, customs, and values, which combine to form the “melting pot” of American culture and society. Make an effort to make American friends and take every opportunity possible to enhance your experience. More details on the US culture and customs can be found on our website. You can also view some videos about Life and Culture in the US [here](#).

**US Laws:** You should familiarize themselves with local, state and federal laws. The legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21. The laws in America are very strict concerning the drinking age. Bars require that you show photo identification to enter and purchase alcohol. It is also illegal to drink alcohol in public or on the streets. If you are under 21 years of age, you must not drink while you are here on a J-1 visa. The use of illegal narcotics in the United States is prohibited by law at any age. If you are caught using illegal substances, not only are you subject to local and state laws, you run the risk of your J-1 visa being terminated.

**Driving:** If you intend to drive in the U.S., you must familiarize yourselves with local and state laws on driving. All U.S. states recognize foreign driver’s licenses. In most cases, your license will be valid for up to three months after the date you enter the United States. Your foreign license is valid only if accompanied by your passport and your Form DS-2019.

**Tipping:** In the United States service is not “included” as it is in Europe, and tipping is expected. The general rule is to tip anyone in the service industry, including restaurants, hotels, taxis, and bars. Individuals who work in these areas receive lower wages, and depend on tips as a main source of income. Please respect this practice. A tip of 18% to 20% is standard in restaurants; a tip of 15% for taxi fares and food delivery, and \$1 to \$2 is typical for a beverage and hotel service.

**Language:** You may at first be uncomfortable with your English skills, however the only way to improve is to practice. As a J-1 visa holder, you are also eligible to take English classes part-time as long as they do not interfere with your training program. Fermilab also offers two conversational English classes.

## ***Local Community Resources***

Visit the Local Community Resources page to learn about places to visit, shopping, local events, restaurants, nearby schools and daycares.

## ***Sponsor Rules***

**Fermilab Code of Conduct:** Fermilab has established a set of expectations that all members of the Fermilab community shall follow. Disruptive or harassing behavior shall not be tolerated regardless of race, color, religion, disability, age, gender, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or nationality.

## ***Health Insurance and Health Care***

All Exchange Visitors and dependents must have valid health insurance for the full duration of their stay in the United States. You purchased a plan as part of your J-1 Visa process – please review the terms of that contract.

**Seeking Medical Care:** Before heading to the doctor's office, call your insurance company and ask what steps you need to follow to ensure that your doctor's visit will be covered by your insurance. Many times you will need to pay upfront for an appointment and then be reimbursed. If this is the case, your doctor will need to fill out a claim form during your appointment that you will later submit to your insurance company.

**Hospital, Doctor, or Clinic:** Hospitals are meant for emergency situations. If you have a specific or ongoing medical concern, you should find a doctor in that specialty area. Walk-in clinics are a better and more affordable option for common ailments, such as sore throat, fever, flu, etc.

## ***US Taxes***

If you receive a wage during an internship or training program (excluding VIEs), you are required by law to pay federal, state, and local or city income taxes. You are not required to pay Social Security & Medicare Tax (FICA) or Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA). All J-1 Exchange Visitors must file a tax return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS is the U.S. government agency responsible for collecting taxes, and publishes a yearly comprehensive U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens.

**April Tax Day:** Normally, tax returns must be submitted by this day, which usually will fall on April 15th. If your stipend is paid by Fermilab, you will need your W-2 tax form in order to file your taxes. If your stipend is paid by the foreign entity, you are exempt from having a W-2 tax form.

**W-2 Form:** Fermilab sends out the W-2s in January. Please ensure that Fermilab has your permanent address abroad or your W-2 might not get to you in time.

**Tax Preparation Assistance:** In February, the Visa Office will send out a mass email offering FREE Tax Prep software, Glacier Tax Prep, which will allow you to prepare your Federal Tax return online. **You must respond to us if you would like to use this software.** At the end of the Glacier's Federal return you will have an opportunity to purchase access to a State return preparation. Alternatively, you may use your Federal tax forms to prepare the State return on your own.

**\*\*\*For full information on taxes in the United States, please visit the Taxation of Nonresident Aliens section of the IRS website and Publication 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens. Fermilab has created this resource document based on information provided by the IRS. We are not tax experts, and therefore are not liable for**

any incorrect information provided in this guide.\*\*\*

### ***Ending Your J-1 Program***

**J-1 Exit Meeting:** Before your program ends, you must attend an Exit Meeting with the Visa Office (scheduled for the Monday before your program ends). During this meeting, you will complete an Exit Checklist that helps you understand

- What happens with your US immigration record when your program ends and you depart the U.S.; and
- What to do to file your U.S. tax return next year.

**Fermilab Property:** You must return all Fermilab property including but not limited to your Fermilab ID badge, computers, or other equipment.

**Grace period:** J-1 Interns have a “grace period” after the end of their program (as listed on the DS-2019) of 30 days. You are not work-authorized during your grace period! You cannot receive a salary during your grace period! Departure from the U.S. must occur on or before the last day of your grace period.

### ***Questions?***

If you have any other questions about these or any other topics, contact the Visa Office and we will do our best to help!

You can also contact us via email or phone:

Valery Stanley:

vstanley@fnal.gov or 630-840-3933

or

visaoffice@fnal.gov



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