



J-1 SCHOLAR PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE: Visiting Professors, Research Scholars & Short-Term Scholars

Welcome to Case Western! We are glad that you chose Case Western Reserve University for your J-1 Exchange Visitor Program and look forward to welcoming you to Cleveland! At the Immigration & Human Resources (IHRS) office, we are here to help you with immigration planning and related matters during your stay.

This J-1 Visitor Pre-Arrival Guide contains essential information about immigration regulations, programs and services for new international scholars. Whether you are coming to CWRU from your home country or from another U.S. University, please read this guide carefully.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Immigration & Human Resources Services

Case Western Reserve University

10900 Euclid Avenue

Crawford Hall

Telephone: 216.368.2000

<http://www.case.edu/hr/immigration-services>

Visa@Case.edu

PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

Carefully read all of the information in this J-1 Visitor Pre-Arrival Guide.

Before arriving, you must:

- Verify that all of the information on your DS-2019 is correct. **Note the program begin date and notify your inviting department (and ISSS) immediately if your travel plans change.** This includes any delays encountered obtaining your visa.
- Pay the SEVIS FEE online at <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html#>
- Apply for a J-1 Visa at the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy to your home residence.
- Arrange or make plans with your department for transportation from the airport to your hotel or apartment.
- Complete your mandatory Pre-Arrival Checklist online at visas.case.edu.
- Purchase or make plans for required medical insurance coverage. The U.S. Department of State requires all individuals who enter the United States in J-1 status to have medical insurance for yourself and J-2 dependents for the duration of your program.
- Arrange or make plans for your housing needs. Although IHRS is unable to assist you in arranging housing, this guide provides an overview of the many housing choices in Cleveland. Contact your department if assistance is needed.

SEVIS FEE

All J-1 visa applicants must pay the SEVIS fee of \$220. ***Fee amount subject to change.***

The SEVIS fee must be paid at least three business days before the scheduled visa application interview. For most individuals, the SEVIS fee can be paid by electronically completing the Form I-901 and paying with a credit card at www.fmjfee.com/i901fee. You will need the information from your DS-2019 in order to complete the SEVIS Fee payment.

Print the electronic receipt immediately at the time of payment. You must show the receipt to the consular officer at the time of the interview. Spouses and dependent children (J-2s) do not pay this fee. The SEVIS fee is not a visa application fee. It is used to operate and maintain the SEVIS system. The fee is nonrefundable, even if the visa application is denied.

NOTE: Canadian nationals are exempt from the J-1 Visa requirement. However, they must still pay the SEVIS fee.

APPLYING FOR A J-1/J-2 VISA

A valid J-1 visa is required for entry to the United States on the Exchange Visitor Program. For information regarding processing times and procedures, visit the U.S. Department of State at:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html>. From this website you will be directed to <http://www.usembassy.gov> to find information regarding your nearest Consulate or Embassy.



NOTE: A personal interview is required, so you will need to schedule your appointment as soon as possible. Be aware that there may also be substantial delays due to security checks, so please plan your travel arrangements accordingly.

Immediate family members (spouse and children under the age of 21) who will accompany you to the U.S. may apply for J-2 visas using the DS-2019 forms enclosed. If your family will join you later, a DS-2019 form will be issued at a later date, upon request.

The following is generally required for the consular J-1/J-2 visa application:

- Signed DS-2019(s) – A separate DS-2019 form is required for each visa applicant. Each J visa applicant should sign his/her own DS-2019, with the exception of children under age 14 (the J-1 parent should sign in this instance). The DS-2019(s) will be returned to you to present at the U.S. port of entry.
- Receipt showing payment of the SEVIS Fee (J-1 only).
- Payment of the \$160 visa application fee (**fee amount subject to change**) and appropriate visa application forms (see <http://www.usembassy.gov>) for each visa applicant.
- Passport(s) valid for at least 6 months into the future, for each visa applicant.
- Proof of ties to your home country - Consult the website of your local U.S. Consulate/Embassy for suggestions.
- Proof of financial support - You must be able to verify the total funds indicated on the DS-2019 with a personal bank statement and/or a sponsor's official statement of support. If you are receiving payment from CWRU, you may use your offer/appointment letter from the inviting department which specifies your position and salary.
- Two U.S. Passport-size photos (often required – check with U.S. Consulate), for each visa applicant.
- Evidence of J-2 relationship to the J-1 applicant (e.g. marriage or birth certificate).

PROGRAM DATES AND ACTIVITY

Applying for a J-1 visa using the enclosed DS-2019 implies acceptance of the terms and conditions outlined on the second page of the form. You may be admitted to the United States to engage in the activity described in item 4 of the form and for the period of time specified in item 3.

MAXIMUM STAY

The category indicated in item 4 of your DS-2019 determines your maximum period of stay under your J-1 program. See the second page of the DS-2019, 1(c) "Limitations of Stay." Upon completion of your J-1 program, you are afforded a 30-day grace period to prepare for departure from the United States. You cannot work or engage in other program activities during this period.

ENTERING THE UNITED STATES

Present the following documents to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer at the U.S. port of entry:

- Passport(s) containing a valid J-1 visa (or J-2 visas for accompanying family members).
- Signed DS-2019(s) for you and any accompanying family members.
- Recommended: Proof of financial support (same as the document presented at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate).
- Invitation letter from the sponsoring department at CWRU.



The officer should return the following:

- Passport(s) with entry stamp: Please check that the entry stamp has the notation "J-1 D/S" or "J-2 D/S" (D/S stands for "Duration of Status"). If you notice a discrepancy, please be sure to address it with the CBP officer immediately as it may be difficult to correct later.
- Stamped DS-2019s for you and any accompanying family members.
- Any of the recommended documents that you provided.

I-94 RECORDS

Once you enter the U.S., your I-94 entry record will be available to you by accessing the following website online: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>. Occasionally, a paper I-94 is issued at the U.S. Port of Entry.

NOTE TO CANADIAN NATIONALS:

Canadian nationals are not required to obtain a visa stamp from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. However, they must present the enclosed DS-2019, SEVIS fee receipt, and a Canadian passport at the U.S. port of entry in order to be admitted in J-1 status for D/S (duration of stay). If you are a Canadian Landed Immigrant, please check with the nearest U.S. Consulate about whether or not you require a J-1 visa stamp, as requirements vary depending on country of citizenship.

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

AIRPORT:

Cleveland Hopkins International Airport is the closest airport to campus. It is the primary airport serving the Greater Cleveland and Northeast Ohio regions, the largest and busiest airport in the state, and the 43rd busiest airport in the U.S. by passenger numbers. It is located approximately 17 miles (27 kilometers) from the CWRU campus. Transportation options from the airport to campus are listed below:

SUPERSHUTTLE

This company provides airport transportation in the form of shared vans. To get to the CWRU campus, you should plan to pay an approximately \$58.00 fare for one passenger and possibly an additional fee for any additional passenger(s). To make a reservation visit <https://www.supershuttle.com/locations/cleveland-cle/>.

TAXI/UBER/LYFT

Taxis and other passenger cars are available on various apps. In most cases, you do not need to arrange a ride in advance, but costs may vary between companies. Be sure to verify the cost with your driver before you leave the airport.

TRAINS (RTA) TO CWRU:

The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) operates the Red Line rapid transit rail service, which includes stops on/near campus. Information can be found here: <https://www.riderta.com/routes/redline>



MAP OF CWRU CAMPUS

You can find a map of the CWRU campus at the following link: <https://webapps.case.edu/map/>

NEXT STEPS UPON ARRIVAL

Inform your inviting department that you have arrived safely. Complete the “Arrival and Check In” request at visas.case.edu. This includes attending the mandatory International Employee/Scholar Orientation at IHRS (details discussed further in Arrival and Check In request).

MANDATORY INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

The U.S. Department of State requires us, as your program sponsor, to provide you with an orientation program. After you attend the orientation, an Immigration Specialist in IHRS will validate your arrival in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database. This validation notifies the Department of Homeland Security that you have arrived and begun your J-1 exchange visitor program and changes your SEVIS record to “ACTIVE” status.

Failure to attend orientation and have your SEVIS record validated may result in **future immigration complications**.

DAYS AND TIME

You MUST attend the J-1 Scholar Orientation prior to your DS-2019 start date and I-9 verification. Orientation sessions typically last around one 30-45 minutes. **To schedule your appointment, please register here:**

<https://cwru.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYpcOiupzMrGdz9IJ0qmJIveTkfFCDGJwSL>. We conduct orientation in a group setting, so please be on time. If you arrive more than 10 minutes after orientation has started, you will be asked to reschedule for another session.

CHECKING IN WITH IHRS

Following Orientation, you will need to visit our offices on the second floor of Crawford Hall. Please bring the following documents and information:

- Passport(s)
- DS-2019(s)
- Proof of Health Insurance (if not sponsored by CWRU)

TOPICS COVERED AT ORIENTATION & MORE

- Immigration Status/Changes of Status
- Medical and Evacuation/Repatriation Insurance
- Employment
- Obtaining an Ohio Driver’s License
- And More!

HOME RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT/PARTICIPATION BARS

212(E) TWO-YEAR HOME RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

Exchange Visitors and their dependents may be subject to the 212(e) Two-Year Home Residence Requirement. This requirement is different from the 12-month and 24-month repeat participation bars. Please read and understand section 1(a) on the second page of the enclosed DS-2019. This requirement is normally associated with government funding (from your country or the United States) and/or the U.S. Department of State skills list.

To check the skills list: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor/exchange-visitor-skills-list.html>. If you are subject to 212(e), it does not mean that you cannot return to the United States for two years in any nonimmigrant status (i.e., F student or B tourist). However, it does mean that you cannot change status in the United States, obtain a work visa (H), an intra-company transferee visa (L), a fiancé visa (K), or permanent residency (green card), unless this requirement is waived or met. The Consular Officer may indicate this requirement on your visa or DS-2019; however, the Department of State Exchange Visitor Program makes the final determination on whether this requirement applies.

REPEAT PARTICIPATION BARS

12-MONTH BAR

USCIS regulation 22 CFR 62.20(d)(ii) established a “12-month bar” on beginning a new J-1 program as a J Research Scholar or J Professor for those persons who spent the previous year in the United States in any J status. This bar does not apply to transfers from one institution to another, to persons who were J Short-Term Scholars, or to persons (other than J Research Scholars or J Professors) whose J program lasted less than six months. Also applies to J-2s.

24-MONTH BAR

USCIS regulation 22 CFR 62.20(i)(2) established a “24-month bar” on repeat participation as a J Research Scholar or J Professor for those persons who were present in the United States in J-1 Research Scholar/Professor Category on or after November 17, 2006. The bar does not apply to transfers from one institution to another. The “24-month bar” only prevents new programs as a J Research Scholar and J Professor who have previously held J status as J Research Scholar or J Professor in the past 24 months. Also applies to J-2s.

These bars do not prevent someone who has held J status from beginning a new program, such as a J-1 Student or Short-Term Scholar. Once the applicable 12-month or 24-month time period has lapsed, Exchange Visitors are again eligible to begin a program in any J category.

NOTE: If you held J status in the past or believe that one of these bars might apply to you, please contact an IHRS specialist at visa@case.edu.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

U.S. Department of State regulations require all J-1 Exchange Visitors to have medical insurance for themselves and any J-2 family members (regardless of their location) for the duration of the J-1 program. **Willful violation of the insurance requirements shall result in termination of your J-1 program by ISSS, in accordance with immigration regulations.** Fulfilling this insurance requirement is essential, not only because of the U.S. Department of State regulations, but because **medical treatment in the United States can be very expensive, especially without proper insurance coverage.** It is your responsibility to provide proof of continuous insurance coverage to ISSS.

CWRU EMPLOYEE MEDICAL INSURANCE

Your medical insurance coverage *may* be provided to you as a benefit of your employment, according to the following guidelines. If you are not eligible for CWRU employee/postdoctoral associate benefits, you will need to secure your own insurance for yourself and all J-2 dependents for the entire duration of your program dates, including any days spent in the U.S. prior to your start date or after your program ends.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

CWRU Health Insurance starts on the first business day of the month following your start date (for faculty/staff) or on your first working day (for postdocs). Please note that you may experience delays in your health insurance coverage. For that reason, we recommend purchasing short-term health insurance to cover you and any dependents until your CWRU insurance becomes active.

NEW EMPLOYEE/POSTDOC ORIENTATION FOR BENEFITS-ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

If you will receive insurance benefits from CWRU due to your employment (faculty/staff), you will need to attend a new employee orientation to elect your insurance coverage. New employee orientation is presented by Human Resources. Please verify the date and login details with HR. Additionally, employees can speak to a Benefits Representative at AskHR@case.edu or with Postdoc Affairs at postdoc@case.edu.

If you will receive insurance benefits from CWRU as a postdoctoral associate, you will need to attend Postdoc Orientation. This orientation is presented monthly by the Postdoctoral Affairs. Please verify dates and times with PA. Additionally, postdocs can speak with Felicia Moss regarding benefits and related information at postdoc@case.edu.

YOUR INSURANCE MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

Medical Benefits	At least \$100,000 per accident or illness
Repatriation of Remains	At least \$25,000
Medical Evacuation (to home country)	At least \$50,000
Deductible	\$500 or less per accident or illness

MEDICAL INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure you and all dependents have adequate insurance that meets the minimum Department of State requirements. Failure to carry insurance at the appropriate minimum for the duration of your program can result in loss of your status and termination of your program.

PREGNANCY AND INSURANCE COVERAGE

Please know that many international/travel plans will not cover pregnancy expenses or may exclude pre-existing pregnancies. If you or your spouse are currently pregnant and you are not eligible for CWRU employee medical insurance, you should be careful to purchase a medical insurance policy that will cover the pregnancy and birth while you are in the United States. Both the CWRU employee and CWRU student health insurance plans will cover a pre-existing pregnancy. If you are eligible for an employee medical insurance and you or your spouse is currently pregnant, please contact Human Resource Services or (in the case of postdoctoral associates) Postdoc Affairs as soon as possible.

VISION AND DENTAL CARE

It is important to remember that in the United States certain kinds of elective medical care, such as eyeglasses or dentistry, are ordinarily not covered by regular medical insurance. Exchange Visitors should take care of such needs before leaving home or may elect to purchase separate coverage for these needs through a private company.

PUBLIC CHARGE

A recent rule has been altered to expand the definition of “public charge.” While all J1 Exchange Visitors have to show proof of finances before entering the United States, it is important to remember that as an exchange visitor, you are not allowed to accept public benefits in the form of cash assistance, food stamps, housing assistance, or Medicaid. Examples of these benefits are SNAP, Section 8 Housing, free healthcare. Accepting one or more of these benefits could result in future visa denials or applications for permanent residency.

TAX INFORMATION / SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

TAX INFORMATION

As in most countries, the tax laws in the United States are very complicated. Tax treaty benefits, Social Security taxes, and filing requirements depend on your visa status, the purpose of your visit, the number of days you will be in the United States, and the history of prior visits.

TAXATION OF EXCHANGE VISITORS

It is hard to generalize about specific tax situations. Under normal circumstances, visitors in J-1 status do not pay Social Security or Medicare taxes until they have been in the United States for two calendar years. However, U.S. source income is normally subject to federal income tax withholding at a 10-14% rate, or at a 30% rate for one-time payments for independent contractor services. If your country has a Tax Treaty with the United States, a portion of your income is generally exempt from tax withholding for a certain period of time specified by the treaty.

TAX FILING RESPONSIBILITIES & ASSISTANCE

If you are in the United States for even a day in J-1/J-2 status, you will have tax filing responsibilities during tax filing season (**February through April**). If you did not have any U.S. income source, you are still required to file Form 8843 with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Your J-2 dependents must also file Form 8843. If you have U.S. income source, you may also be required to file a tax return. ISSS does not have a certified tax advisor and cannot assist you with preparing your taxes, however we do provide tax preparation software.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

If you are being paid by a U.S. entity (including CWRU), an SSN is required in order to be paid in the United States. Instructions on the SSN application procedure are available from IHRS. You must wait 5 days after your arrival to the United States and be validated in the SEVIS system in order to apply for an SSN, therefore please plan accordingly. Your J-1 status will be validated in the SEVIS system within 1-2 days of your attendance at the mandatory International Employee/Scholar Orientation. Please read the instructions provided IHRS, on what documents you will need to take with you when you go to the Social Security Office.

NOTE: If you have an SSN from a past visit to the United States, you will use the same number for your entire lifetime.

HOUSING INFORMATION

APARTMENTS

Many J-1 faculty and scholars live in privately owned apartments within walking distance of campus or on the CWRU shuttle or city bus routes. Depending on the apartment complex, you may be able to rent an apartment before you arrive in Cleveland, or in person upon your arrival. You may also want to contact your sponsoring department to see if they are able to provide housing assistance or suggestions to you. It might be necessary that you consider a plan for living in a hotel or AirBnB for the first few days after your arrival, until you are able to find housing that suits your needs.

OFF CAMPUS HOUSING RESOURCES

If you are already on campus, there are normally several free apartment guides around the student newspaper stands that you may choose to look at, or there are several internet websites that may assist you in your apartment search. We have listed a few below to get you started. *Please keep in mind that these sites do not offer a complete list of local off-campus housing and IHRS does not offer any endorsement of these sites or the properties that are listed. We are listing these to give you some idea of the resources available to you as you begin your apartment search.*

- Apartment Guide.com: Apartmentguide.com
- Apartment Finder: <https://www.apartmentfinder.com/Off-Campus-Housing/Ohio/Apartments-Near-Case-Western-Reserve-University-vpz644f>
- CWRU Off-Campus Housing Service: <https://case.edu/housing/services/campus-housing>

SHORT TERM HOUSING RESOURCES

<p>Courtyard by Marriott Cleveland 2021 Cornell Road Cleveland, OH 44106 Phone: (216) 791-5678 Website: https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/clece-courtyard-cleveland-university-circle/overview/</p>	<p>Residence Inn by Marriott, Cleveland University Circle/Medical Center 1914 E 101st Street Cleveland, OH 44106 Phone: (216) 249-9090 Website: https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/cleuv-residence-inn-cleveland-university-circle-medical-center/rooms/</p>
<p>The Tudor Arms Hotel Cleveland – DoubleTree by Hilton 10660 Carnegie Ave Cleveland, OH 44106 Phone: (216)-455-1260 Website: https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/cleucdt-the-tudor-arms-hotel-cleveland/</p>	<p>Holiday Inn Cleveland Clinic, an IHG Hotel 8650 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, OH 44106 Phone: (216) 707-4200 Website: https://www.ihg.com/holidayinn/hotels/us/en/cleveland/cleca/hoteldetail</p>
<p>AirBnB</p> <p>Airbnb.com or access through the app.</p>	<p>Vrbo</p> <p>Vrbo.com or access through the app.</p>

ENSURING THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF ALL EXCHANGE VISITORS IS CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE’S HIGHEST PRIORITY

To help safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all exchange visitors, there is an Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) Emergency Hotline – 1-866-283-9090 – a 24/7 toll-free telephone number that allows exchange visitors to directly contact the Department in emergency and urgent situations. A Department representative is available 24 hours a day.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECTIONS & RESOURCES

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html>

<https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/EV-TRIFOLD.pdf>

EXCHANGE VISITOR WELCOME BROCHURE

<https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/EVP-Welcome-Brochure-2022.pdf>