VISA TIPS, TRICKS, & CHANGES

June 17, 2022

ABOUT YOUR PRESENTERS

Holly Schneidmiller

ISO Specialist

International Scholars Operations for OAP

Rahimah Carpenter

Visa Specialist

Academic Appointments and Compensation for School of Medicine

TODAY'S AGENDA

- J-1 Visas
  - Poll Questions

- H-1B Visas
  - Poll Questions

- Administrative
  - Poll Questions

J-1 VISAS

J-1 VISA TIPS

- Only submit requested supplemental materials
  - E.g.: Do not include Postdoctoral Data Sheet and/or CV with signed final packets
  - Use checklists to determine necessary documents

- FedEx shipping labels: include with signed conditional approval packets for original DS-2019(s) to be sent to scholars
  - DS-2019 hard copies will be sent the visa requestor via campus mail

- ISO will only send DS-2019 hard, not digital, copies due to federal regulations

J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR ARRIVALS

- Scholars can arrive up to 30 days before work start date
  - Scholars can't work until DS-2019 start date, even if they arrive early
  - If scholar is unable to enter the U.S. by their start date or start their work on time, request a DS-2019 amendment using the online request form

J-1 EXTENSION VISA TIPS

- Ensure Statement of Compliance for Insurance is completed and signed
  - Note: Emergency evacuation and repatriation are **not included** with UW benefits plans

- If J-1 extension indicates scholar is outside the U.S., ISO will follow up
  - Scholars are required to maintain U.S. residence throughout their J-1 program
  - Additional Information section: Include out-of-country dates and current U.S. residence

- List all worksites including remote (especially if working from home)
  - First address is considered "primary site of activity"
  - If the site has changed, you will be asked to confirm the primary site of activity
  - Include all secondary worksites as well

J-1 VISA TRAVEL TIPS

- Out of Country Requests (approval needed)
  - If scholar is out of the U.S. for more than 30 days, they must submit an [Out of Country Request](#) to ISO
  - One of the following must be approved before submitting to ISO:
    - International Remote Work Request – approved by Tax Office
    - Protected Leave Request – approved by Academic HR
  - Facilitates re-entry into U.S. after a prolonged absence

J-1 VISA TRICKS

- Additional Information section: Special DS-2019 handling requests like sending the DS-2019 to someone other than listed requestor
  - Example: Send the DS-2019 to John Smith, Campus mailbox #350000
- Submit visa request far ahead of the sponsorship start date (as much as 5 months)
  - Use ISO's process handouts to establish realistic expectations around processing times

J-1 COVID REQUIREMENTS AND ENTERING THE U.S.

- Foreign nationals flying to the U.S. on nonimmigrant visas (including UW-sponsored H-1B, J-1, E-3, and TN visas) must be fully-vaccinated against COVID-19

  ◦ Effective November 8, 2021

  ◦ Limited exceptions

  ◦ Additional details: White House, the Department of State, and the CDC

J-1 VISA TRICKS: REMOTE CHECK-IN AND VALIDATION

- J-1 scholars must request a mandatory ISO remote check-in **upon arrival** in the U.S.

- **If ISO does not receive the check-in materials and validate the scholar's immigration record, it can cause big problems**

  ◦ There is a Remote J-1 Check-In & Validation Request form that must be completed, signed by the scholar and faculty supervisor, and returned with the appropriate documentation to do this

  ◦ Travel validation signatures are currently not a part of the check-in process

    ◦ If a scholar needs to travel, they must have this signature on their DS-2019

      ◦ **If the scholar needs a signature, they should contact ISO or use walk-in hours**

J VISA CHANGES

- New Amendment Form to request changes of dates

- New Add J-2 Dependent Form
  ◦ To add a spouse or child under 21

- Visa request packet changes may require a revised conditional approval
  ◦ This requires re-routing for signatures, so plan ahead!

J-1 Poll

1. When can scholars can arrive before the work start date on the DS-2019?
   a. **On or up to 30 days before the start date**

2. True or False: Emergency evacuation and repatriation are included in all UW benefit plans.
   a. Answer: **False**

3. When should scholars go through the mandatory ISO check-in process?
   a. **As soon as they arrive in the U.S.**

4. True or False: If scholar plans to leave US for more than 30 days, they may submit an Out of Country request to ISO before they depart."
   a. Answer: **True** (if they have appropriate approval from the UW Tax Office or Academic HR).

H-1B VISAS

H-1B TIPS

- Include all H-1B required documents

- Ensure no additional documents are added, unless requested by ISO

- Forward digital copy of USCIS letter to ISO with H visa packet
  - ISO may propose edits before signing
  - Depending on the routing and your department's procedures, you may not be able to hold off on the signature by the chair or dean.
    - If unable to hold off on signature, determine if you could circulate a digital letter for approval
    - Use the correct USCIS template letter
  - **List all worksites** on visa request and confirm if scholar will work remotely from home
  - Confirm with scholar all worksites listed on the visa request

H-1B TIPS

- Tell ISO your preferred posting method and if you'd like a separate LCA for posting at a remote home address (each method has different instructions for posting):
  - **physical posting at the worksite**
  - **listserv posting**
  - **intranet posting**

- **Have Procurement Services write scholar's legal name and/or visa request tracking number on check stub to ensure it goes to correct scholar's case and file**

- Provide FedEx label to ISO <u>prior to notice being issued</u> if you want the receipt and/or approval notice sent directly to the scholar
  - Courtesy copy of approval notice will be sent to the department by campus mail

H-1B TRICKS

- Title, salary, and visa purpose impact H-1B processing times
  - Understand the differences between union and non-union processing times
  - [Consult timeline](#) to help determine start date
  - When in doubt, ask ISO for estimated timeline

- Create case management system and/or process
  - H-1Bs are complicated and lengthy from start to finish
    - Use the H Intake form to gather necessary information
    - Staying on track is critical
  - Look for key action points
    - Should include check points for following up with other departments/entities

H-1B TRICKS

- Pay close attention to entire timeline
  - Use the H Process Handout to establish realistic expectations
  - Create weekly updates
  - Note that government agencies can take months of waiting at certain points in this process

H-1B CHANGES

- Currently takes over 6 months for Prevailing Wage Determinations from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

- Check visa appointment wait times if the scholar will need a new visa stamp

H-1B Poll

1. True or False: You should forward a soft copy of the USCIS letter to ISO with the H visa packet so that ISO can suggest any changes that may be needed.
   a. Answer: **True**

2. You can post an LCA using one the following methods:
   a. Physical posting at the worksite
   b. Listserv posting
   c. Intranet posting

   d. Any of the above

3. True or False: Processing times for H-1B visas are relatively set and there is no variance based on the title or salary of the scholar.
   a. Answer: **False** (this differs greatly depending on union vs. non-union, title, salary, and visa purpose)

4. What should you make sure Procurement Services notes on check stubs that are sent to ISO?
   a. **Scholar's legal name or visa request tracking number**

ADMINISTRATIVE

WORKDAY ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

- Ensure all scholars, including courtesy appointments such as visiting scholars, **are entered in Workday**
  - Supports keeping UW academic personnel records complete

- Start dates and appointment dates should align whenever possible

BUDGET INFORMATION ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

- Double check budget name, number, and contact on visa requests (saves time in reconciliation and billing later)

  ◦ Email acadvisa@uw.edu to change a budget number

  ◦ Ensure budget number is valid for at least 6 months or beyond

  ◦ ISO can only invoice one budget number

- Invoicing system auto generates invoices after conditional approval

  ◦ Email acadvisa@uw.edu to request invoices

TYPING SCHOLAR NAME ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

- Enter scholar name in lowercase on visa request
  - Automatically modifies last name to all caps
  - Helps with consistent, clean, and efficient file organization
  - Correct result in subject line: SMITH, John

SECTION #5 ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

Visa Request Section #5:

- For UW academic home department/program section
  - Use academic unit name followed by division name
    - Example: Physics/Institute of Nuclear Theory
    - Example: International Studies/Center for Korea Studies
- UW academic home school/college/campus section
  - Use UW Bothell or UW Tacoma
  - Use School of Medicine

LISTING PRIOR VISITS ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

- **Visa request "Prior U.S. Visits" section: Include scholar's current status and current status start/end dates**
  - ISO is looking for time-in status (how long the scholar held their visa in total)
  - NOT a list of every single entry/exit within a certain status or program
  - **Avoid using End Date: "to present"**
  - Use scholar's current immigration documents for end date
  - List start date on the visa request as the next day after the expiration date listed on the immigration document

- If currently in the U.S., upload documents for scholar's current visa status
  - E.g., DS-2019, EAD card, I-797 Approval Notice
  - Helps prevent unnecessary back and forth with departments and delays

CONDITIONAL APPROVAL ADMINISTRATIVE TIPS

- Always be sure to reply to the same request ticket by clicking "Reply All"

  ◦ Example: change of title, duties/activities, address, name, dates, leaving early, changes in dependents, etc.

  ◦ Conditional approval and billing based on initial information

- ISO accepts conditional approvals with electronic signatures and PDF'ed supplemental documents. Submit documents as one packet:

  ◦ Convert digital documents (Word Docs, etc.) to PDF rather than printing and scanning

  ◦ Limit email attachments to 50 MB or less

  ◦ For files 50 MB and over, use the Manage Files function on the visa request form

CONTACTING ISO: GENERAL QUESTIONS

◦ Email acadvisa@uw.edu

   ◦ uses a ticketing system with a shared inbox (any ISO team member can respond)

   ◦ ISO sees the email thread; keeps records cleaner

   ◦ If working with a specific advisor, include their name in the greeting or email body

◦ Let ISO know your availability (work hours/location)

CONTACTING ISO: SPECIFIC VISA REQUESTS

- Ticket generated and advisor assigned when visa request sent to ISO

    - Respond to ticket notification to help with follow up

    - Best used for active, unresolved cases

- Required subject line format: "[UW-AP #XXXXX]"

    - Note: If an email is sent to acadvisa@uw.edu without this formatting, a new ticket is generated

- Include a screenshot or reference a particular web page excerpt you don't understand when emailing ISO for clarification

WHERE TO SEND SCHOLARS' QUESTIONS

Visa type	Where to look	Who to contact
J-1 or J-1 Academic Training	Most recent DS-2019 #2 Program Sponsor AND #4 Exchange Visitor Category	If program sponsor is UW AND exchange visitor category is Short-Term Scholar, Research Scholar, Professor, or Specialist Contact: UW ISO (acadvisa@uw.edu)
		If program sponsor is UW AND exchange visitor category is Student Contact: UW ISS (uwiss@uw.edu)
		If program sponsor is UW AND exchange visitor category is Student Intern or Student Non-Degree Contact: UW IELP VISIT/VISER program (uwvisit@uw.edu)
		If program sponsor is not UW, scholar should ask the program that issued the DS-2019

WHERE TO SEND SCHOLARS' QUESTIONS

Visa type	Where to look	Who to contact
H-1B, TN, E-3, or O-1 sponsored through UW ISO	Most recent I-797 upper right-hand corner "Petitioner"	If petitioner is UW/UW ISO Contact: ISO acadvisa@uw.edu
		If petitioner is other entity, scholar should contact that entity
F-1 or F-1 OPT	Most recent I-20 School Information: School Name	If school name is UW Contact: UW ISS (uwiss@uw.edu)
		If School Name is not UW: scholar should ask the school that issued the I-20
Other status		Scholar should ask private immigration attorney: www.ailalawyer.com

VISA REQUEST TOOL CHANGES

- Minor changes to the J and H-1B forms in Lux for greater clarity
  - More options for managing files and uploading documents
  - More help bubbles on visa request form to greater explain the content being requested
  - Can now add multiple netIDs to increase access to viewing visa requests
  - Scholars now have limited access to view and download uploaded documents in Lux
    - Can see petitions and receipt and approval notices for H-1Bs

Administrative Poll

1. True or False: Visiting Scholar titles don't need to be entered into Workday.
   a. Answer: **False** (we use Workday for record keeping purposes and for our records management system)

2. To list the end date for the "Prior U.S. Visits" section on the visa request you should put:
   a. **List the date exactly as it appears on the immigration document, even if the date is in the future**

3. To follow up on an active visa request case, you should:
   a. **Reply to the Request Ticket so that the correct advisor receives your inquiry**

4. True or False: To make visa request changes after the conditional approval has been issued you should reply to the same request ticket so ISO can take the appropriate action.
   a. Answer: **True**

ISO and USCIS fees
(as of 06/17/2022)

Visa	Expense	Fee	Payable
J-1 New or extension		$521	ISO
J-2 New or extension		$521	ISO
J-1 Add'l Year		$521	ISO
J-2 Add'l Year		$521	ISO
DS-2019 Reissue		$105	ISO
H-1B/TN/E-3 New		$521	ISO
H-1B/TN/E-3 extension		$521	ISO
H-1B/TN/E-3	I-129 Petition Filing	$460	US Dept. Homeland Security
H-1B	Anti-Fraud (new app or transfer)	$500	US Dept. Homeland Security
H-1B/TN/E-3	Premium Processing (optional)	$2,500	US Dept. Homeland Security
H-4	I-539 Dependent Filing	$370	US Dept. Homeland Security

J-1 & H-1B RESOURCES

J-1 Resources

- How to Sponsor a J-1 Visa

- J-1 Visa Intake Form

- J-1 Checklist

- J Visa Request Form

- J-1 Amendment Form

- J-1 Check-In Information

- Statement of Compliance for Insurance

- Out of Country Request Form

- Add J-2 Dependent Form

H-1B Resources

- How to Sponsor an H-1B Temporary Worker

- H-1B/E3/TN Visa Intake Form

- H-1B Checklist

- H Visa Request Form

- USCIS Employer Letter Template

- Postdoctoral Scholar Letter Templates:
  ◦ New hire offer letter (updated 7/30/2021)
  ◦ Reappointment letter (updated 7/30/2021)

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

- OAP Visa Guidance for Unit Administrators

- Visa Request Launch Page

- International Scholar COVID-19 Related Updates

- OAP Academic Titles and Ranks

- OAP Updates and Announcements

- OAP eDigest Archive

- Training and Administrative Forum Archive

- Visa Fees

General Email Addresses

- ISO: acadvisa@uw.edu

- AHR: acadpers@uw.edu

Other Resources

- FedEx

- UW Procurement Services

THANK YOU!

Email: acadvisa@uw.edu