



## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

Read this Before Accepting the East-West Center Degree Fellowship

### The J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa

East-West Center degree fellows are required to come to the United States on a J-1 exchange visitor visa. Each degree fellow in J-1 status is considered a participant in the Center's Exchange Visitor Program. As your program sponsor, the East-West Center brings you to the U.S. to fulfill a specific educational objective. The Center expects you to pursue that objective in a timely and sustained manner.

The East-West Center issues you the initial **Form DS-2019** [Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status] to apply for a J-1 visa.

- *If you are outside the U.S.*, the DS-2019 form will be sent to you after receipt of acceptance into a study program and evidence of financial support. Instructions about applying for a J-1 visa at an American Embassy or Consulate will be sent with the DS-2019.
- *If you are already in the U.S. in J-1 status*, you may change your sponsorship either by leaving the country and re-entering or by transferring visa sponsorship to the East-West Center. Please contact the EWC Visa Officer about changing your sponsorship.
- *If you are already in the U.S. in another nonimmigrant visa status*, you are required to change to J-1 status as a condition of your fellowship award. Please contact the EWC Visa Officer **immediately** about these procedures if you are in this situation as the process is lengthy and the transfer must be approved by USCIS before you may benefit from your fellowship.

### Purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program

The broad purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program is to promote international educational and cultural exchange in order to develop mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. Exchange programs permit visitors to come to this country for a wide range of educational activities. The East-West Center's exchange visitor program provides opportunities for study, research and participation in educational and professional activities for foreign students, research scholars, short-term scholars, and specialists under the sponsorship of the Center.

### The Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement

The intent of the Exchange Visitor Program is to have participants return to their home countries upon program completion to share and apply the knowledge and experience gained during the program. Exchange visitors who are funded in whole or in part, directly or indirectly by the U.S. Government, their home country government, or international organizations for exchange purposes are subject to a two-year home country physical presence requirement. Exchange visitors are also subject to the home country residence requirement if their field of study is on the Exchange Visitors Skills List (a list of fields of specialized knowledge and skills and those countries which require the services of persons engaged in one or more of such fields). This requirement is stated on your Form DS-2019 that you must read and sign before being issued a J-1 visa. It is intended to prevent the exchange visitor from staying longer than necessary for the degree objective and to ensure that he or she will spend at least two years in the home country before coming back to the U.S. for a long-term stay.

Subjectivity to the home country residency requirement (212(e)) means that you will not be eligible for an immigrant (permanent resident) visa or nonimmigrant H (temporary worker), K (fiancé), or L (intra-company transfer) visas without first residing in your home country for an aggregate of two years after completing your exchange visitor program. Residence in a third country will not fulfill this requirement. However under current practice, one is eligible to apply for re-entry to the U.S. under most other nonimmigrant visa classes (other than H, K, or L) without any waiting period.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

In support of the Center's commitment to the goals of the Exchange Visitor Program, the Center expects participants to return home upon completion of the specific program objective for which they came. Students who wish to continue their studies after completing their current degree, whether at the University of Hawaii or a U.S. mainland institution, should plan to depart the U.S. and apply for a new visa from an American Embassy or Consulate abroad and re-enter the U.S. on the new visa.

Exchange visitors who are subject to the residence requirement cannot change from J visa status to other nonimmigrant statuses within the U.S.; for example, from J-1 to F-1. [Exceptions are made only for the A (diplomatic) visa and G (international organization) visa, to which one may change without departing the U.S.]

You may not change from one exchange visitor category to another while still in the U.S.; for example, you may not change from J-1 student to J-1 research scholar. You must depart the U.S., apply for the new visa at an American Embassy or Consulate abroad, and re-enter on the new visa. (There may be limitations to re-entering depending on the exchange visitor category). Temporary entry on another nonimmigrant visa does not release you from the two-year home country residence requirement.

### **Waiver of the Two-Year Home Country Residence Requirement**

While there is a procedure by which individuals who are subject to the two-year home country residence requirement may apply for a waiver, **it is the Center's policy to object to a waiver request.**

### **Exchange Visitor Responsibilities to Maintain your J-1 Visa Status Within the U.S.: Failure to comply may result in termination of your East-West Center Degree Fellowship.**

Once in the U.S., it is your responsibility as an exchange visitor to:

1. Make clear progress toward program objectives. You must be a full-time student during the fall and spring semesters and relevantly involved during the summer. Degree Students may **not** drop or add a course or change a field of study without their EWC Scholarship Coordinator's approval. A J-1 visa can be terminated prior to its expiration date if progress is not evident or if your fellowship is terminated.
2. Not engage in employment, except as authorized in writing by the EWC Visa Officer
3. Hold a valid passport at all times (6 months beyond your DS-2019 end date). You are responsible for obtaining information on passport renewal procedures prior to leaving your home country.
4. Submit extension request to your EWC Scholarship Coordinator two months prior to the end date of your DS-2019. If you require country clearance and employer approval you must request these approvals no later than 6 months before the DS-2019 end date.
5. Provide Current Residential Address and Phone Number to the Visa Officer. Changes in residence must be reported to the Visa Officer within 10 days of the move.
6. Keep your Scholarship Coordinator informed of any travel dates away from Hawaii, address, and phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency.
7. Extend your visa status in the U.S. if it expires before completion of your program. The EWC is able to extend visa sponsorship until you complete your original educational objective for approved program extensions. Forms and information on are available from the EWC Visa Office.

### **Financial Support**

For visa applications, you must present to the American consul evidence of financial support from the Center as well as other funding sources used to support your program. The terms of the Center's financial support as well as costs you are responsible for are indicated in the EWC Degree Fellowship Agreement. All expenses not provided by the Center, including financial support for J-2 dependents, are the responsibility of the participant.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse and Dependents**

For information on J-2 visas for spouse and dependent children, please request a separate information sheet on "Visa Information for Family of Exchange Visitors" from the EWC Visa Office. You must receive permission from your EWC Scholarship Coordinator to have your spouse and/or dependents join you. In certain cases, approval must also be received by the program funding partner.

**Health Care and Insurance**

Exchange Visitors are required, as a condition of their J-1 status in the United States, to carry health insurance and repatriation and medical evacuation insurance for themselves and any accompanying family members.

If the East-West Center is providing health insurance and repatriation and medical evacuation insurance coverage for you under the terms of your award, the health insurance and repatriation and medical evacuation insurance plan will meet federal exchange visitor requirements. The EWC will accept other insurance coverage if it meets or exceeds each of the specific exchange visitor program regulatory requirements.

The University of Hawaii operates a health center (clinic) for students, faculty, and staff. More information on UHM health services and insurance plan options will be provided upon your arrival.

In the United States certain kinds of elective medical care, such as eyeglasses or dentistry, are ordinarily not covered by insurance, and they can be very expensive. To the extent possible, exchange visitors should take care of those needs before leaving home.

The Visa Officer is responsible for all participant exchange visitor visa matters. If you have any questions, please feel free to write to: Visa Office, East-West Center, 1601 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96848, USA. Telephone: (808) 944-7706. Fax: (808) 944-7730, E-Mail: [wongv@eastwestcenter.org](mailto:wongv@eastwestcenter.org)

I have read and understand the above information regarding the terms and conditions of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program and the East-West Center's policies and procedures regarding the Exchange Visitor Program and agree to comply with all terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date