

Illinois Institute of Technology

International Center

3300 S. Federal Street
Main Building, Room 405
Chicago, IL 60616
Phone: (312) 567-3680
Fax: (312) 567-3687

J-1 Scholar Travel and Visa Information

01/08

For all travel you should carry a valid passport, I-94 card and DS-2019 form with a recent travel signature from the International Center.

Travel Procedures to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean Islands

A valid U.S. entry visa is not required if you travel to a contiguous territory (Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean Islands excluding Cuba) for less than 30 days. If a person in J-1 status enters the US from the contiguous territories after an absence from the US not exceeding 30 days, the entry visa is considered to be automatically extended to the date of reentry PROVIDED THE ENTRY VISA HAS NOT BEEN CANCELED OR VOIDED. This is called “**Automatic Visa Revalidation.**” If you plan to use this procedure, **do not surrender your valid I-94 card to Immigration officials upon departure from the United States.**

This automatic revalidation is not valid for people who travel from a contiguous territory (ex: Canada) to a non-contiguous country (ex: Germany) and return to the US via a contiguous territory.

SPECIAL NOTE: Citizens of the following countries are NOT eligible for Automatic Visa Revalidation: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Sudan, North Korea and Cuba. Also the automatic visa revalidation provision excludes aliens who applied for a U.S. entry visa in Canada or Mexico and whose visa application was denied.

**Certain individuals require an entry visa before entering Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean Islands. Please contact the appropriate consulate for information regarding this matter.

Travel Procedures to All Other Countries

To travel to any other country you should have a valid, unexpired J-1 entry visa in your passport. If you do not, you must apply for a visa at a US consulate or embassy abroad. You should also have a letter from your department confirming your employment. Please let the International Center know that you are planning to travel **at least a week in advance** so that we can endorse your DS-2019 for travel. Be sure that you have all of the documents required by the country you are intending to visit.

US VISIT (Entry system)

This is a system that will collect biographic information on all foreign nationals entering the US. This system may add minor delays upon your return to the US so please plan accordingly when booking your flight and possible connections. For more information on the US VISIT system, please go to http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content_multi_image/content_multi_image_0006.xml.

Special Registration Requirements for Travel

If, at the time of entry to the U.S., you were designated by the immigration officer to be a subject of special registration procedures, you will have to notify the immigration about your departure and make sure to meet with an inspecting officer at a U.S. through a designated port of departure. For more information on special registration requirements and the list of designated ports of departure please go to <http://www.ice.gov/pi/specialregistration/index.htm>.

Obtaining or Renewing a J-1 Visa in your Home Country

To obtain general information about visa services and DS-156 visa application form please visit the Department of State website at usembassy.state.gov.

Follow the same procedure that you followed when you obtained your previous visa(s) to enter the United States. You will also need to bring a current proof of financial support. The documents required vary from country to country so please inquire at the American Consulate in your home country before you leave the US to determine the specific documents required. Please note that due to security background checks the processing of your visa may take a considerable amount of time.

Obtaining or Renewing a J-1 Visa in Canada or Mexico

If you want to apply to obtain or renew your J-1 visa in Canada or Mexico rather than in your home country, you must call for an appointment 2-3 weeks in advance. The US Embassy or Consulate will send you information regarding your appointment and will inform you about which documents you must bring to your interview. You must call from a private telephone line.

You may schedule an appointment with a US Consulate in Canada online at www.nvars.com using a major credit card or by calling 1-900-443-3131.

You may schedule an appointment with a US Consulate in Mexico online at www.visa-usa.com.mx using a major credit card.

Please be aware that there is no guarantee that you will get a new or renewed J-1 visa. A decision will be made at the time of the interview. Due to security background checks the processing of your visa may take a considerable amount of time. While your visa application is in progress you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. Also if you apply for a visa in Canada or Mexico and are DENIED the visa, you will not be able to re-enter the United States under "Automatic Visa Revalidation."

If you have previously violated your immigration status you may not be eligible for a visa from a country other than your home country. If you have any questions regarding this issue please make an appointment to talk to an advisor at the International Center.