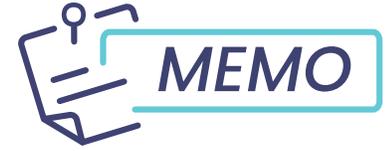


Request for a Change of J-1 Visa Category



Individuals in the United States as J-1 research scholars at the time of application to Intealth for sponsorship in the J-1 alien physician category must file a formal change of category request for review by Intealth and the U.S. Department of State (DOS). The documentation listed below is the minimum required to file such a request.

Potential applicants should be aware that the DOS has indicated that worthy change of category requests must document consistency with and relationship to one's original exchange objective. The DOS has also indicated that applicants who will complete four or more years as a research scholar by their proposed clinical training start date are not eligible for a change of category, as they are considered to have fulfilled the objective of their J-1 category. These applicants must be away from the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program for a minimum of 12 months to be considered for sponsorship in the J-1 alien physician category.

Additionally, the DOS has indicated that applicants who have applied for or received a waiver of a two-year home country physical presence requirement associated with their current (or any previous) J status are not eligible to apply for a change of category.

If the applicant will complete participation in the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program and depart the United States within six months prior to the proposed clinical training start date, a change of category request is still required but with slightly different documentation. Find more information on this process here: <https://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/evspscocdmemo.pdf>

Required Change of J-1 Visa Category Documentation

All required documentation must be uploaded by the TPL and/or applicant through MyIntealth at the time of application.

- **COMPLETE APPLICATION FOR INTEALTH SPONSORSHIP**

The standard initial application documents are required in addition to the documents outlined below.

View the application checklist here: <https://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/initial-accredited.pdf>

- **COPIES OF ALL CURRENT AND PREVIOUS FORMS DS-2019**

Please submit all previously issued Forms DS-2019, including the first issued Form DS-2019 stamped by the U.S. embassy/consulate.

- **COPY OF CURRENT FORM I-94, ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE RECORD**

A recent copy of the applicant's latest Form I-94 (not travel history) must be submitted. Copies of electronically issued Form I-94 can be printed from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>. The print-out must include the date it was printed and cannot be older than 30 days prior to application submission. Note that Form I-94 also may be attached to Form I-797, Notice of Action, issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

- **STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES (SEO) FROM APPLICANT**

Completion of SEO Form. In the form, the applicant should provide justification as to why the proposed clinical training is being pursued and how it relates to their previous research activities. If additional training is anticipated after the proposed program, specify the program's duration and subspecialty if known. If available, also upload any future offer letters. The SEO Form is available at

<https://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/applicant-SEO.pdf>.

- **LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM RESEARCH MENTOR AND CLINICAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

The applicant's most recent research program director/mentor and the proposed clinical program director must each provide a letter of support for the applicant on institutional letterhead. The letters do not need to be lengthy but must focus specifically on the clinical value of the proposed training, how the physician will benefit from the clinical skills and knowledge to be acquired, and how the applicant's research activities relate to the proposed clinical training activity. The two letters cannot be identical and must be signed by the research mentor and proposed clinical program director respectively. If they are the same, one strong letter is sufficient.

In drafting the letters, it is important to be aware that the J-1 visa is a temporary, nonimmigrant visa reserved for educational and cultural exchange, and thus carries with it the expectation that physicians will return to their home country at the end of their training.

- **A/RO RESPONSIBLE OFFICER FORM**

Signed acknowledgment from the Responsible Officer (RO) or Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) of the current **research** sponsoring J-1 program confirming his/her knowledge that (1) a change of category is being pursued; (2) the Exchange Visitor will maintain J-1 status while the change of category request is pending and the current Form DS-2019 will not expire; and (3) program release and SEVIS transfer will be granted if the requested change in category is approved. The form is available at <http://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/category.pdf>.

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- **INTEALTH APPLICATION FEE OF \$370.00**

The standard \$370.00 application fee must be paid through MyIntealth at the time of application submission.

- **DOS CASE PROCESSING FEES OF \$567.00**

After the application is determined to be a DOS case, the applicant will be invoiced an additional \$567 (\$200 Intealth review and preparation fee + \$367 DOS processing fee). Once received, Intealth will submit the \$367 processing fee to DOS on the applicant's behalf.

- **PROOF OF SEVIS PAYMENT (I.E., RECEIPT)**

- » The \$220.00 SEVIS fee must be paid again by the applicant for the change of category request, even if paid previously upon original entry to the U.S. Please upload the receipt with the other required documents.
- » The fee is payable online at <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.htm>; a printable receipt will be immediately available upon payment.
- » Information from the *current* (i.e., research) Form DS-2019 must be used to complete payment, including the current Program ID, Program Name, and category (J-1 research scholar).
- » When paying the SEVIS fee, an error will pop up stating that the fee has already been paid. Please continue with payment regardless. The fee will be applied to the new category if approved.

Change of Category (COC) Requests — What to Expect

- **Intealth and the U.S. Department of State are mindful of clinical training start dates** and work collaboratively to reach a decision **before the start date whenever possible**.
- Once an application is complete and under review, **status updates are generally not available**. We understand that waiting can be stressful and appreciate your patience.
- Applicants and TPLs will be **notified promptly by email** as soon as there is an update or a decision to share.
- **COC requests are reviewed individually**, based on each applicant's circumstances. While every request receives careful consideration, **approval cannot be guaranteed**.
- While a COC request is pending, applicants **must remain in valid J-1 research scholar status**. There is no interim or provisional status during the review period, and **maintaining continuous status avoids disruption** in valid visa status.
- If international travel is necessary while a COC request is pending, applicants should plan to **re-enter the United States in J-1 research scholar status** and **no later than two weeks prior** to the clinical training start date.
- If a COC request is approved, **next steps will be shared by email**. At that time, the A/RO of the current research program will be asked to **transfer the SEVIS record to Intealth at an appropriate time just before the clinical program start date**.
- The **start date on an Intealth-issued Form DS-2019** following COC approval is based on the date Intealth receives authorization to issue the form. Because forms cannot be backdated, the start date may differ from the originally proposed date.
- After COC approval, any future international travel will require applying for a **new J-1 visa stamp as an alien physician**, as the prior research scholar visa is no longer valid for U.S. entry (Canadian citizens exempt from applying for a visa).
- Intealth sponsorship following COC approval applies **only to the training program and time frame approved**. Any proposed changes, including subspecialty training, must be reviewed and approved through a **formal sponsorship authorization request**.

**Please contact JProgram@intealth.org
with questions about the change of category process.**