Understanding J-1 Status

The J visa's formal name is the Exchange Visitor Program and is governed by the U.S. Department of State. The Program was created to “…promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange […]”.

Yale's Exchange Visitor Program is reviewed by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the State Department every two years. Our Designated Program number is P-1-00160 which does not allow any patient care or clinical activities without express permission from the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS).

To learn more about how the Department of State runs the J Exchange Visitor Program, please watch a short video or read the information posted on their website [1]. You can also read their Welcome Brochure [2], which summarizes many of your rights as an Exchange Visitor.

Contacts and Concerns

Contact Your Department

Before coming to New Haven, it is important for you to communicate directly with your host department at Yale regarding your arrival date, and details of how to begin your employment. Please read your Yale job offer letter carefully, and ask your department if you have any concerns about the salary, benefits, lab or office set-up and expectation of work schedule.

Contact OISS

If you do not understand the terms of your work status, or if you still have unanswered questions, please contact your adviser in OISS [3]. If you ever have any immigration questions, OISS should be your first resource. We are happy to help you understand the complexities of U.S. immigration policies.

Contact the Department of State

As an Exchange Visitor (J-1), your visa is governed by the U.S. Department of State (DOS). The Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration Academic and Government Programs (OPA-AG) monitors and enforces full compliance with Department regulations and policies with a focus on exchange visitor's health, safety, and well-being; and responds to complaints and incidents. At any point prior to coming to Yale, or during your program, you should feel free to contact the DOS using the information below.

- Telephone: (866) 283-9090
- Email: agalert@state.gov [4]

Cultural Exchange Opportunities

The cross-cultural component of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program gives participants the opportunity to learn about U.S. society and culture. At the same time, international visitors are critical members of the Yale community by sharing perspectives and challenging assumptions across academic disciplines. In addition to your academic goals, Yale invites you to participate in the many cultural and social events being offered around the campus, and in particular at OISS. Whether you are seeking an English language discussion partner or wanting to join a Speed-Friending event with American graduate students, OISS offers countless opportunities to network and socialize with the Yale community. Here are just a few cultural events and resources:

- OISS Events and Programs [5]
Also check out the amazing Yale Events Calendar [7].