Understanding the 12 and 24 Month Bars

The 12 and 24 month bars are different from the two-year home country residence requirement. Any indication below that there is “no wait” time refers only to the 12 and 24 month bars. It is possible that a J-1 visitor has no wait time related to the 12 and 24 month bars - but is subject to the two year home residency requirement. [1]

The 12 and 24 month rule affects J-1 exchange visitors who have been in the U.S. on a J-1 visa previously, and wish to return, using the J-1 visa. The bars prohibit certain “repeat participation” in the Research Scholar or Professor categories only. Depending on what your previous J category was, you may be subject to a 12 month bar, a 24 month bar or have no bar at all. The following chart shows how long you would have to wait (the 12 or 24 month bar) before you could obtain a new J-1 Research Scholar or Professor visa based on what your previous J status was. If you have never before had J-1 visa sponsorship, then the bars do not apply to you.

### Previous Scholar Visa Status

#### For LESS Than 6 Months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you have or had this J visa category</th>
<th>Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J-1 Student Non-Degree</td>
<td>No Wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-1 Student</td>
<td>No Wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-1 Research Scholar/Professor Category for any amount of time (one day to five years)</td>
<td>24 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-1 Short-Term Scholar</td>
<td>No Wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J-1 Specialist</td>
<td>No Wait</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### For MORE Than 6 Months:
If you have or had this J visa category

- J-1 Student Non-Degree
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 12 Months

- J-1 Student
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 12 Months

- J-1 Specialist
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 12 Months

- J-1 Research Scholar/Professor Category for any amount of time (one day to five years)
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 24 Months

- J-2 Dependent of Research Scholar/Professor Category
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 24 Months

- J-2 Dependent of any J-1 category except Short-Term Scholar
  - Wait time for new J-1 Research Scholar/Professor visa: 12 Months

Source URL: [https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-scholars/understanding-j-1-status/understanding-the-12-and-24-month-bars](https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-scholars/understanding-j-1-status/understanding-the-12-and-24-month-bars)

Links:
[1] [https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-students/understanding-j-1-status/two-year-home-country-residence-requirement](https://oiss.yale.edu/immigration/j-1-students/understanding-j-1-status/two-year-home-country-residence-requirement)