

## Maintaining Lawful J-1 Student Immigration Status

All international students in J-1 Exchange Visitor status are obligated to meet certain immigration and Department of State (DOS) regulations in order to maintain their legal immigration status during their stay in the United States. To maintain your lawful J-1 status in the U. S., it is **each STUDENTs RESPONSIBILITY** to meet the important requirements listed below. Failure to maintain lawful immigration status may result in serious problems for you, such as the inability to continue studies at Regent University and the need to depart the United States. Questions regarding the rules and responsibilities of the J-1 immigration status, employment restrictions, and travel and reentry procedures, should be addressed to the OISS and not to any other office on campus.

1. **REPORT** to the International Student Services Office (OISS) **within 30 days** of the DS-2019 start date, **OR within 1 week** of your arrival at Regent, whichever comes first. You will need to bring your passport, DS-2019, I-94 Arrival/Departure Record, and local U.S. address.
2. **MAINTAIN FULL-TIME STATUS** each semester. For degree seeking students, full-time status is generally defined as 12 credit hours for undergraduate students, 9 credit hours for graduate students (MA/MS), 6 credit hours for doctoral/PhD students, 10 credit hours for law students (JD/JSD). Non-degree students must maintain the “prescribed course of study” which is typically defined in the linkage agreement with your university. (Students who drop out of school or who fail to carry a full course load without prior permission from Regent’s OISS will be in violation of their J-1 status.)
3. **STUDY** only at the institution authorized on your DS-2019.
4. **KEEP** your (and your dependents’) immigration documents **VALID** and **CURRENT** at all times by following these simple rules:
  - A) Maintain a valid **PASSPORT** which is current for at least six months into the future. (Passports may be revalidated or reissued in the U.S. at the appropriate embassy. You should contact your country’s embassy to find out how far in advance you can apply for a new passport and for guidance on the proper application procedures.)
  - B) Keep your **DS-2019** valid and up-to-date at all times. Make sure that your name is spelled correctly and that all information is correct. You should also check sections 3, 4, and 5 of the DS-2019 on a regular basis and notify the OISS immediately about any changes in your major, degree level, financial support, or program end-date. If necessary, you **MUST** apply for a program extension at least 30 days in advance of your DS-2019 end-date.
  - C) **FILE TIMELY** and **APPROPRIATE TRANSFER** and **EXTENSION REQUESTS** at least 30 days **BEFORE** the end date on your current DS-2019.
5. **MAINTAIN** the required **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE** for you and all of your J-2 dependents, which are listed in section (f) on page 2 of the DS-2019.

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6. **DO NOT WORK OR ENGAGE IN ANY TYPE OF TRAINING** on or off-campus **WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION** from the OISS. (On-campus employment is restricted to no more than 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters.)
7. **REPORT a CHANGE OF ADDRESS** to the University **within 5 days** of the change. (The University will report the change to the U.S. government through the SEVIS system.) The address reporting instructions are as follows:
  - ▶ During web-registration periods at the start of each term, all students are required to confirm or enter their correct addresses in Genisys during the web-registration process before they can register for classes. The U.S. address that you enter/confirm in Genisys during web-registration is the address that Regent is required to report to the government in SEVIS. It is your important responsibility to make sure your current U.S. address is listed correctly in Genisys during web-registration periods and at all other times as well.
  - ▶ If your address changes during the middle of the semester/outside of web-registration periods, you must report the new address to **TWO** separate offices **WITHIN 5 DAYS** of the change: the **OISS** AND the **Registrar's Office**. Students can still use Genisys to report the new address to the Registrar's Office outside of web-registration periods, and should use the "Information Change Form" on the OISS website to report the change to the Office of International Student Services.
8. **NOTIFY** the OISS **PRIOR TO** any **PERMANENT DEPARTURES** from the U.S. as a J-1 student.
9. **LEAVE** the United States **within the 30 day grace period** of the program end-date on your DS-2019, or within 30 days of your actual completion date, whichever comes first.

### **OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES:**

10. **BEFORE TRAVELING** outside the United States for a temporary departure, you should contact the OISS to make sure you have the proper reentry documents & signatures.
11. **NOTIFY THE OISS** if you plan to change your immigration status.

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### *Special Notes:*

**OISS Website:** Additional immigration related information and request forms (for an I-20/DS-2019 Travel Signature, Dependent DS-2019, Request for a New DS-2019, etc.) are available on the OISS website at: [www.regent.edu/iss](http://www.regent.edu/iss)

▶ **Weekly Email Messages, Monthly Newsletters, and Student Responsibility:** The OISS newsletters and email messages contain important immigration information that you will need to know for maintaining your lawful J-1 status, so you are expected to read them carefully. If, for any reason, you are not receiving the newsletters or the weekly email messages, it is YOUR responsibility to inform the OISS immediately.

▶ **Immigration/Employment/Travel Related Questions:** If you have any questions or uncertainties about your responsibilities for maintaining your lawful J-1 status, the SEVIS reporting requirements, restrictions on working in the U.S., travel outside the U.S., or if you think you may need to apply for a reinstatement to lawful status, please visit the OISS (Student Center, Room 201) as soon as possible. No other office on campus can assist you with these questions.

▶ **SEVIS Reporting:** All U.S. institutions that sponsor J-1 Exchange Visitors (students, professors, etc.) are required to report various types of information to the government electronically through a system called SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). The information includes, but is not limited to: address changes, violations of status, failure to maintain required health insurance, failure to maintain full-time status, etc.