

# U.S. Department of Energy Exchange Visitor Program G-3-00348

## Welcome to the Department of Energy Exchange Visitor Program!

This is to give pre-arrival information that you will need to successfully plan your visit to the United States, and to help you understand the terms and conditions of your upcoming exchange assignment at the U.S. Department of Energy facility or National Laboratory, to which you are assigned. Please check this information immediately. If you have questions, please contact the Host or Responsible Officer referenced below.

## Pre-Arrival Information

You will reside in the Metro Denver Area and fulfill your exchange visitor program assignment at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). Each DOE program Exchange Visitor at NREL is assigned a host who will provide guidance and information to enable a productive exchange visit.

In addition, the following individual(s) at the site are available to assist you with any concerns regarding your stay.

**Name: Stephanie Padgett, Foreign National Affairs Administrator,**  
[Stephanie.Padgett@nrel.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Padgett@nrel.gov), 303-275-4226.

**Name:** Chris Mullane, DOE Alternate Responsible Officer for the DOE Exchange Visitors Visa Program, [Christopher.Mullane@ee.doe.gov](mailto:Christopher.Mullane@ee.doe.gov), 720-356-1728.

Upon your arrival in the United States, please notify **Stephanie Padgett at 303-275-4226**.

This individual will advise you where (at the site) to report initially. U.S. immigration law requires that you report to your exchange assignment within **10 days** after your arrival in the United States. It is critical that you bring your passport and your **DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visit**, when your report.

### Purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program

The broad purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program is to promote international education and cultural exchange in order to develop mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. Exchange programs exist in a variety of formats and permit visitors to come to this country for a wide range of activities. The DOE Exchange Visitor Program sponsors assignments as Research Scholars, Short-term

Scholars, Government Visitors, and Specialists to provide opportunities for study and scientific research. Exchange Visitors come to this country for a specific objective, such as a program of study, or research project with time frames that vary from six months to five years, as determined by the Exchange Visitor Category and the requirements of the sponsoring organization.

### **Your Visa and Pre-Arrival Information**

Your visa documents indicate approval for you to enter the United States for purposes of this exchange assignment under the provisions of the Exchange Visitor Program. The Form DS-2019 “*Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status*” indicates that you have been officially invited and are qualified to participate in this program. **You are required to read page two of form DS-2019. If you agree to the conditions that apply to an exchange visitor, please complete the “Exchange Visitor Certification” at the bottom of page one, prior to presentation to a United States Consular or Immigration Official.** The Consular Officer will return the form to you and you will present it again to an Immigration Inspector at the point of entry to the United States. The Inspector will stamp the DS-2019 and return it to you, you will need to print your I-94 Departure Record as soon as possible:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html;jsessionid=BZ3JVvrQ11vJhhsTRHKVlynlKwP2w2sjn0tDZb7tbCxPz23vjnJv!1358670245>

At the port of entry to the U.S. you will be required to comply with US-VISIT biometric entry procedures, such as digital, inkless finger scans and a digital photo. It is a fast and simple process.

**It is important that you keep the DS-2019 document and I-94 with your passport (valid for 6 months beyond the anticipated start date of assignment) with visa. They are your only proof of your J-1 visa status.** You will need them for such purposes as extending your permission to stay in the United States, reentry to this country after temporary trips abroad during the period of validity of the J-1 visa; or work permission (if applicable).

Included is a copy of the Information Sheet, “What a student or exchange visitor can expect upon arrival at a U.S. Port of Entry.” Distributed by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office, it may help you prepare for your visit to the United States.

Please note that exchange visitors must notify their Responsible Officer that they have arrive in the United States within 10 days after the “Program Begin Date” listed on the form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor J-1 Status, after you read the Exchange Visitor Certification statement (on page 2 of your DS-2019), please sign the bottom of the DS-2019, page 1.

You should coordinate all Exchange Visitor Program communications and activities through your contact at the hosting organization. We look forward to your visit to the United States and the Department of Energy and its National Laboratories.

## **New Insurance Requirements as of January 1, 2015**

**Proof of Medical Insurance for healthcare and repatriation of remains are required, as a condition of your exchange visitor (J-1) status in the United States. Sponsors must inform all exchange visitors that they, and any accompanying spouse and dependent(s), may be subject to the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.**

This applies to all exchange visitors and their dependents. By government regulation, minimum coverage must provide the following: up to **\$100,000** per person accident or illness; repatriation of remains in the amount of **\$25,000** and expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of **\$50,000**. A deductible, not to exceed **\$500.00** per accident or illness. It is the exchange visitor's responsibility to obtain appropriate medical insurance coverage for the duration of the exchange visit assignment.

### **The Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement**

*Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and Public Law 94-484*

Exchange Visitors whose programs are financed in whole or in part, directly or indirectly by either their government or by the U.S. Government, are required to reside in their home-country for two years following completion of their program before they are eligible for immigrant status or temporary worker status. Also, if the exchange visitor is acquiring a skill which is in short supply in their home country, they will be subject to the two-year home-country presence requirement. Many of the Department of Energy Exchange Visitors are "subject to the 2-year home country requirement." The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that the home country benefits from the Exchange Visitor's experience in the United States. The home-country physical presence requirement is intended to prevent a participant from staying longer than necessary for the purpose of the collaboration, and to ensure that he or she will spend at least two years in their home country before coming back to the United States to apply for immigrant alien status. For the terms of this requirement, please see Page two, 1. (a) of the Form DS-2019. The U.S. Department of State makes the final determinations regarding who is subject to INA Section 212(e).

NOTE: If you have questions regarding the terms of your exchange visitor assignment please contact your host or the Responsible Officer listed below. If you decide not to participate in the DOE Exchange Visitor Program, please notify your host or the Responsible Officer and return the original Form DS-2019 "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status" to the following address:

Debra A. Hunter  
Responsible Officer, G-3-00348  
Office of Travel Management  
Office of Administration  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20585  
Telephone: (202) 586-4526  
Fax: 202-586-0406  
[Debra.hunter@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Debra.hunter@hq.doe.gov)

## **New Exchange Visitor Orientation**

The schedule of your orientation as a New Exchange Visitor at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will be provided to you upon reporting to NREL.

Orientation will consist of both formal and informal activities to insure your understanding and comfort during this assignment.

- (1) Life and customs in the United States;
- (2) Local community resources (e.g., public transportation, medical centers, schools, libraries, recreation centers, and banks), to the fullest extent possible;
- (3) Available healthcare, emergency assistance, and health insurance coverage;
- (4) A description of the exchange visitor program in which the exchange visitor is participating such as information on the length and location of the program, including housing and transportation information. *Please refer to your orientation letter and the following Web link:*  
<http://www.nrel.gov/careers/visas-immigration.html>

## **Responsibilities of Exchange Visitor**

**Throughout the duration of your stay in the United States as an Exchange Visitor in J-1 Visa status you are required to comply with applicable U.S. law, federal regulations, and government policies.**

**All Exchange Visitor Program participants must comply with federal Exchange Visitor Program Regulations, (22 CFR Part 62), in addition to applicable regulatory requirements for exchange visitors issued by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services “USCIS” and Department of Energy policy, program and procedural requirements.**

When you agree to participate in an Exchange Visitor Program, you incur the following responsibilities:

1. Notify your host of your arrival within days of entering the United States.
2. Ensure that your host notifies the DOE Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer of your arrival within **10 days** of the begin date of your exchange assignment.
3. Notify the host or their designee of any change in address and/or telephone number, and email address, while participating in this exchange program. **This includes all dependents.**
4. Prior to any travel outside the U.S., all Exchange Visitors must have their Travel Validated by the Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer on the Form DS-2019 that they continue to be in good standing in the exchange program. This

validation will enable the exchange visitor's readmission to the United States after travel to another country other than a contiguous territory or adjacent islands.

5. Maintain the required amount of medical insurance for the J-1 visa holder and each dependent, throughout the duration of the J-1's exchange assignment.

6. Notify host and/or Responsible Officer of any situation involving personal injury, death, or U.S. law enforcement intervention.

7. Fulfillment of your designated Exchange Visitor Assignment.

8. Maintain Exchange Visitor Status

### **Termination of Program Participation**

Exchange Visitor Program Regulations list certain conditions as grounds for termination of an exchange visitor's participation in the program. (Ref. 22 CFR 62.40 Termination of Program Participation) The following excerpt from the regulations is included here to help you avoid these pitfalls during your assignment.

#### **62.40 Termination of Program Participation**

- (a) A sponsor shall terminate an exchange visitor's participation in its program when the Exchange Visitor:
  - (1) Fails to pursue the activities for which he or she was admitted to the United States;
  - (2) Is unable to continue, unless otherwise exempted pursuant to these regulations;
  - (3) Violates the Exchange Visitor Program regulations and/or the sponsor's rules governing the program, if in the sponsor's opinion, termination is warranted;
  - (4) Willfully fails to maintain the insurance coverage required under § 62.40 of these regulations; or
- (b) An exchange visitor's participation in the Exchange Visitor Program is subject to termination when he or she engages in unauthorized employment. Upon establishing such violation, the Department of State shall terminate the exchange visitor's participation in the Exchange Visitor Program.

### **Cost of Living Information**

Cost of Living information will vary according to geographic location and DOE site, and prior terms of agreement regarding the exchange assignment.

[http://www.nrel.gov/extranet/international\\_services/](http://www.nrel.gov/extranet/international_services/)

## **Financial Requirements**

The following is the list of financial requirements for J-1 Exchange Visitors:

- Evidence of funds to cover expenses in the U.S must be provided.
- J-1 exchange visitors must demonstrate adequate financial support for the entire period of stay in the US. The J-1 principal will also need to budget for additional family members who accompany them in the J2 dependent status.
  - Financial support may be any combination of personal funds, and/or third party organization funds, i.e. fellowships, scholarships, grants, etc.

## **Monitoring of Exchange Visitors**

Exchange visitors' participation in their exchange program must be monitored by employees of the sponsor. Monitoring activities must not include any retaliation or discrimination against exchange visitors who make adverse comments related to the program. No sponsor or employee of the sponsor may threaten program termination , remove from the program, ban from the program, adversely annotate an exchange visitor's SEVIS record, or otherwise retaliate against an exchange visitor solely because he/she has filed a complaint; instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding; testified or is about to testify; consulted with an advocacy organization, community organization, legal assistance program or attorney about a grievance or other work-related legal matter; or exercised any work-related legal matter; or exercised or asserted on behalf of himself/herself any right or protection.

***We hope your visit and stay with us will be both pleasant and productive.***