

Summer Work & Travel USA

Know your rights

We are confident that you will have a rewarding stay in the United States. However, if bad situations happen, you have rights and you can get help!

You have the right to:

- ★ Be paid fairly
- ★ Be free from discrimination
- ★ Be free from sexual harassment and sexual exploitation
- ★ Have a healthy and safe workplace
- ★ Request help from union, immigrant, and/or labor rights groups
- ★ Leave an abusive employment situation
- ★ Prior to travel, please review the information pamphlet describing your rights while working in the United States:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce/Wilberforce-ENG-100116.pdf>

IF YOU ARE MISTREATED, CONTACT THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE AT 1-888-373-7888 (WITHIN THE UNITED STATES), TEXT "HELP" TO 233733 (WITHIN THE UNITED STATES) OR EMAIL nhtrc@polarisproject.org



How long before my J-1 program's start date can I arrive in the United States?

How long can I remain after my program ends?

You may not arrive more than 30 days before the program start date shown on your DS-2019. Upon completion of your exchange program, you have a grace period of 30 days to depart the United States.

Who should I contact if I have a question or concern about my exchange visitor program?

Contact your designated sponsor, whose name and telephone number is listed on Form DS-2019.

Can I switch jobs once I am in the United States?

Please check with your sponsor for changes in your employment. If you change jobs without the permission of your sponsor, your status in the program may be terminated.

*If your program is terminated, you must leave the United States immediately.

What is a Designated Sponsor?

Your official sponsor in the United States is who issues your DS-2019, whose name and telephone numbers is listed on Form DS-2019.

What is "SEVIS"?

SEVIS means: "Student and Exchange Visitor Information System". This system tracks participants in the J-1 Visa categories during their stay in the United States. All students must register within 10 days of arriving in the United States and every 30 days thereafter. You must report to your sponsor within 10 days if you change your job, housing addresses, telephone numbers, and/or email addresses.

Can my sponsor extend my visa?

No. Your sponsor cannot extend your program after you have arrived in the United States. Your visa was approved by the U.S. embassy in your home country based on the official summer vacation dates of your university and your original vetted job offer.

What happens if I do not update my SEVIS information with my sponsor?

If you fail to update your sponsor with your current address, phone number, and employer information, your program will be terminated. If your program is terminated, you may jeopardize your future chances of being able to re-enter the United States. It is a matter of national security for the Department of Homeland Security to know where you are living and working at all times. Not reporting your information is a serious violation.

How do I apply for a Social Security Card?

All first-time applicants of the Summer Work & Travel J-1 program must apply for a Social Security card. Only if you have obtained a Social Security Number in the past, through a previous U.S. visa, are you exempt from this requirement. In this case, you can use the same card/number again.

Can I be placed with my friend/partner?

This depends on the host company and is handled on a case-specific basis. This is usually allowed, but please understand that your Summer Work & Travel Program contract is with the host company, not with your friend/partner.

How does the employer arrange pay and benefits?

Summer Work & Travel students receive appropriate pay and the required workman's compensation coverage from their jobs. Host employers are required to fairly compensate participants for their work, and "shall compensate participants with pay and benefits commensurate with those offered to their American counterparts".

What if I'm injured on the job?

All job-related injuries are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance. Your employer should refer to their Workers' Compensation policy.

What should I do if I lose my passport or other documents?

If you lose your passport or visa, go to your closest local police station and file a police report. Then contact your nearest Embassy or Consulate as soon as possible so that they can assist you in obtaining new documentation. If you lose your DS-2019 Form, please contact your sponsor.

If you lose your Social Security card, you can apply for a replacement card at the local Social Security Office. To prevent identity theft, do not share your Social Security number or other personal ID information with anyone other than your employer, or authorized persons only when absolutely necessary (e.g. opening a bank account).

What if I don't want to work anymore, and would just prefer to travel to the United States, is this okay?

The visa you entered on is specific to the J-1 Summer Work & Travel program. You are expected to work while you are in the United States. If you decide you no longer wish to work in the United States, this will terminate your work program in SEVIS and you must return home. You cannot spend more than 30 days travelling in the United States after your SEVIS is terminated.