

Date: June 22, 2020
Subject: Special Extension for Student Interns

Dear Sponsors:

The Department of State (Department) appreciates your continued efforts to address the health, safety, and welfare concerns of your exchange visitors during this challenging time. In order to help sponsors manage the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 crisis, this email contains important information regarding an optional, one-time opportunity to seek an extension of program participation beyond the maximum duration for student interns to make up for the time missed on their exchange programs because of the COVID-19 situation.

Due to the extreme challenges that COVID-19 has presented for travel and other aspects of our exchanges, the Department wants to confirm to sponsors and host organizations that it expects to look favorably upon sponsors' requests pursuant to 22 CFR § 62.43(c) to extend the programs for student interns beyond maximum duration for the time lost due to COVID-19. Such extensions will allow exchange visitors to complete their programs as described in their Training/Internship Placement Plans (T/IPPs). This initiative recognizes that events due to COVID-19-related issues interrupted internship programs.

To pursue extensions beyond maximum duration under 22 CFR § 62.43(c), sponsors must reassess the eligibility of both exchange visitors and their host organizations. Once sponsors have determined which student interns wish to complete their programs, they can reach out to host organizations to determine which student internships can resume. All three parties should sign new T/IPPs that reflect extended dates and, if appropriate, changes in phases.

Next, sponsors should submit requests for one-time extensions in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) for all interested and eligible student interns. Sponsors should continue to monitor SEVIS records and apply for extensions prior to exchange visitors' program end dates, if possible. Finally, student intern sponsors must submit an extension request and justification for each exchange visitor to AGExchanges@state.gov by **August 15, 2020**. Extension requests must include updated T/IPPs and a completed "Student Intern extension request" Excel spreadsheet (see attachment). This spreadsheet provides the following information for each exchange visitor: (1) SEVIS identification number, (2) full name (last name, first name), (3) date of birth, (4) country of citizenship, (5) sponsor program number, (6) the requested program end date, and (7) Pay.gov receipt for the \$367 extension fee.

Once the Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation has granted extension requests for one or more eligible exchange visitors, sponsors should reprint Forms DS-2019 for those exchange visitors whose programs are extended and provide them with updated and signed forms as soon as possible. In addition, sponsors should update the T/IPPs in SEVIS to reflect either new or updated training phases and provide updated copies to exchange visitors and host organizations.

The Department is continuing to monitor closely the COVID-19 situation and its effect on the Exchange Visitor Program. We will supplement this guidance with additional information and/or will adjust our guidance, as needed.

Once again, thank you for your work, patience, and understanding as we navigate through these unprecedented times together.

Sincerely,

Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation

Academic and Government Programs

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State



Please visit our website at <http://j1visa.state.gov>

Exchange Visitor Program Regulations (22 CFR Part 62)