Change of a Site of Activity for a J-1 Scholars

What is a Site of Activity?

A site of activity is the name and address of the location where an Exchange Visitor (EV) will conduct their program activities. All EVs must have a primary site of activity listed in their SEVIS record. Additional sites must be added when an EV requests a change of site or will engage in activities at more than one location.

General Guidelines Regarding the Site of Activity:

You must request and receive approval for a change in your site of activity (site) before beginning a program objective at a different site. A change in your site without prior approval may have an adverse impact on your immigration status. If you are found eligible for a change, your SEVIS record will be updated, and a new DS-2019 will be issued.

Please note:

- There must be a relationship between a site of activity and your original program objectives. Failing to maintain that objective is a violation of your program immigration status. Generally, you should continue your original program objective even after a change of site.
- Your primary site of activity and program objectives can be found in section #1 (site of activity) and section #4 (subject/field code and remarks) of your DS-2019. The subject/field code and remarks should always reflect your current program objectives.

Eligibility for a Change of Site of Activity:

- Receive an invitation to continue your program objectives at a new site of activity.
- Submit proof that the objective at the new site is related to or a progression of your original program objectives.
- Submit proof that any change in funding and/or your health insurance meets the minimum requirements for your immigration status.

How to Apply for a Change to my Primary Site of Activity?

Please submit the Change of Site of Activity E-form using the iStart link found at www.isss.utah.edu. Please be prepared to submit the following information in the E-form:

- Description of the research/program activities conducted at the current site of activity
- Description of the research/program activities that will be conducted at the new site of activity
- Description of how the research/program activities at the new site is related to or is a progression of the research/program activities conducted at the current site.
- Offer letter disclosing the new location, name, and contact information of your supervisor, and a brief description of the research/program activities at the new site.

Please Note: This policy is for J-1 Scholars only (Research Scholar, Professor, Short-term Scholar, Student Intern, and Specialist. If you are a J-1 Student, please refer to the J-1 Student Policies and Forms.)

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Frequently Asked Questions:

1. **What if I have already changed my site of activity and didn’t inform ISSS?**
   A change of site without prior approval by ISSS may have serious consequences for your immigration status. Please make an appointment with a J-1 Scholar Advisor to discuss your options.

2. **What if my program objective at the new site is unrelated to my original program objective?**
   ISSS will make an assessment not only based on the **program objectives**, such as finding a cure for cancer, but also on the type of **activity**, such as biomedical research, when determining whether to make, accept, or permit a change.

3. **Can I depart the U.S. and re-enter on a new DS-2019 if I am not allowed to change my site of activity based on my current DS-2019?**
   In most cases, a departure such as this may be seen as a completion of the current EV program and could trigger the 24 month bar on a repeat visit for those in the **Research Scholar** and **Professor** category. Please make an appointment with a J-1 Scholar Advisor before considering this option.

4. **What if my Primary Investigator (PI) or supervisor is the only change?**
   A change such as this should be fine as long as there is no change in your program objective. If there is a change, it should be one that is related to or a progression of the original **program objectives**.

5. **What if my EV program is shortened because of a loss of funding and a change of site is the only way to remain at the U of U?**
   There may be circumstances where this option is allowed. Please make an appointment with a J-1 Scholar Advisor to discuss this option.

6. **What if there is a change to my funding related to the new site of activity?**
   Along with other information related to a change in your site of activity, you must provide an update related to any change in the amount and/or source of funding. This information is necessary, listed on your DS-2019, and must be reported to ISSS within 10 days of the change. Be aware that the source of funding, such as funds provided by a foreign or U.S. government for the purpose of international exchange, may subject you to the 212(e) home residency requirement.

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