

The 12 and 24-Month Bar

12-Month Bar

Exchange Visitors (EVs) and dependents who have been in the U.S. in any **J visa status** (including J-2 status) for any part of the **12-month** period preceding a program **begin date** for a **new EV program** in both the **Professor** or **Research Scholar** category, will not be eligible for the **Professor** or **Research Scholar** categories.

Note: The 12-month bar does not prevent individuals from returning to the U.S. in any other visa status or in another J visa category, such as Short-Term Scholar or College/University student. It is primarily a “bar” or a 12 month wait, before one is allowed to participate in a new EV program in the **Professor** or **Research Scholar** category.

There are **three exceptions to the 12-month bar** rule:

1. **J-1 transfers:** EVs who will begin a new program by **transferring** to a new program sponsor.
2. **Presence in J status of less than 6 months:** EVs whose prior physical presence in **J visa status** was **less than six months** in duration based on their I-94 arrival/departure record.
3. **Presence in J status as a Short-Term Scholar:** Time spent in the U.S. in the Short-Term Scholar category does not trigger the 12-month bar.

12-Month bar Examples:

- A **non-degree student** or **student intern** in the U.S. in J-1 status for **less than 6 months** based on their I-94 arrival/departure record, will not be subject to the 12-month bar
- A **dependent** who spent time in the U.S. in **J-2 status for less than 6 months** based on their I-94 arrival/departure record, will not be subject to the 12-month bar
- A student visiting for an internship who spent 8 months in the US in the **student intern category** will be subject to the 12-month bar
- A student visiting for one or more exchange semesters in the **student non-degree category** will be subject to the 12-month bar

24-Month Bar

Exchange Visitors who participate in the “J-1” **Professor** or **Research Scholar** category, regardless of the amount of time spent in those categories, will be subject to what is known as the **24-month bar**. The 24-month bar prevents “**repeat participation**” in the **Professor** and **Research Scholar** category for a period of 24 months. Although someone can eventually return to the U.S. in the **Professor** or **Research Scholar** category, anyone subject to the 24-month bar must wait 24 months before a returning in **those two categories** based on the date of the completion of their exchange visitor program. The bar also applies to **J-2 dependents**, based on the program completion of the primary J-1 exchange visitor’s program completion.

When a Research Scholar or Professor completes their program, or ends their program early, the 24-month bar period begins to accrue. The bar is **based on participation** in the Research Scholar or Professor Category, not on the time period spent in the EV program.

In order for ISSS to properly maintain your SEVIS record and advise on the 24-month bar, we should be notified upon early completion of your research or teaching program, or if there will be an extended period of time spent outside of the U.S. (30 days or more). If you will be outside the U.S. for longer than 30 days, please review our [Temporary Out of Country Absence Policy Guide](#) for more information, or make an appointment with a J-1 Scholar Advisor to discuss your situation.

Note: The 24-month bar **does not** prevent individuals from returning to the U.S. in another visa status, or in any other J-1 visa category. **The 24-month bar is not a home residency requirement.**

24-Month bar Examples:

- A **Research Scholar** or **Professor** completes their research program in 3 months **will be** subject to the 24-month bar.
- A dependent (in J-2 “status”) of an EV in the **Research Scholar** or **Professor** category for 5 months **will be** subject to the 24-month bar based on their J-1 Exchange Visitor spouse or parent’s participation in the **Professor** or **Research Scholar** category.
- A **Professor** that transfers to the University of Utah from another university in the U.S., **will be** subject to the 24-month bar upon completion of their program.

24-Month Bar compared to the Two-Year Home Residency Requirement 212(e)

The 24-month bar is a different visa regulation from the **two-year home residency requirement**, also known as **212(e)**. 212(e) may apply to visitors in any J visa category, while the 24-month bar only applies to EVs in the **Research Scholar** or **Professor** category, and their dependents of someone in the Research Scholar or Professor category.

Note: An EV can be subject to one while not being subject to the other, or can be subject to both (the 24-month bar and the 212(e) home residency requirement at the same time). For more information on the 212(e) home residency requirement, please see our [212\(e\) Policy Guide](#).

Disclaimer: International Student & Scholar Services provides support and information related to U.S. immigration laws and regulations related to F and J status. ISSS staff are not attorneys and any information provided by us should not be construed as legal advice. Individuals are welcome to consult a qualified immigration attorney for specific legal advice, particularly in complicated cases. For a list of local Utah attorneys please visit our website [here](#).