

J-1 Program: Holiday Closing Announcement (DEC 25th - JAN 2nd):

The American Immigration Council offices will be closed starting on Christmas Day, December 25, 2013 and will reopen on January 2, 2014. During this closing, it is important that you know how to reach the International Exchange Center staff in the event of an urgent situation:

If you have an urgent concern during the holiday break, you may contact Lois Magee (Responsible Officer) at (202) 329-3690. We will be checking the J1Program@immcouncil.org [1] email inbox daily, so we will attempt to reply to the urgent emails that we receive during the break.

During that week, we will not be processing J-1 applications, signing documents, performing site visits, or responding to inquiries, except for those urgent issues that come from our J-1 Participants.

For those of our J-1 Trainee and Intern participants who will be traveling during the holidays, it is important that you travel with all of the necessary documents, so that you are admitted to the US when you arrive from your trips abroad. Make sure you travel with:

1. Your unexpired Passport with a **valid** J-1 visa stamped inside. IMPORTANT: Make sure your J-1 visa will not expire before you return to the United States. If your visa expiration date has passed or will pass before you return to the United States, you will need to apply for a new J-1 visa at a US Consulate in your country of residence BEFORE you return to the US to continue your J-1 program. Also, make sure your passport will not expire while you are outside the US.
2. Your DS 2019 with the Travel Validation By Responsible Officer field signed. Make sure you have obtained a Travel Validation Signature on your DS 2019, and the date above the signature will not expire before you return to the United States. For information on the process for obtaining a Travel Validation, please download and read the [Travel Validation Request Form](#) [2]. In order to obtain the signature, you must send us your DS 2019 form in the mail to our office, located at:

**American Immigration Council
International Exchange Center
1331 G Street NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005**

If you will travel in less than two weeks, please send us a self-addressed and paid return envelope in the envelope with the Travel Validation Request form and your DS 2019, so that we can deliver the form to you before you depart the United States.

If you travel without your documents, or without obtaining the Travel Validation signature on your DS 2019, you may be admitted into the US and placed into 515(a) status. This means that you will be admitted in the US for 30-days on the condition that you will send your DS 2019 and related documents to the [Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)](#) [3] at the Department of Homeland Security. For more info on 515(a), visit this [webpage](#) [4].

515(a) is a huge hassle! So please travel with all the necessary documents.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at J1Program@immcouncil.org [1].

Thank you and Happy Holidays!!!

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-The International Exchange Center Staff

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Links:

[1] <mailto:J1Program@immcouncil.org>

[2] http://www.internationalexchangecenter.org/sites/default/files/docs/iec/Travel_Validation_Request_Form.pdf

[3] <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/about/sevp>

[4] <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/515a>