

## Orientation Guide

- What can I expect when I arrive to the United States?
  - Within the first 10 days of your arrival in the U.S. you must send a photocopy of your J-1 visa, Form DS-2019 (front and back), Exchange Visitor Arrival Notice, and the Record of Admission confirmation page ([www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94)) to [pike@italchamber.org](mailto:pike@italchamber.org). This information will be used to validate your internship/traineeship in the United States Department of State Student/Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).
  - You MUST contact the IACC to update your phone number, email address, U.S. address, or your site of activity within three days of any changes. Please send all updates to [pike@italchamber.org](mailto:pike@italchamber.org).
- Customs and Border Protection at your port of entry
  - When you enter the country as a nonimmigrant, a U.S. immigration inspector examines your passport, J-1 visa, and DS-2019. In addition, exchange visitors entering the United States are now required to undergo additional inspection. Please be patient and be prepared to answer all questions clearly and fully. You should be ready to explain that you are coming to the U.S. for a cultural exchange program, after which point you plan to leave the U.S.
  - Customs officials in the airport will no longer provide a hard copy of the I-94 (white immigration card). Instead, you will receive an annotated admission stamp in your passport, which validates your arrival with the DHS. This stamp will indicate your Date of Entry, Duration of Stay (D/S), and Class of Admission (J-1/J-2).
  - This annotated admission stamp will allow you to remain in the United States for the length of time specified on the Certificate of Eligibility, plus 30 days as a tourist after the expiration of the DS-2019. It also proves that you arrived in the country legally.
- Exchange Visitor Welfare
  - As a J-1 Visa Sponsor, the IACC is responsible for the health, welfare and safety of our Exchange Visitors. It is important to always keep the IACC updated on any and all changes to your contact information.
  - Please also keep in mind that the IACC is your **primary point of contact** for any questions or concerns pertaining to your program, including the stipend amount, hours per week or training, nature of training, safety, and work culture, among others.



Italy-America  
Chamber of  
Commerce

- o For any issue or question that arises during your program, please contact Siena Pike by email at [pike@italchamber.org](mailto:pike@italchamber.org) and by phone at 212-459-0044, or, Federico Tozzi, the Responsible Officer, by email at [info@italchamber.org](mailto:info@italchamber.org). The offices of the IACC are located at 11 E 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1400, New York, NY 10017. Please note that all meetings are by appointment only. You must call to make an appointment before visiting our office in order to ensure that a J-1 visa specialist is available to meet with you.
- o In the event of an emergency outside of regular business hours, our emergency contact number is 646-461-7186. A serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate assistance constitutes a true emergency.
- Cost of Living and Accommodations
  - o Your living expenses during your training program will depend on the city/state where you are located. However, there are some general expenses that you should consider for your monthly budget. Some of these living expenses include transportation (private or public), rent, phone, utilities (gas, electricity, water), leisure activities, and, of course, food. To see an approximate cost of living in a city near your training program, [click here](#). Keep in mind that Americans typically do not spend more than 30% of their pre-tax income on rent.
  - o Looking for housing is a difficult task for anyone in a new city. Many young people choose to share a space with roommates in order to save money. Others choose to find a host family to experience an American family dynamic. Hotels can be rather expensive, and it is not recommended to stay more than a few nights upon arrival in a hotel unless your company is paying for your stay. Ask the IACC and your HR department, as well as any current trainees or interns at your host company, for advice.
  - o Be careful: There are many scams on the internet and we strongly discourage you from sending any money via check, wire transfer, credit card, etc. before you have seen the apartment and have a signed contract. Do some research and ask your HR department for recommendations for affordable and safe neighborhoods.
  - o Housing Requirements:
    - Your housing must be no more than 50 miles from your site of activity.
    - Your housing must be accessible to public transportation.
  - o The following is a list of resources that may be helpful in finding short-term housing: [orbitz.com](http://orbitz.com), [hostelworld.com](http://hostelworld.com), [homestay.com](http://homestay.com), [unhousing.com](http://unhousing.com), [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com)



- o The following is a list of resources that may be helpful in finding long-term housing: craigslist.org, easyroommate.com, apartments.com, padmapper.com
- Health Insurance
  - o The Exchange Visitors under IACC sponsorship are enrolled in a GlobalSecutive health insurance plan, which meets the requirements as set forth by the U.S. Department of State. If an Exchange Visitor wishes, they may also purchase additional insurance or opt-in to their employer-based health insurance as their secondary plan. However, the coverage provided through the IACC GlobalSecutive plan must remain the primary coverage plan because it contains specific coverage (for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains) which is required by the Department of State and is NOT part of a traditional employer-based health insurance plan.
- Emergency Resources
  - o In case of serious emergency such as fire, crime or medical emergency, **dial 911** and you will be transferred directly to an emergency services dispatcher in your area. It is free to dial 911 from any personal phone or public payphone.
  - o If you become severely ill or have an accident, you must notify your host company and the IACC immediately. In the event of an emergency outside of regular business hours, our emergency contact number is **646-461-7186**.
  - o A serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate assistance constitutes an emergency. The Exchange Visitor Emergency Hotline number listed below is for use by exchange visitors and third parties in the case of **urgent** situations. A Department of State representative is available 24 hours a day.

**Exchange Visitor Emergency Hotline:** 1-866-283-9090

**Exchange Visitor Email Address:** Jvisas@state.gov

**Exchange Visitor Program Website:** www.J1Visa.state.gov

**National Human Trafficking Resource Center:** 1-888-373-7888