

**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE OFFICE OF GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
FOREIGN NATIONALS AND INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

DEFINITIONS (AS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT)

Educational Commission on Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG): ECFMG is a private, non-profit organization established to:

- provide information to and answer inquiries of IMGs planning to come to the United States for GME;
- evaluate IMGs' credentials, knowledge of medicine, and command of English; and
- certify that IMGs have met certain medical education and examination requirements.

Certification by ECFMG is the standard for evaluating the qualifications of International medical graduates (IMGs) before they enter U.S. graduate medical education (GME), where they provide supervised patient care. ECFMG Certification also is a requirement for IMGs to take Step 3 of the three-step United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) and to obtain an unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States. (From <https://www.ecfm.org/about/index.html>, accessed September 4, 2020)

ECFMG also administers the Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program (EVSP), which sponsors J-1 visas for the purpose of participation in a U.S. accredited training program. For more information and a complete listing of services provided to assist IMGs, please go to the ECFMG website www.ECFMG.org or contact Kathy Sandman in the GME Office.

Employment Authorization Documents (EAD): A document issued by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). See <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/information-for-employers-and-employees/employer-information/employment-authorization> for more information.

International medical graduates (IMGs): A physician who has graduated from a medical school outside of the United States or Canada.

POLICY

1. Individual programs may limit the amount of time they will hold a position open for applicants to obtain appropriate immigration status.

ECFMG Certificate Requirement for IMGs

2. All graduates of medical schools outside of the United States or Canada must have a valid ECFMG certificate to train in University of Louisville residency programs.
3. Certificates must be current on the date that the resident begins training.

Foreign Nationals Employment Authorizations/Immigration Status

4. Foreign medical residents may train using a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) or Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) or by obtaining an accepted visa status.
 - a. **Visas Accepted:**
 - i. **J1 Clinical Visa:** The University of Louisville School of Medicine utilizes the J1 visa for residency training. Eligibility criteria for the J1 visa include ECFMG sponsorship and acceptance into an ACGME-accredited Residency or fellowship program or any program approved by the ECFMG.
 - i. Residents sponsored on J1 visas are not allowed to moonlight or earn any income for activities that are not a part of their training program.
 - ii. The GME office must be notified if any of the following occurs with a physician who is sponsored on a J1 visa:
 - **Offsite rotation or elective**
 - **Leave of absence**
 - **Resignation from program**
 - **Dismissal from program**

- **Remediation (academic probation, whether or not a training extension is required)**
- **Incident or allegation (death, missing, sustains a serious illness or injury, litigation, incident involving the criminal justice system, sexually related incident or abuse, negative press, etc.)**

b. Visas Not Accepted:

- i. **H1B Visas:** Because residents are classified as students at the University of Louisville, the University does not sponsor H1B visas for residency training.
 - ii. **J2 Dependent Visas:** J2 dependent visas are not accepted for residency training. These individuals must obtain their own J1 visa status.
 - iii. **J1 Research Visa:** The J1 research visa does not allow the clinical activity required for residency training programs. Those applicants currently sponsored on the J1 Research visa must apply for a change of category to J1 Clinical, which requires Department of State approval.
5. It is the resident's responsibility to see that these documents are renewed when appropriate; allowing these documents to expire can result in a lapse in training.
 6. The GME office must have a copy of the unexpired document on file in order for the resident to train and be paid.
 7. All residents training on visas are required to provide a copy of their most recent I-94 in order to begin training.

PROCEDURE

J1 Visa Application and Renewal Instructions

1. The Training Program Liaison initiates the application. The applicant submits the application and coordinates with the TPL to submit required documents.
2. Under normal circumstances applications take 4-6 weeks to be approved, but it is recommended that applications be sent as early as possible to avoid delay due to unforeseen complications.
3. Applications for initial sponsorship should be submitted no more than 90 days before the beginning of training.
4. Applications for continuing sponsorship should be submitted no more than 60 days before the beginning of the next training year..

Foreign Nationals Employment Authorizations/Permanent Resident Card Instructions

5. It is the resident's responsibility to see that these documents are renewed when appropriate to avoid any lapse in training.
6. We recommend that applications for renewal of Permanent Resident cards be submitted 5-6 months before the expiration date.
7. Applications for Renewal EAD's should be submitted at least 90 days in advance of expiration.
8. Trainees must notify the GME Office if there is any change in immigration status.

CONTACT

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APPROVAL

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