

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status (DS-2019)

J-1 Exchange Visitor Program (22 CFR Part 62)

OMB # 1405-0119

A. Justification:

1. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State (DOS) administers the Exchange Visitor Program (J-Visa) under the provisions of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (MECEA), as amended (Public Law 87-256, 22 U.S.C. 2451, *et seq.*). This program enables U.S. Government agencies and public and private organizations to conduct a variety of educational and cultural exchange activities.

Individuals entering the United States must be appropriately identified, and Form DS-2019 is the form that provides the information needed to identify an individual seeking to enter the U.S. as an Exchange Visitor. The Form DS-2019 is the Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status, which is used to request a J-1 visa. See Title 8, Section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; 22 CFR Part 62; and the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act.

2. An Exchange Visitor Program sponsor must complete the Form DS-2019. When completed, the form is sent to the prospective exchange visitor abroad who takes it to the U.S. Embassy/Consulate to secure an Exchange Visitor (J-1) visa. The completed form gives some of the information that the consular official needs in order to determine whether or not the individual should be granted a J-1 visa to enter the United States as an Exchange Visitor.

3. The Department incorporated Form DS-2019 electronically into the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). SEVIS, which is administered by the Department of Homeland Security to meet the legislative mandate established by Subtitle D, Section 641 of the Illegal Immigrant Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) (P.L. 104-208), was developed and operational in 2002 to collect and submit information on non-immigrants entering the United States on F, J, and M visas. Mandatory national implementation of the system began in 2003.

Regulations require sponsors to provide original signatures, in blue ink, on each Form DS-2019. Form DS-2019 is completed on-line. This serves as a notification and tracking system for each exchange visitor. Once submitted on line, a paper copy of the form is printed from SEVIS, signed by the Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer and sent to the exchange visitor. This form enables the prospective participant to apply for a visa at a U.S. Embassy. When the collection of electronic signatures on official documents is in place in SEVIS, this process is expected to move to a completely electronic format.

4. There is one form per exchange visitor. There is no duplication. This information is not otherwise available.
5. This collection does not have significant economic impact on small business entities.
6. If the collection of information is not conducted or conducted less frequently, the Department would be unable to provide the requested information to Congress and other interested parties. Less frequent collection of the information could affect the reliability of the information on record and could affect the period of time that a sponsor has sponsorship responsibility for an Exchange Visitor. A Form DS-2019 may generate a visa that would be valid for several years in the case of college students. If a sponsor does not wish to assume sponsorship responsibility for an individual beyond a single year, they may limit the period of stay to a single year. If at the end of the first year, the sponsor wishes to extend an individual for a second year, they may extend the period of stay for a second year or for several more years, dependent on the regulations governing the category of exchange under which the exchange visitor entered the United States.
7. There are no special circumstances. The collection of information indicated on the Form DS-2019 is a one-time procedure for each individual exchange visitor.
8. The Department published a 60-day notice on December 6, 2007. No comments were received.
9. Respondents are not provided with any gifts or payments.
10. There is no assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents as the information collected pertains to foreign nationals.
11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature included in the data required on the Form DS-2019, other than questions regarding basic personal information needed to verify identity.
12. The number of responses for Form DS-2019 is estimated to increase to 350,000 annually. The respondents complete a form for each prospective exchange visitor. This form takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. The annual burden for this form is estimated to be 262,500 hours.
13. There is no cost to the respondents.
14. There is no cost for this collection to the Federal Government. Based on the results of an independent fee study, the fees assessed to obtain designation or redesignation every two years pay the costs associated with administering the Exchange Visitor Program.
15. An increase in designated exchange visitor program sponsors will cause an estimated increase of 50,000 exchange visitors entering the U.S. This increase in responses to

350,000 will result in an estimated burden increase of 37,500 hours (50,000 x 45 minutes) for a total burden hour of 262,500.

16. The Department will not publish the collected information.

17. The Department will display the OMB expiration date.

18. The Department is not requesting any exceptions to the certification.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS.

This collection does not employ statistical methods.