

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION**

**Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status
(J-Nonimmigrant),**

**Form DS-2019
OMB Number 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 administer and conduct a variety of educational and cultural exchange activities.

Individuals entering the United States must be appropriately identified. The Form DS-2019 is the document that provides the information needed to identify an individual seeking to enter the U.S. as an Exchange Visitor in J visa status. The Form DS-2019 is a Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (J-Nonimmigrant). This form is used by potential Exchange Visitor Program participants to request J-visas at U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad. See Title 8, Section 101(a)(15)(J) 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-Nonimmigrant) visa. The completed form gives some of the information collected by the SEVIS system that the consular official needs in order to determine whether the individual should be granted a J visa to enter the United States as an exchange visitor. The Form DS-2019 also may be used to facilitate entry of an exchange visitor's alien spouse or minor unmarried children into the United States. Information collected through the Form DS-2019 is also used by the U.S. Department of State for exchange visitor program administration purposes.
3. The Department has incorporated the data fields from Form DS-2019 into the form produced electronically through 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 Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) (P.L. 104-208), was developed and made 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.

DHS guidance requires 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 and, where applicable, any accompanying spouse and dependents. Once submitted online, 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, and accompanying spouse and dependents, if applicable, to apply for a visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. In a few years, when SEVIS is equipped to collect electronic signatures on official documents, this process will move to a completely electronic, paperless format. One-hundred percent of the submissions are electronic.

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. While most Forms DS-2019 are written to be valid for a period of one year or less, there are circumstances where a Form DS-2019 may result in the issuance of a visa that would be valid for several years in the case of some exchange visitors. If a sponsor does not wish to assume sponsorship responsibility for an individual beyond a single year, that sponsor may limit the period of program to a single year. If at the end of the first year, the sponsor wishes to extend an individual (and spouse and dependents, where applicable) for a second year, the sponsor may extend the period of program 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 in the Federal Register (82 FR 33198) on July 19, 2017 soliciting public comments. Four comments were received, but no comments were germane to the collection instrument. Two comments were submitted by the same commenter and appear to contain information on his personal views or circumstances without regard to Form DS-2019. Two comments make programmatic remarks, rather than comments on the Form DS-2019 as a collection instrument.
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.
12. The number of responses for Form DS-2019 is estimated at 325,000 annually. The respondents complete a form for each prospective exchange visitor (and related forms for spouse and dependents, where applicable). This form takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. The annual burden for this form is estimated to be 243,750 hours. The result is an estimated burden hour of 243,750 (325,000 x 45 minutes). The annual hour burden for this form is thus estimated to be 243,750 hours. The average hourly wage for sponsor employees (respondents) is \$31.50 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2016 (see <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2016/article/nonprofit-pay-and-benefits.htm>) for educational services employees in non-profit and for-profit organizations, the sector in which J-visa sponsors work. Total hour cost burden is thus 325,000 exchange visitors (and related forms for spouse and dependents) x \$23.63 x 1.4 (weighted wage rate) (\$33.08), or \$10,751,000.
 1. There is a postage cost to the respondents for mailing the paperwork to the participants. Based on an average cost of \$7.00 per mailing, total postage costs are $325,000 \times \$7 = \$2,275,000$.
 2. Based on the results of an independent fee study, fees of \$3,982 are assessed on program sponsors to obtain designation or re-designation every two years pay the costs associated with administering the Exchange Visitor Program. The annualized cost to the Federal Government is covered 100% by these fees, all of which are collected in advance of the sponsor's use of the DS-2019 form.
 3. Section 6 has been reworded to have each Responsible Officer and Alternate Responsible Officer, before he or she signs Form DS-2019, attest that the Program Sponsor organization identified on the DS-2019, has verified, in accordance with the requirements of 22 CFR 62.12(b), that each prospective exchange visitor: (i) is eligible and qualified for, and accepted into, the program in which he or she will participate; (ii) possesses adequate financial resources to participate in and complete his or her exchange visitor program; and (iii) possesses adequate financial resources to support an accompanying spouse and dependents, if any. The Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer also must attest that, upon printing and signing the Form DS-2019, he/she is physically present in the United States or in a U.S. territory. This rewording is taking place to indicate clearly to the Responsible Officers and the Alternate Responsible Officers that they may sign a Form DS-2019 only if the sponsor has verified certain exchange visitor information as set forth in 22 CFR 62.12(b). Previous language that a notification copy of Form DS-2019 has been provided to the U.S. Department of State remains in Section 6. In addition, updated information on required participant insurance amounts has been added to the instructions to the form. The number of designated exchange visitor

sponsors has increased from approximately 1,400 to 1,500 annually; the numbers of exchange visitors (and spouses and dependents) have remained the same.

4. The Department will not publish the collected information.
5. The Department will display the OMB expiration date.
6. The Department is not seeking any exceptions to the certification.

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.