



# F-1/J-1 INVITATION OF DEPENDENTS

## International Student Services – Texas A&M University

Students holding F-1/J-1 visas who want to invite their dependent(s) to come to the U.S. can obtain information and the necessary documents from the International Student Services (ISS) office. Each eligible dependent will be issued an I-20/DS-2019 by ISS, and will then have to request a corresponding visa (F2 or J2) at a U.S. Consulate/Embassy in a foreign country.

Please be aware that while U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations do allow dependents on F-2 visas to be enrolled in a degree program, they are not permitted to take a full course load (they must take less than 12 credits for undergraduate programs, and less than 9 for graduate programs). If dependents wish to take a full-time course load, they will first have to obtain F-1 status. In cases where a dependent wishes to begin a full-time course of study shortly after arrival in the U.S., s/he should apply for the F-1 visa, and not the F-2 visa.

A “Dependent” is defined as the spouse and/or unmarried child (*under the age of 21*) of an F-1/J-1 student.

**The student must provide International Student Services (ISS) with the following documents:**

1. **Official Documents:** Student’s valid passport with visa, I-94 card, and the most recent I-20 or DS-2019 received
2. **Current Financial Support:** Current evidence of all sources of financial support for the student and any dependents. For detailed information about acceptable proof of financial resources, please visit <http://iss.tamu.edu/Current-Students/Estimated-Cost-of-Attendance>.
3. **Dependent Information:** First name, middle name, last name (as stated in passport), date of birth, birth country, country of citizenship, country of residence, gender, relationship to student (spouse, child). This can be provided to ISS by submitting a copy of the dependent’s immigration documents (passport, visa, etc) or by typing out the dependent information on a piece of paper.
4. **Department Letter.** This letter is necessary if you have already been in the current academic program for one academic year (9 months) or more at the time of this application. The letter has to be written by your academic advisor. It has to confirm that you are in good academic standing; that you meet departmental expectations; the requirements remaining; and your projected date of graduation (month/year). For graduate students, the letter needs to be signed also by the Graduate Advisor.

**Note:** After the I-20/DS-2019 for the student’s dependent(s) has been issued, ISS will put a registration hold on the student’s academic record.

- Once the student’s dependent(s) enter the U.S., the student must provide copies of each dependent’s official documents (passport, visa, I-94, I-20/DS-2019) to ISS in order to have the registration hold removed.
- For students in J immigration status, the hold can only be removed *after* ISS has verified that health insurance requirements for all family members in J immigration status are fulfilled.
- Please refer to <http://iss.tamu.edu/Prospective-Students/Health-Insurance> for additional information on health insurance coverage requirements.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEPENDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ISSUED A DEPENDENT I-20 or DS-2019**

The student's dependent(s) shall present the following (and any other supporting documents required) at the U.S. Consulate/Embassy abroad to apply for an F-2 or J-2 visa:

1. Valid passport;
2. Marriage license/birth certificate (as appropriate);
3. Form I-20 or DS-2019;
4. Original financial support letters.

**Please note:** U.S. Consulate and Port of Entry Officials may request additional documents or information not mentioned above.

The ISS website <http://iss.tamu.edu/Prospective-Students/Applying-for-Visa> has links to US consulate/embassy websites you may want to visit to see if there are any additional requirements (besides the above) for citizens of your country.

### **Other documents a U.S. Consulate or Embassy may require:**

1. Student's personal income tax returns (Forms 1040, 1040NR, or NREZ, etc.) for each year while in U.S.
2. Student's W-2 tax forms
3. Proof of health insurance in U.S. for the dependents
4. Copy of the student's passport pages (visa pages, validity page, picture page, and pages showing all port-of-entry stamps).

**Within a week after your dependent(s) have arrived in the U.S., it is necessary to complete the Dependent Check-In task in Terra Dotta found on our website: <http://iss.tamu.edu/Side-Menu/TerraDotta#0-F-2%2FJ-2DependentCheck-in> Keep in mind that you must upload copies of each dependent's stamped I-20 or DS-2019, I-94 or port of entry stamp, visa, and passport in order to have your registration hold removed.**

### **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR DEPENDENTS**

- J-2 dependents are **required** by federal law to maintain health insurance coverage as long as they have an active J SEVIS immigration record, including during periods when they are outside the U.S.
- Learn about minimum health insurance requirements for persons in J immigration status by referring to <http://iss.tamu.edu/Prospective-Students/Health-Insurance>, or by contacting [healthinsurance@tamu.edu](mailto:healthinsurance@tamu.edu).
- F-2 dependents are **strongly recommended** to maintain health insurance coverage while they are in the U.S.
- Regular medical insurance coverage from the home country may not be sufficient for U.S. conditions. Medical services in the U.S. are very expensive and a trip to the emergency room or hospitalization can result in large bills for those without adequate health insurance coverage.
- Holders of F and J visas cannot access U.S. Public Assistance benefits, *including low-cost health care services targeted at uninsured/underinsured U.S. citizens.*

"State law requires that you be informed of the following: (1) you are entitled to request to be informed about the information about yourself collected by use of this form (with a few exceptions as provided by law); (2) you are entitled to receive and review that information; and (3) you are entitled to have the information corrected at no charge to you."