

## Adding a J-2 Dependent

### Who can be added as a J-2 Dependent?

A primary **Exchange Visitor (EV)** can request to add their dependent spouse or unmarried minor child (under 21 years of age) to their SEVIS record. Once this is done, ISSS will issue a DS-2019 so the dependent can apply for a J-2 visa or J-2 visa “status”. Dependents will receive their own DS-2019 and have their own unique SEVIS ID number.

**Note:** A dependent’s status is connected to the J-1 Exchange Visitor’s status. If the EV’s status expires, terminates, or the EV departs the US permanently, with no intent to return, the dependent’s status also terminates.

### Applying for a J-2 dependent DS-2019 from ISSS:

To request a dependent DS-2019, an “Add Dependent Request” E-Form must be submitted through [UAtlas](#). Dependent DS-2019s have a processing time of up to 10 business days.

When submitting the e-form, be prepared to provide biographical information, such as given name, date of birth, and citizenship.

The following documents must also be uploaded to this E-form:

- Copy of a dependent’s biographical (photo) page from **passport**
- Copy of **marriage certificate** (for spouse) or **birth certificate** (for child)
- Copy of the J-1 EV’s **DS-2019**
- **Financial support documents**
  - For **EV students**: \$6,000 per dependent is required to support each dependent for one year
  - For **EV scholars** (Researchers, Professors, and Student Interns): An additional \$500 per month for the duration of the Exchange Visitor’s program
    - Follow this link for [more information on funding](#).
- **Affidavit of Support**: Required if the bank statement provided is from another source other than the EV student or EV scholar, such as from a family member. Please contact an international advisor for guidance on the affidavit of support.

**NOTE:** Once a dependent DS-2019 is received, the **dependent** must sign the form, unless a dependent is under the age of 14. If a dependent is under the age of 14, the J-1 primary Exchange Visitor must sign the dependent’s DS-2019.

## After receiving a Dependent DS-2019:

### **OPTION 1: Dependent applies for a J-2 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad**

If a dependent applies for a J-2 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad, preferably in their country of citizenship, it is recommended that they bring the following to the visa interview: the **dependent DS-2019**, along with a **photo copy** of the Exchange Visitor's documents (**DS-29019, visa, passport, and I-94**).

For more information about this process and what additional (or country specific) documents are needed for a visa interview, please refer to visa application information on a U.S. Embassy or Consulate's website in your country of citizenship, or contact them directly.

### **OPTION 2: Dependent is already in the U.S. in another visa status**

If a dependent spouse or minor child is currently in the U.S. in another visa status (not J-2) and wishes to change their visa "status" to J-2 without departing the U.S., please schedule an appointment with an ISSS advisor to discuss the process and timeline for a **Change of Status (COS)** through application to USCIS. Because a change of status process can be complicated, please make an appointment with a scholar advisor.

## Dependents and Travel:

Dependents may depart and re-enter the U.S. independently of their J-1 Exchange Visitor spouse or parent, as long as their EV spouse or parent is in Active SEVIS status.

Dependents must carry the following documents when entering the U.S.:

- Valid **Passport** (follow this link for [more information](#)) on passport validity
- Valid **J-2 visa stamp** in their passport
- **Dependent DS-2019**

\*It is also recommended to provide photo **copies** of the J-1 Exchange Visitor's most current immigration documents (*if travelling separately*): passport, DS-2019, J-1 visa stamp, I-94.

If an Exchange Visitor departs the U.S. without their dependent(s), dependent(s) may remain in the U.S. as long as the EV is in active status and plans to return after a temporary absence to continue their EV program.

If an Exchange Visitor departs the U.S. after their official program end date and has not applied for an extension, or for students - applied for post-completion Academic Training, the dependent must also depart the U.S., and cannot re-enter on their current DS-2019 and J-2 visa.

## Frequently asked Questions:

**1. I am engaged. Do I need to be married in order to receive a J-2 dependent DS-2019?**

You may request a dependent DS-2019 without having an official marriage certificate, and your spouse may be added to your SEVIS record before you are legally married. However, you must be legally married and have a physical copy of your marriage certificate by the time you apply for a J-2 visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or before you submit a Change of Status application to USCIS (if your dependent is changing status from within the U.S.).

**2. Is my dependent allowed to study?**

**Yes**, dependents may study full or part-time.

**3. Is my dependent allowed to work?**

Yes, dependents are eligible to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS in order to be employed in the U.S., **as long as the employment is not for the purpose of supporting the Exchange Visitor**. For questions about the application process, please review the [EAD policy guide](#), or schedule an appointment with an ISSS student or scholar advisor.

**4. Can I add my unmarried domestic partner, significant other, parent, sibling, cousin, or friend as my J-2 dependent?**

**No**. You cannot add anyone other than your legally married spouse or minor child (under the age of 21) as your dependent. However, there may be other visa types more appropriate for short term visits for friends and “other” family members. For questions, please schedule an appointment with an ISSS student or scholar advisor.

**5. My dependent has A) changed their visa type, B) permanently departed the U.S., or C) changed the relationship status, such as divorce. For these and other examples, how do I remove a dependent from my SEVIS record?**

To remove a dependent from your SEVIS record, you must submit the “Remove Dependent Request” E-form through [UAtlas](#). You will need to sign, scan, and upload the [Voluntary Termination Request](#) to the E-form. If your dependent has changed their visa status, please upload evidence of this change (**I-797** receipt notice showing Change of Status approval). If you and your dependent spouse have divorced, upload a copy of the official **divorce decree**. There may be some restrictions to removing your dependent from your SEVIS record, and the reasons to do this are limited.

**6. I am subject to 212(e). Are my dependents also subject?**

**Yes**. A J-2 dependent’s status is connected to the J-1 EV’s status. If an EV is subject to the 2-year home residency requirement, also known as 212(e), dependent(s) will also be subject. For more information, please review our [212\(e\) Policy Guide](#).

**Disclaimer:** International Student & Scholar Services provides support and information related to U.S. immigration laws and regulations related to F and J status. ISSS staff are not attorneys and any information provided by us should not be construed as legal advice. Individuals are welcome to consult a qualified immigration attorney for specific legal advice, particularly in complicated cases. For a list of local Utah attorneys please visit our website [here](#).