GERMAN AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (GAPP)

EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM HANDBOOK FOR SPECIALISTS

Pre-Arrival Manual- Welcome & Contact Information

We are glad to welcome you as an exchange teacher in our GAPP program. Below is contact information for your responsible officer (RO) and alternate responsible officer (ARO) at each of our seven schools. It is recommended that you contact your ARO for assistance.

Please review this pre-arrival guide as well as your welcome letter, employment contract or letter of employment and Employee Handbook or Guidelines from your school, as well as U.S. Department of State Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure.

Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or concerns.

Kind regards,

Ajkuna Hoppe, RO
Executive Director
GAPP c/o Goethe Institute
30 Irving Place
New York NY 10003
Tel.: +1 212 439 8700
Emergency: +1 646 267 2022
ajkuna.hoppe@goethe.de

Carol Klessen, ARO
Michaela Rueda, ARO
German International School New York
50 Partridge Road
White Plains NY 10605
Tel.: +1 914 948 6513 x 211
cklessen@gisny.org
mrueda@gisny.org

Lisa Connolly, ARO
German International School Boston
57 Holton Street
Boston MA 02134
Tel.: +1 617 783 2600 x 14
lisa.connolly@gisbos.org

Lena Bacan, ARO
German School Brooklyn
760 Sterling Place
Brooklyn, NY 11216
Tel.: +1 914 619 4192
lbacan@germanschoolbrooklyn.org

Renate Wood, ARO
German International School Washington DC
8617 Chateau Drive
Potomac MD 20854
Tel.: +1 301 767 3812
rwood@giswashington.org

Karen Lin, ARO
Peter Wong, ARO
German International School Portland
3900 SW Murray Blvd
Beaverton OR 97007
Tel.: +1 503 626 9089
karen.lin@gspdx.org
peter.wong@gspdx.org

Désirée Appadurai, ARO
German International School Silicon Valley
310 Easy Street
Mountain View CA 94043
Tel.: +1 650 254 0748 x 308
dappadurai@gissv.org

Sonja Alice Manhart, ARO
German International School Chicago
1726 W Berteau Avenue
Chicago, IL. 60613
Tel: +1 773 857 3000
smanhart@germanschoolchicago.com

Purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program

Building common ground among nations will be critical for a new generation navigating the forces of globalization. Strong emphasis on international education and cultural exchange is a great tool to thrive in an interconnected world. Teachers are sharing their experiences and knowledge in the US, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Home Country Physical Presence Requirement

The three-year home country physical presence requirement is one of the most important characteristics of Exchange Visitor status.

All Exchange Visitors employed at the German International Schools in our program will be subject to the three-year home country physical presence requirement since participation in this exchange program was financed, directly or indirectly, by a foreign government for the purpose of exchange – in this case the German government.

Exchange Visitors subject to max-three-year residence requirement must return to their "home" countries and be physically present there for an aggregate of three years before being eligible to return to the US in immigrant (permanent resident/green card) status, H status (temporary workers and dependents), or L status (intracompany transferees and dependents). Exchange Visitors subject to the three-year home country residence requirement are not eligible to change their nonimmigrant status from J to permanent residence or to any other nonimmigrant category except A (diplomatic) and G (international organization).

Applying for a J-1 / J- 2 Visa

A valid J-1 visa is required for entry to the United States on the GAPP program. Immediate family members (spouse and children under the age of 21) who will accompany you to the U.S. may apply for J-2 visas using the DS-2019 forms enclosed. If your family will join you later, a DS-2019 form will be issued upon request.

After you have received your contract or employment letter, your ARO will begin the visa process. Once you receive the DS-2019, please verify that all the information on your DS-2019 is correct.

Here are instructions once you receive the DS-2019:

1. Please read the instructions in the non-immigrant visa section of the American Embassy website in Germany https://de.usembassy.gov (or Austria or Switzerland if applicable) and https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/exchange.html
2. Schedule an appointment for an interview.
   NOTE: A personal interview is required, so you will need to schedule your appointment in a timely fashion. Be aware that there could also be substantial delays due to security checks, so please plan your travel arrangements to the Embassy accordingly.
3. Receipt showing payment of the $220 SEVIS fee (J-1 only).
4. Payment of the $185 visa application fee and appropriate visa application forms for each visa applicant is required (see https://de.usembassy.gov).
5. Please read instructions regarding the filing of form DS-160.
   Please fill out all forms using your computer and use the English version.
   If you still have a German home address, please use it.
6. You will need to obtain two U.S. passport-size photos (check with U.S. Consulate for photo requirements) for each visa applicant.
7. Your passport must be valid 6 (six) months beyond the expiration date on your DS-2019 form.

8. For your interview you will need to bring: the form letter from your ARO, the signed DS-2019 form, and two passport photos meeting the requirements described on the website. It takes approximately one week for a visa to be issued.

Safekeeping of J1-Visa Documents

Using a written procedure each school ensures that privacy and private information of a J1 visa holder is properly protected.

Health Insurance

As a participant in the Exchange Visitor Program, you are required to have health insurance which meets EVP requirements. Any J-2 dependents with you in the U.S. are also required to have adequate health insurance.

The US State Department sets forth the following requirements:

- Medical benefits of at least $100,000 per accident or illness
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of $25,000
- Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his or her home country in the amount of $50,000
- A deductible not to exceed $500 per accident or illness.

If you are ADLK, BPLK, or BDU via the ZfA, your health insurance will be covered through their system. If you are locally hired, please contact the HR Department of your host school for more information.

Health insurance rates may vary by location, age, type of coverage selected, and number of family members requiring coverage and could range from $150 - $250 per person per month. Before accepting a position and arriving in the U.S. you should consult with your host school and become fully aware of your health insurance provider and the total cost of your health insurance.

Program Dates and Activity

Applying for a J-1 visa using the DS-2019 implies acceptance of the terms and conditions as outlined on the second page of the form. You may be admitted to the United States to engage in the activity described in item 4 of the form and for the period of time specified in item 3.

Upon completion of your J-1 program, you are afforded a 30-day grace period to prepare for departure from the United States. You should not work or engage in other program activities during this period.

Entering the United States

Present the following documents to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officer at the U.S. Port of Entry:

- Passport(s) containing a valid J-1 visa (or J-2 visas for accompanying family members)
- Signed DS-2019(s) for you and any accompanying family members

The officer should return the following:

- Passport(s) with entry stamp: Please check that the entry stamp has the notation “J-1 D/S” or “J-2 D/S”. D/S stands for “duration of status”.

- Stamped DS-2019 for you and any accompanying family member

I-94

Under the current system, your I-94 entry record will be available to you by accessing the following website: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94

Arrival Information

Inform your school ARO that you have arrived safely, and he/she will validate your arrival in the SEVIS Information database (SEVIS). This validation notifies the Department of Homeland Security that you have arrived and begun your J-1 exchange visitor program and changes your SEVIS record to ACTIVE status.

The school will plan for an orientation session. You will need to bring the following documents to orientation for you and any accompanying dependents:

- Passports
- I-94 arrival departure record
- DS-2019
- Proof of medical insurance if applicable (see note below)

Your ARO will need to update your local U.S. address in SEVIS as soon as available.

At orientation, we will cover your immigration status, medical and evacuation insurance, employment, obtaining a U.S. Social Security Number and Driver's License as well as cross cultural activities. We will also provide you with a letter of verification of your employment to assist with housing opportunities and opening a US bank account.

NOTE: It is important that the EV must have medical insurance from Germany beginning with the term of his visa **or** if the EV plans on obtaining insurance once in the USA, the EV must have insurance from their home country till at least 30 days after the begin of their employment.

You are required to inform your ARO if you change your actual and current US address, email address, telephone number and/or site of activity within ten (10) days for the duration of your J-1 visa, and if you decide to end your employment earlier than the program end date (shorten program participation).

Living in the USA

The cost of living in the vicinity of each of our seven schools i.e., New York, Boston, Washington DC, Silicon Valley, Portland and Chicago varies. New York and Silicon Valley are by far the most expensive. In order to prepare our exchange visitors for their move to the USA, he / she will be set up with a "buddy" teacher at their new school who will assist in answering questions about moving and living in the USA.

Please refer to the information on our website for general information on the cost of living in the USA in the areas covered by our seven schools:

Bridge USA Exchange Visitor Programs - Goethe-Institut USA

Cross Cultural Component

Exchange Visitors (J-1 Visa holders) are required to complete two annual cross-cultural activity components through which exchange teachers share aspects of their cultural heritage with their US communities. The activities must be designed to give an overview of the history, traditions, heritage, culture, economy, educational system and/or other attributes of his or her home country.

We will collaborate with you to find appropriate activities; however, it would be helpful for you to establish interest with your current school to participate in a cross-cultural component activity with your host school in the US.

Contacts and Emergency Contacts

Department of State, Exchange Visitor Program
http://j1visa.state.gov/

Department of State Emergency Hotline: +1-866-283-9090 – toll-free

National Human Trafficking Resource Center: +1-888-373-7888

E-Mail: jvisas@state.gov

Sponsor

German American Partnership Program (GAPP)
Ajkuna Hoppe, Executive Director
30 Irving Place, 4th Floor,
New York, NY 10003, USA

Emergency Contact: + 1 646 267 2022

E-mail: ajkuna.hoppe@goethe.de