August 10, 2026

Guidance Directive 2026-01: Final Rule Establishing a Fixed Time Period of Admission for Exchange Visitors (J Nonimmigrants)

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a new rule establishing a fixed period of admission for exchange visitors who enter the United States as J nonimmigrants. This rule changes the previous policy of "duration of status" (D/S), which allowed certain nonimmigrants to remain in the United States if they maintained compliance with their visa terms and conditions, rather than until a specific end date. This guidance provides information on how sponsors shall fill out Form DS-2019 and maintain accurate SEVIS records.

New Fixed Admission Periods

Effective September 15, 2026, all new and continuing exchange visitors who enter the United States or change to J status on or after that date will receive an Admit Until Date (AUD). The AUD marks the last day the exchange visitor is authorized to remain in the United States in J status; this period cannot exceed four years. Exchange visitors who need additional time beyond their AUD to complete program objectives must apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for an extension of stay via the Form I-539 *Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status* or depart the United States and apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry with a valid Form DS-2019 and U.S. visa.

How DHS Determines the Admit Until Date (AUD)

DHS will use the Program End Date listed on the Form DS-2019 as the primary guide for determining the AUD. If the Program End Date falls within four years of the exchange visitor's Program Begin Date, DHS will generally admit the exchange visitor until that date plus 30 days for departure. If the Program End Date exceeds four years, DHS will, at its discretion, admit the exchange visitor for up to four years plus 30 days for the purposes of departure or to otherwise seek to maintain lawful status.

Note: This four-year threshold governs DHS's admission and extension of stay practice only. It does not restrict the total length of an exchange visitor's program under U.S. Department of State (the

Department) regulations. Sponsors may continue to issue Forms DS-2019 for the full authorized program duration for the exchange visitor's category (e.g., up to five years for Research Scholars), even though DHS may admit the exchange visitor for a shorter initial period.

Sponsors must enter Program Begin and End Dates in SEVIS based on the exchange visitor's current program terms (e.g., available funding or contract dates). If the Program End Date does not reflect the date the exchange visitor is expected to complete the program in full, the sponsor must enter an "Expected Completion Date" in the Subject/Field Remarks (Field 4). Doing so allows DHS to consider admitting the exchange visitor for a period longer than the Program End Date, up to a maximum of four years plus 30 days for the purposes of departure or to otherwise seek to maintain lawful status.

This guidance must be followed for new exchange visitors and for those continuing their program on or after the effective date (September 15, 2026). For exchange visitors on a program authorized prior to September 15, 2026, sponsors should review the Program End Date in SEVIS to confirm it reflects the date the exchange visitor is expected to complete the program. If the Program End Date does not reflect that date, sponsors must add an Expected Completion Date in Field 4, following the requirements below.

Requirements for Using Field 4 (Subject/Field Remarks)

- Place the Expected Completion Date at the beginning of Field 4 using this format: "Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY."
- Only the first 200 characters print on the Form DS-2019, so listing the Expected Completion Date first is essential. After that, include any additional information that would normally be entered into the Subject/Field Remarks field.

3. Form Covers Period:	4. Exchange Visitor Category:	
From *(mm-dd-yyyy)*: 07-01-2026 To *(mm-dd-yyyy)*: 06-30-2027	ALIEN PHYSICIAN	
	Subject/Field Code:	Subject/Field Code Remarks:
	51.1201	Expected Completion Date: 6/30/2030 Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency - 4 years

Expected Completion Date Guidance by Category

The following chart gives examples of Field 4 (Subject/Field Remarks) entries for each Exchange Visitor Program category. Note that some categories are not eligible for extensions beyond the maximum duration set forth in 22 CFR Part 62, Subpart B. Sponsors should refer to this chart when determining whether to report an Expected Completion Date that extends beyond the exchange visitor's Program End Date. Sponsors should not report an Expected Completion Date if the Program End Date reflects the date the exchange visitor is expected to complete the program.

Category	Subject/Field Remarks
Alien Physician	Include the Expected Completion Date of the exchange visitor's accredited residency or fellowship program, along with the typical timeframe required to complete the program. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY, Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency – 4 years) **Note**: Extensions beyond the seven-year maximum duration require approval by the Department.
Au Pair	If an extension beyond the Program End Date is anticipated**,** include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the 12-month maximum duration require approval by the Department. The total program duration cannot exceed two years.
Camp Counselor	If the Program End Date is less than four months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full four-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the four-month maximum duration are not permitted for this category.
Government Visitor	If the Program End Date is less than 18 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 18-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the 18-month maximum duration require approval by the Department.
Intern	**Standard Intern programs (12-month maximum)**: If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date.

Category	Subject/Field Remarks
	(e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Korea WEST-designated MOU programs (18-month maximum)**: If the Program End Date is less than 18 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 18-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the applicable 12 or 18-month maximum duration are permitted only under extenuating circumstances and require approval by the Department.
International Visitor	If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the 12-month maximum duration require approval by the Department.
Professors	If the Program End Date is less than five years after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full five-year maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the five-year maximum duration are permitted only under extenuating circumstances and require approval by the Department.
Research Scholar	If the Program End Date is less than five years after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full five-year maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the five-year maximum require approval by the Department. Exchange visitors sponsored

Category	Subject/Field Remarks
	under "G-7" program serials are permitted an extension beyond the five-year maximum under regulation. For all other program serials, extensions beyond the five-year maximum are permitted only under extenuating circumstances.
Secondary School Student	If the program duration is less than one academic year and an extension is anticipated to reach the full academic year, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the one-academic year maximum are not permitted for this category.
Short-term Scholar	If the Program End Date is less than six months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full six-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the six-month maximum duration are not permitted for this category.
Specialist	If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the 12-month maximum duration require approval by the Department.
Student College/University	**Student Associates through Student Doctorate (no regulatory maximum):** **Note**: 22 CFR Part 62, Subpart B does not establish a maximum duration for this category; sponsors may therefore extend the Program End Date as needed for the exchange visitor to complete the program in its entirety. **Student Intern (12-month maximum):** If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and

Category	Subject/Field Remarks
	an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the 12-month maximum duration are not permitted for this category. **Student Non-Degree (24-month maximum):** If the Program End Date is less than 24 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 24-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note:** Extensions beyond the 24-month maximum duration are not permitted for this category.
Summer Work Travel	**Standard SWT programs (4-month maximum)**: If the Program End Date is less than four months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full four-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Australia and New Zealand-designated MOU programs (12-month maximum)**: If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the applicable four or 12-month maximum durations are not permitted for this category.
Teacher	If the Program End Date is less than three years after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full three-year maximum or to extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY)

Category	Subject/Field Remarks
	Note: Extensions beyond the three-year maximum duration require approval by the Department. The total program duration cannot exceed five years.
Trainee	**Agriculture and Hospitality and Tourism placements (occupational category):** If the Program End Date is less than 12 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 12-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **All Other Placements**: If the Program End Date is less than 18 months after the Program Begin Date and an extension to reach the full 18-month maximum or extend beyond the maximum is anticipated, include the Expected Completion Date. (e.g., Expected Completion Date: MM/DD/YYYY) **Note**: Extensions beyond the applicable 12 or 18-month maximum durations are permitted only under extenuating circumstances and require approval by the Department.

Maintaining Accurate SEVIS Records

As a reminder, sponsors must maintain accurate SEVIS records and provide updated Forms DS-2019 promptly. Inaccurate or outdated information may result in DHS admitting an exchange visitor or granting an extension of stay for an incorrect period. The following SEVIS updates allow sponsors to adjust Program End Dates and may require corresponding changes to the Subject/Field Remarks:

- Amend Program
- Extension Within the Maximum Duration of Participation
- Extension Beyond the Maximum Duration of Participation
- Correct SEVIS Status
- Correct Minor or Technical Infraction
- Matriculation
- Reinstatement
- Reinstatement-Update SEVIS Status
- Change of Category
- Edit DS-2019 (applies to Transfer-in Records)

Shortened/Terminated Programs

The AUD represents the last date an exchange visitor may remain in the United States in J-1 status. However, if a program is shortened or terminated, the exchange visitor may be required to depart earlier than the AUD, as described below.

- **Shortened Programs**: If a program is shortened for a neutral reason, the exchange visitor must depart by the AUD or within 30 days of the new Program End Date, whichever is earlier.
- **Terminated Programs**: If a program is terminated for a negative reason before the exchange visitor's AUD, the exchange visitor must depart the United States immediately. If termination occurs on or after the AUD, the exchange visitor's existing AUD departure deadline continues to apply.

  For example, an exchange visitor whose SEVIS record changes from Inactive to Terminated must depart immediately. Also, an exchange visitor whose SEVIS record changes from Active to Terminated while the AUD is still a future date must depart immediately.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) **If a research scholar or professor plans to participate for five years, can sponsors issue a Form DS-2019 for the full five-year period?**

   A: Yes. Sponsors may issue a Form DS-2019 with program dates reflecting the full five-year period. However, sponsors must inform the exchange visitor that DHS will, at its discretion, admit the exchange visitor into the United States for a maximum of four years plus 30 days, regardless of the duration listed on the Form. If DHS admits the exchange visitor for four years and the exchange visitor does not obtain an updated AUD, the exchange visitor must either apply for an extension of stay with USCIS or depart and apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry before beginning year five.

2) **If the Program Begin and End Dates on the exchange visitor's Form DS-2019 reflect the full anticipated length of the program, should the sponsor enter an Expected Completion Date in the Subject/Field Remarks field?**

   A: No. Sponsors should enter an Expected Completion Date only when the Program End Date listed on the Form DS-2019 does not reflect the date the exchange visitor will complete the program in its entirety.

3) **If a sponsor enters an Expected Completion Date in the Subject/Field Remarks field that is later than the Program End Date on the Form DS-2019, is DHS required to admit the exchange visitor for the full program period?**

A: No. DHS may consider the Expected Completion Date when determining an AUD, but DHS retains ultimate authority over that determination and may decline to grant the Expected Completion Date based on other factors, such as the exchange visitor's passport expiration date. The period of admission cannot exceed four years, regardless of the Expected Completion Date entered on the Form.

4) **If a sponsor extends an Active-status exchange visitor's Program End Date to a date beyond their AUD, is the exchange visitor required to take action to update their AUD?**

A: Yes. The exchange visitor must either apply for an extension of stay with USCIS or depart the United States and apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry with a valid Form DS-2019. In either case, the sponsor must provide the exchange visitor with an updated Form DS-2019 to present at the U.S. port of entry or include with their Extension of Stay application.

5) **Does the same process apply if the sponsor's extension of the Program End Date qualifies as an Extension Beyond the Maximum Duration of Participation (EBMD)?**

A: Yes, subject to two additional considerations. First, only certain Exchange Visitor Program categories are eligible to request an EBMD (see 22 CFR Part 62, Subpart B). Second, if the Department approves an EBMD after the exchange visitor's AUD has passed, the exchange visitor must file the extension of stay application with USCIS within 30 days of the Department's decision.

6) **If an exchange visitor is currently in the United States on Duration of Status ("D/S"), and the sponsor updates the exchange visitor's Program End Date, is the exchange visitor permitted to remain under D/S, or are they required to apply for an Extension of Stay to cover the extended Program End Date?**

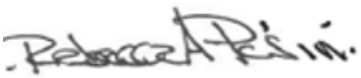
A: Whether the exchange visitor may remain under D/S or must apply for an extension of stay depends on whether an Expected Completion Date was timely added to the record before September 15, 2026.

If the sponsor timely added an Expected Completion Date to the record before September 15, 2026, the sponsor may extend the Program End Date, without requiring an extension of stay, up to the Expected Completion Date noted in the Subject/Field Remarks. The exchange visitor may remain under D/S through that date.

If the sponsor did not timely add an Expected Completion Date, or if the updated Program End Date exceeds the Expected Completion Date on file, the exchange visitor must apply for an extension of stay to cover the extended period or depart the United States and apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry.

7) **If an exchange visitor's status is changed from Inactive or Terminated to Active, and the Program End Date falls after the exchange visitor's AUD, is the exchange visitor required to apply for an Extension of Stay with USCIS?**

A: Yes. If an exchange visitor's SEVIS record is changed to Active and the Program End Date falls after the AUD, the exchange visitor must either apply for an extension of stay with USCIS within 30 days of the status update or depart the United States and apply for admission at a U.S. port of entry with a valid Form DS-2019. This requirement applies to SEVIS records updated through any of the following actions: Reinstatement, Reinstatement–Update SEVIS Status, Correct Minor or Technical Infraction, and Correct SEVIS Status.



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