

Visa Options for LSUHSC International Employees¥			
Visa Type	F-1 Post Completion OPT/STEM OPT	J-1 Exchange Visitor	H1B Specialty Worker
Eligibility Criteria	<b>F-1 Students</b> at U.S. Universities at <b>completion</b> of course of study (degree). Bachelor's or higher.	EV must have a Bachelor's degree <u>or</u> appropriate experience in area of exchange and sufficient English language skills.	<u>Position</u> must require at least a <b>bachelor's degree</b> or equivalent.
Maximum Period of Employment	<b>12 months</b> OPT + <b>24 month</b> STEM Extension (if eligible)	Minimum of 3 weeks for all EV categories; Maximum of 6 months for Short Term Scholar; <b>Maximum of 5 years</b> for Research Scholars	Initial 3 year period, and 3 year extension, <b>total of 6 years</b> , unless LPR Application timely filed.
Benefits	May work at any ER, as long as employment is related to course of study. <b>May change ER</b> without changing visa status.  ER has no early termination penalties.	May <b>transfer</b> to another Program Sponsor's J-1 program easily to change ER, no need to exit & re-enter. No transfer/termination penalties.	H1B EE transfers to new ER (portability) and extensions with current H1B ER <b>only require filing of</b> H1B petition, no requirement to wait for approval of the H1B petition.
Drawbacks	Recommendation, application and processing are fully dependent on University where F-1 student, LSUHSC has no control over the application or approval if not an LSUHSC graduate.  Only available to a student already in F-1 status who is completing their degree.  Time spent in full time CPT (during course of study) is subtracted from initial 12-month maximum period.	<b>212(e) Home Residency Requirement</b> -depending on funding source and skills list of home country* <u>may</u> require EV and any dependents to return to home country for 2 years following J program.  <b>12 month bar</b> to repeat J-1 participation if previous J program was more than 6 months. Research Scholars and Professor EV's and dependents subject to <b>24 month bar</b> to repeat J-1 participation.	If ER terminates EE before end of visa period requested, ER <b>must pay for EE's transportation</b> to country of last residence.  If EE is terminated, considered out of status immediately- <b>unofficial 10 day grace period</b> to leave U.S. generally allowed.  Must pay <b>prevailing wage</b> , as determined by DOL or actual wage, <b>whatever is higher</b> .
Dependents	F-2 dependents may not work, but may take classes if not working toward a degree.	J-2 dependents may work with specific authorization from USCIS. Must apply for work authorization and receive approval. (Form I-765)	H4 dependents may not work. Exchange visitor completes I-539 and pays application fee (\$290) for dependents.
Intent	Intent to <b>return home</b> . Allows for conversion to J-1 or H1B visa at end of OPT/STEM OPT period.	Intent is to <b>return home</b> at end of program. 212(e) <b>waiver</b> needed to convert directly to H1B if EV subject. May not apply for Permanent Residency.	<b>Dual intent</b> allows H1B to apply for Permanent Residency.
Supporting Documents	Documents provided by school. *EE must have a valid, original EAD (employment) card from USCIS on their first day of work to complete required forms.	DS-2019 issued by LSUHSC, offer letter, and valid passport for CP. May change status while in U.S with form I-539, passport, I-94, DS-2019 and waiver.	Degree/Equivalency Evaluation if foreign degree. Offer/Support letter stating job duties and requirements and H1B's qualifications, valid passport.
Processing Time	Generally, <b>90 days</b> from when USCIS receives the application. <b>No PP is available</b> .	CP from abroad: between 3 days and 8 weeks for issuance of entry visa, depending on consulate. (After receipt of Ds-2019) COS within the U.S.: about 5 months from when USCIS receives application. <b>No PP</b> .	COS within U.S., about 5 months from when USCIS receives application. CP from abroad: depends on consulate, usually between 3 days and 8 weeks <i>after</i> approval by USCIS. PP option provides <u>response</u> in 15 days (not necessarily an approval).
Required Fees	<b>None</b> . Student pays application fee (\$410) for form I-765.	<b>None</b> . Exchange visitor pays SEVIS fee (\$350) and entry visa fee (\$160) at consulate if abroad. Exchange visitor completes I-539 and pays application fee (\$370+\$85) if changing status in U.S.	<b>\$500 Fraud Fee must be paid by department and \$460 application fee paid by department. \$2,500 PP</b> (optional) usually paid by Dept, <b>unless</b> EE payment approved by ISO. EE pays entry visa fee (\$190) at consulate if abroad.

COS=Change of Status; CP=Consular Processing; DOL=Department of Labor; EAD=Employment Authorization Document; EE=Employee; ER=Employer; EV=Exchange visitor; LPR=Legal Permanent Residency; PP=Premium Processing; SEVIS=Student and Exchange Visitor Information System; USCIS=US Citizenship and Immigration Services

¥Other visas may be available, these are only the most common types used by LSUHSC employees for work authorization.