



WVHEPC J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

Change of Category

When a Form DS-2019 is prepared for you, a particular category of activity is indicated on the form. This designation of a category helps to establish and define your program objective. For example, the Research Scholar program is designed to engage primarily in research, observe or consult... In general, a change of category represents a change of objective and is not permitted. However, you may request an exception to this policy. A request for change of category along with supporting justification must be submitted to the DOS by the West Virginia Education Policy Commission (HEPC). Upon DOS approval, HEPC shall issue you a duly executed Form DS-2019 reflecting such change of category and provide a notification copy of such form to the DOS. There is a \$246 fee that must be paid when submitting a request of this nature to the DOS.

You are considered to be maintaining lawful status during the pendency of the application. If you apply for a change of category and are denied, you will have lawful status for an additional period of 30 days from the day of such notice and are expected to depart the country within that time or within the period of 30 days after the expiration of your Form DS-2019, whichever is latest.

In preparing a request for change of category, HEPC will provide sufficient documentation of the reasons for the change to permit DOS to reach an informed decision. This documentation may include, but is not limited to, supporting letters from faculty advisors, funding agencies, or the home government supporting the change; an explanation of how the current and intended activities complement each other; and a statement from you explaining your objectives and confirming your intention to return home at the end of the exchange visitor program.