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New Federal Rules Add Complexity for J-1 Visitors in Academic Programs

Federal rules set to go into effect on Sept. 15 for certain nonimmigrant academic students and exchange visitors will no longer utilize the expected training duration of their stay as a boundary. This means that medical students and fellows utilizing the J-1 Visa may no longer be covered for the length of their training program and must apply for an extension to allow them to remain in the U.S. to complete training.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) finalized the rule "Establishing a Fixed Time Period of Admission and an Extension of Stay Procedure for Nonimmigrant Academic Students, Exchange Visitors, and Representatives of Foreign Information Media." The rule replaces the "duration of status" policy with fixed periods of admission for F-1 students, J-1 exchange visitors and certain media visa holders. The rule is scheduled for a Sept. 15 effective date.

Under the new rule, international medical students, research trainees, fellows and other J-1 exchange visitors may need to file extension requests if additional time is required to complete their education or training. The rule also shortens the post-completion grace period for F-1 students from 60 days to 30 days.

The rule can be found in this *Federal Register*.

Please contact WHA Vice President of Federal Affairs and Advocacy Jon Hoelter or WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk with questions about the new rule.

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