



Irish Immigration Center  
100 Franklin Street, LL1  
Boston, MA 02110  
Tel (617) 542-7654  
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www.iicenter.org

# J1 Irish Work & Travel Program Application Guidelines, Process, & Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## Application Guidelines

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Complete the **J1 Irish Work & Travel Program Application Form** and submit it with:

- ⇒ A copy of your certified academic transcript *sent by your academic institution*, along with a letter confirming your full-time student status *or* a certified copy of your certificate, diploma or degree
- ⇒ Supply a clear colour copy of the photo page of your passport
- ⇒ A non-refundable deposit of \$100 USD by any of the payment methods below:
  - Calling (001) 617-542-7654 ext 38 with your credit card information
  - Online payments by credit card or bank account through PayPal at [www.iicenter.org](http://www.iicenter.org)
  - Bank check in US dollars (no personal checks accepted) mailed to:  
Jude Clarke  
International Programs  
Irish Immigration Center  
100 Franklin Street, LL1  
Boston, MA 02110  
USA
- ⇒ Supply a copy of your up-to-date resume (this should be no longer than one page)

## Application Process Timetable

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- ⇒ The IIC receives your application (and required documents) and reviews them to ensure that all U.S. government requirements are met.
- ⇒ The IIC will set up an interview with you either by phone or via webcam.
- ⇒ The IIC will then issue a certificate of eligibility, DS 2019, which you take to the United States consulate or embassy to apply for the J-1 visa. It is strongly recommended that you set up an appointment well in advance.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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- ⇒ *What is the J1 Irish Work & Travel (I.W.T.) Visa?*

The J1 I.W.T. visa is a cultural exchange visa that allows students and recent graduates to work and travel within the United States for up to twelve months. Certain eligibility requirements apply.

- ⇒ *Am I eligible for the J1 Irish Work & Travel (I.W.T.) Visa?*

To be eligible you must be a citizen of Ireland and a currently enrolled student *or* recent graduate of a recognized institution in Ireland or abroad (must be level 6 in Irish Education Framework). Recent graduates must have no more than twelve months between graduation and the program start date.

⇒ *Do I need to find my own job?*

Yes. You will be authorized to work anywhere in the United States on this visa. Those seeking work in the Boston area will have access to the Irish Immigration Center's downtown cybercafé.

⇒ *What does the \$ 650 fee cover?*

The \$ 650 fee to the Irish Immigration Center covers your visa sponsorship, processing of your application, maintenance of your individual SEVIS record, orientation to life in the United States, a 24 hour emergency hotline, and information on obtaining a social security number.

⇒ *What expenses will I have besides the application fee?*

You will have to pay the US \$180 United States government SEVIS fee, the US \$131 visa application fee, your own travel costs and your living expenses in the United States. You need to have enough money to live in the United States for at least 30 days (or until you find employment). Many larger cities in the United States can be expensive. The experience of participants on past exchange programs has been that wages will enable you to live adequately and cover the cost of shared accommodation, transportation, health insurance, food, clothing, taxes etc.

⇒ *Is health insurance required?*

Yes, the U.S. State Department requires that each participant in the program have insurance in effect which covers them for sickness or accident during their time on the program. The insurance must be obtained and active prior to your entry to the United States. The State Department is very specific about what the insurance needs to cover. IIC has researched insurance plans which meet these requirements. This can be discussed during your interview.

⇒ *What do I do in case of an emergency during my time in the U.S.?*

The IIC maintains an emergency hotline that is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That number will be given to you upon arrival.

⇒ *Can I apply for a Social Security number before I arrive?*

No, this must be done in person at the Social Security office in the city where you will be residing with appropriate forms of documentation.

⇒ *How long will it take to get my Social Security number?*

Processing time for Social Security is approximately 2-6 weeks. When you apply, you are given a letter by Social Security acknowledging that you have applied. Most employers would accept this as proof until your number arrives.

⇒ *How much time do I have to find employment once in the United States?*

You will have up to 30 days to find employment. If you have not initially located an internship within 30 days you must contact your sponsor immediately to discuss.

⇒ *Will my spouse and children be allowed to come with me?*

No, dependents and spouses are not allowed to accompany you on the J1 I.W.T. visa.

⇒ *Will I have to pay taxes while in the United States?*

Yes, anyone who earns income from a U.S. source must pay federal and state taxes. You will not have to pay Social Security, Medicare (FICA) or the Federal Unemployment tax (FUTA) because you will not be eligible to receive these benefits.

⇒ Do I have to travel on my start date?

During your interview we will agree to a start date. This is the date your visa will commence and the date from when you can legally begin work. On this program, you are allowed to arrive up to 30 days before your start date. You may also travel home up to 30 days after your end date.

⇒ *Will I be able to change positions to another employer if things do not work out with my initial job?*

Yes. You will have up to 30 days to find new employment if you decide to change jobs.

⇒ *Can I extend my J1 visa if the company wants me to stay longer than a year?*

No, the maximum amount of time for the J1 I.W.T. visa is twelve months and it cannot be extended.

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### **Have more questions?**

If you still have questions that were not answered here, please contact the **International Program staff** at the IIC:

Ann Marie Byrne, Director of International Programs  
Phone: (001)617.542.7654 ext 16  
amariebyrne@iicenter.org

Or

Jude Clarke, International Programs Associate  
Phone: (001)617.542.7654 ext 38  
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