

Dear Student:

You will be participating in the J-1 Exchange Visitor program, which was created by the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 to facilitate educational and cultural exchange. There are many things to consider as you are preparing to come to the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). Be sure to review everything in this packet prior to arriving in the US.

You will find information on:

- Paying the SEVIS Fee
- The Visa Application Process
- Living In and Getting Around Baltimore
- Entering the US
- Check in Requirements
- Health Insurance Requirement
- Cultural Exchange Opportunities
- The Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure

Finally, at the back of this packet, you will find your original DS-2019, certificate of eligibility for J-1 Exchange Visitor Status under the sponsorship of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). You should read the back page of this document carefully, as it includes important information about, the two-year home-country physical presence requirements, extensions, limitations of stay, required documentation for admissions as an exchange visitor, change of visa status, insurance.

Once you have read it, **you will need to certify your agreement with the terms by signing your name and writing the city where you signed and the date of signature at the bottom of the first page of the DS-2019.**

#### **PAYING THE SEVIS FEE**

Please be aware that a \$220 SEVIS fee must be paid to the Department of Homeland Security prior to obtaining your visa. Further information about the fee may be obtained on the SEVIS fee website <http://www.fmjfee.com>, and in the enclosed SEVIS fee handout.

#### **VISA APPLICATION PROCESS**

Please consult the website of your local U.S. embassy or consulate for information on scheduling a visa appointment and any required documents and fees. You can find links to local U.S. embassy and consulate websites around the world at <http://www.usembassy.gov>.

#### **ENTERING THE UNITED STATES**

At the U.S. port of entry, you should present your original DS-2019 form, SEVIS fee receipt, your passport, valid J-1 visa, and financial support documentation used to obtain Form DS-2019. Please visit [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94) after your entry to the US to view your admission's record; you'll need to upload this when you check-in online.

## LIVING IN AND GETTING AROUND BALTIMORE

There are many housing options in Baltimore. We recommend utilizing the UMB Housing website to locate either on campus or off campus housing.

<http://www.housing.umaryland.edu/>

Rental housing costs can vary greatly. It is important to research a location in which you will feel comfortable.

Public transportation is also present in Baltimore. There is a free bus, The Charm City Circulator, <http://www.charmcitycirculator.com/>. There is also transportation available through the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) <http://mta.maryland.gov/>. Students get a reduced cost for MTA or some parking options.

<https://www.umaryland.edu/parking/parking-at-umb/student-parking/>

## CHECK IN REQUIREMENTS

Upon your arrival, you must complete the New F-1/J-1 Student Check-in e-form in Sunapsis under the Orientation tab. You will need to upload a copy or picture of your **DS-2019, passport, and J-1 visa. This check-in with the OIS is a requirement and results in the activation of your SEVIS record.** We'll also need your current street address in the US. Please note that U.S. Department of State guidance indicates that J-2 dependents are expected to reside with the J-1 Exchange Visitor while present in the U.S.

## HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All J-1 exchange visitors, and their J-2 dependents, are required to have insurance which covers medical costs, medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. The Exchange Visitor Program emailed to you describes the required coverage.

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITIES

For more information: <http://www.umaryland.edu/ois/connection-programs>:

- Program Events for incoming students-Please Sign UP!
  - Events offer a variety of programs to help new students connect with other international students while learning about all Baltimore has to offer.
- Global Perspectives Conversation Program-Please Sign UP!
  - The program offers student and post-doctoral fellow participants a one-hour, facilitated weekly conversation to explore common interests; discuss concerns about U.S. academic and social life; and identify and deliberate matters of cultural, social, and political importance.
- UMB also offers numerous activities of which you may take part; once on campus you will receive the Campus Life Weekly email, which will keep you apprised of student activities you may join. You can also view the calendar of events online: <http://elm.umaryland.edu/calendar/>

We hope you enjoy your stay at the University of Maryland Baltimore.

Sincerely,

The Office of International Services