

Spouses and Children

1. Spouses and/or children under the age of 21 who wish to accompany or join the principal exchange visitor (J) visa holder in the United States for the duration of his/her stay require exchange visitor visas (derivative J visas). The application procedure is the same as that for a primary visa applicant. The sponsor must approve the accompaniment of the spouse and/or children and who will each be issued their own Form DS-2019. This form is used to obtain the required visa and the spouse and dependents can enter the U.S. at the same time as the principal exchange visitor or at a later date.
2. **Work** - The spouse and/or children of an exchange visitor in the U.S. may not work in J-2 status. If employment is desired, the appropriate work visa will be required. Before they can work, they must make an application to DHS, US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and be approved for permission to work. They must file Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization with the USCIS office that serves the area where they live for a work permit (employment authorization document). To learn more, select [How Do I Get a Work Permit \(Employment Authorization Document\)?](#) to go to the USCIS Website.
3. **Study**- The spouse and/or children of an exchange visitor visa holder who are in the U.S. on an exchange visitor visa may study in the U.S. without also being required to apply for a student (F-1) visa or change to F-1 status.
4. **Spouses and/or children who do not intend to reside in the United States** with the principal visa holder, but visit for vacations only, may be eligible to apply for [visitor \(B-2\) visas](#), or if qualified, travel without a visa under the [Visa Waiver Program](#).
5. **Family Members Following to Join the Exchange Visitor**
The spouse and children can also apply for visas after the principal applicant has already traveled. In general, they must present the following:
 - **Form DS 2019, SEVIS generated, and approved by the sponsor**
 - **Proof that the principal applicant (the person who received the DS-2019 or IAP-66) is maintaining his/her J visa status**
 - **Copy of the J-1's (principal applicant's) visa**
 - **Proof of relationship to the principal applicant**
 - **Proof of sufficient money to cover all expenses in the United States**
6. Spouses and children of exchange visitors may not enter the United States before the principal visitor enters for the first time.

Source: Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#1

