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Immigration Matters

Any questions you have concerning immigration should be addressed to the Responsible Officer, Bill McKibben, located in the Institute for International Studies at MSU. Bill is the J-1 DHS appointed officer for Murray State and will be able to assist you with any questions or problems you may have.

Applying for your visa

When you go to the Embassy to apply for your visa, you will need the following:

If you are living in the international house during your stay at Murray State University, you can subtract \$300 per month from the total required.

Valid Documentation

In order to maintain status as a visiting scholar in the United States, you must keep your documents current. If your passport will expire during your stay at MSU, you should apply for a new passport at least 4 months in advance of the expiration date. If your passport expires during your stay without renewal, you risk falling out of status.

Your visa should be valid for your entire period of stay. However, if it is not, you must get it renewed if you return home anytime during your program.

The DS-2019 is one of the most important immigration documents that you have. This document informs the US Government that you are in valid status in the United States. You must NOT stay in the United States more than 30 days past the end date on your DS-2019. If you wish to extend your program, you MUST seek assistance at the Institute for International Studies to have your paperwork extended BEFORE the expiration date on your DS-2019 or you will be considered out-of-status.

Orientation

Your orientation will begin the day after your arrival in Murray. It will include the following:

- Social Security Card If you already have a social security number, bring your card with you to Murray. This is very important.
- Banking
- Campus Tour
- Campus ID Card
- Visit to local grocery/department store
- Departmental Introductions in your academic department
- Insurance
- If you have children, enrolling them into school, meeting their teachers, visiting the school, obtaining the bus schedule, finding after school care for them if needed, making appointments for any vaccinations (shots) that are needed, buying items on the school supply list, filling out paperwork for their school, arranging rides to and from school, arranging ESL assistance for your children
- Establishment of an MSU Email Account
- Anything else that needs to be done.

In order to help us to get this orientation done in a speedy manner, please read this manual completely and be ready with your questions upon arrival. If you are bringing children with you, it is very important that you read the section: Bringing Your School-Age Children. This section will help you in bringing the right materials and documents for your child so that s/he can be enrolled quickly into the local school here in Murray.

Insurance

As a J-1 scholar, your insurance requirements are very strict. You must purchase insurance immediately after arrival at MSU or before you come to the US. If you purchase insurance in your native country, you must bring a copy of the policy in ENGLISH from home. You will be considered out of status if you do not purchase insurance with the minimum requirements within one week of arrival at MSU. The minimum insurance requirements for a J-1 scholar are:

- Medical benefits of at least \$50,000 per person per accident or illness
- Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500
- Expenses associated with medical evacuation in the amount of \$10,000
- The policy should have a deductible less than \$500

If you bring family with you to the US as dependents, all dependents MUST also have these minimum requirements. Proof of insurance will be needed for you AND all dependents who come with you to MSU.

You may purchase insurance after arrival at MSU. Policy options are included in your welcome packet and are also available at the IIS after your arrival.

Banking

After your arrival at MSU, our orientation staff will assist you with several things. One of these is securing a bank account. There are several local banks to choose from in Murray. All have ATM machines in town and one has an ATM machine on campus in the student services building. Most banks offer the same basic services:

Checking Account

This is an account in which you place your money in the bank and are able to ~~write spend~~ ~~write spend~~ that money. Checks are accepted at every shopping location in Murray with the exception of some restaurants and gas stations. If you are not familiar with checks and how to write checks, the IIS will assist you with this after arrival.

Savings Account

This type of account allows you to place money in the bank and earn interest on that money. You cannot write checks on this money.

Debit Card

A debit card is a visa or mastercard that pulls money directly out of your account. It can be used anywhere visa or mastercard are accepted, but instead of paying interest on your total, the bill automatically comes out of your bank account. This card can be used with either a checking or a savings account.

ATM Card

An ATM card allows you to get money out of cash machines all over the world. This money comes directly out of your bank account. You can use your ATM card to access your checking and/or savings account.

Transferring Money From Home

You can transfer money to your bank account here after arrival in Murray if necessary. However, you should ask the Responsible Officer about the fees associated with transferring money into your account here in Murray. This can be very expensive. Check on this before leaving your home country.

Safe Deposit Box

Banks in the US offer the use of a safe deposit box to store your valuables such as your passport, expensive jewelry or family heirlooms. This may be useful when you travel while in the US. A safe deposit box costs a monthly fee payable directly to the bank where your box is located.

Account Overdraw

In the US, banks do not allow customers to overdraw their accounts. Though this is common practice in countries outside the US, doing this in the US will be very costly to you. Therefore, be very ~~caer~~ careful about the amount of money you spend from your account. Fees related to overdrawing your account can be as much as \$30 per check per day.

Living on campus in College Courts

College Courts is an apartment complex owned and operated by Murray State University. All College Courts apartments are furnished with a bed, desk, couch, table and chairs and have a full private bathroom and kitchen. Cable internet service, water, trash pickup and electricity are provided.

If you are placed in one of the college apartments owned and operated by Murray State University, there are some things you will need to be responsible for. The apartment is provided free of charge to our visiting scholars who qualify for it. The Institute for International Studies expects you to take care of the apartment and the furniture and goods in it. In that respect, pay close attention to the following things:

Problems

If anything is broken in the house please contact Bill at 731.3089 or bmckibben@murraystate.edu as soon as possible. Do not let the problem last until the apartment is permanently damaged. As soon as something goes wrong, notify Bill to have the problem fixed.

Cable service

Basic cable service is provided in the apartments.

Living off-campus

You may choose to live off-campus while visiting Murray State University. For those of you who are not visiting MSU as part of a reciprocal exchange, this is one

Bringing your School-Age Children

If you bring your school-age children (age 5 to 18) to Murray with you, there are several things that you should consider and be prepared for before leaving your native country. This section is intended to reduce your stress after arrival in getting your child enrolled in school.

Vaccinations

All school-age children are required to have a specific amount and type of vaccinations (shots). A booklet called "Shots for Tots" is available at the Institute for International Studies and is enclosed here for you if you have informed the IIS that you are bringing children with you to MSU. This booklet explains what each shot is for and how the illness it prevents can be recognized. The shots required for children to attend school are broken down according to age. These are:

Child's Age	Vaccination
Birth-2 months	Hepatitis B
1-4 months	Hepatitis B
2 months	Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis; Polio; Haemophilus influenzae type b; Pneumococcal disease

Bus requirements

The local schools offer a bus pick up and drop off service to all school children in the county limits. The IIS can assist you with informing the bus service that you wish to utilize it. Your child can ride the bus both to and from school or just one way depending on your needs. The IIS will help you find out what time the bus picks up and drops off and the closest stop to your housing. In return, the bus drivers often appreciate having a sheet of commands in your native language. For that purpose, please translate the following phrases into your native language:

- Sit down.
- Be quiet.
- Hello.
- Good Morning.
- Good afternoon.
- Goodbye.
- See you tomorrow.
- No food is allowed on the bus.
- Wake up.
- This is your bus stop.

Local school buses are on a very strict schedule. If the bus driver has informed you that your child will be picked up at 6:50 every morning, then your child should be at the bus stop before 6:50. If your child is late, the bus will not wait for him/her. In the afternoons, if you are not waiting for your child at the bus stop, the bus will not drop your child off.

After school programs

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You may also take courses for credit if you wish. You are allowed to take 12 courses per semester for credit, but those must be paid for by you unless a previous arrangement has been made with the Institute for International Studies regarding payment by an outside party, such as Fulbright or LASPAU.

The courses you take at MSU for credit CANNOT lead to a degree. You must take the courses as a non-degree student and are not eligible to receive a degree as a J-1 scholar. If you wish to seek a degree at MSU, you should apply for a change of category to a J-1 student or a change of status to an F-1. You can see the Responsible Officer for details and assistance with this if it is needed.

Relationships Within Your Academic Department

Prior to your arrival at MSU, you will be in contact with the academic department you will be affiliated with while at MSU. Upon arrival, you will meet the faculty and staff of that department. Your work within the department and research collaboration with other faculty are solely dependent on that department and the interests of the faculty members of the department.

The department you are affiliated with may or may not provide office space, computer support, and internet services. This is the decision of the department and is based on space and equipment availability. This is determined each semester. You should ask your department about it but be willing to share space with other adjuncts or student workers. If no space is available in your department, there are computer labs on campus in several buildings where you can utilize the internet and word-processing capabilities.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency on Murray's campus, you should call Public Safety at 2222 for assistance. Public Safety patrols the campus and will assist you with whatever you need. If you are living off-campus or experience an emergency during travel away from MSU, you should dial 911 for assistance from the local authorities (police, fire, ambulance).

You should also feel free to call the Institute for International Studies' Scholar Coordinator to seek assistance.