

Departmental Policy Title	Visa Policy - GME	Policy ID	11327
Keywords	visa, J-1, F-1OPT, H-1B, transfer, ECFMG		
Department	Graduate Medical Education (GME)		

I. Purpose of Policy

This policy defines the requirements for non-United States (U.S). citizen applying to Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited residency or fellowship programs at Dartmouth Hitchcock (DH).

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all non-U.S. citizens applying to ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs at DH.

III. Definitions

- **Resident:** Any physician in an ACMGE-accredited graduate medical education (GME) program including residents and fellows.

IV. Policy Statement

In addition to meeting GME eligibility requirements, a non-U.S. citizen applying to a DH GME program must either have Permanent Resident Status, an Employment Authorization Card or be eligible to obtain one of the following employment visas: J-1, F-1 OPT, or H-1B Transfer.

A. Sponsored Visa Categories

- J-1 Visa
 - The J-1 visa is a temporary nonimmigrant visa reserved for participants in the Exchange Visitor Program.
 - To apply for a J-1 visa, an applicant must meet the following criteria. Eligibility requirements delineated in the ECFMG's Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program supersedes those that follow.
 - Passed Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination™ (USMLE™) or equivalent.
 - Have a valid ECFMG Certificate.
 - Have a contract or official letter of offer for a position in a GME accredited program.

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- Provide a statement of need from the Ministry of Health of the country of last legal permanent residence regardless of country of citizenship.

- **F-1 OPT Visa**

- An F-1 student is a nonimmigrant who is pursuing a full course of study towards a specific educational or professional objective, at an academic institution in the U.S. that has been designated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to offer courses of study to such students.
- The “Citizenship and Immigration Services” (CIS) may authorize students in F-1 status to engage in “optional practical training” (OPT) for up to 12 months after completion of studies, provided the appointment can be completed in 12 months. This OPT authorization is appropriate for the first or prelim year of training and is a 1-year contract. International Medical Graduates who receive U.S. medical degrees while in F-1 status may apply to the CIS for OPT work authorization.

*Pending meeting program requirements, a student engaged in OPT for 12 months could be sponsored for further training under the H-1B visa status.

- **H-1B Transfer**

- The H visa category is for the temporary employment or training of foreign nationals by a specific employer. The H-1B visa allows professional foreign physicians to work in the U.S. in specialty occupations for up to six years.
- Programs may consider candidates who are presently holding H-1B visas from other training programs. Each training program applies certain program specific criteria for screening of H-1B applicants.

V. References

- <https://www.uscis.gov/>
- <http://www.ecfm.org/>
- <http://www.usmle.org/>
- <https://www.nbome.org/>

Responsible Owner:	Graduate Medical Education (GME)	Contact(s):	Karen Miller
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Related Polices & Procedures:	Eligibility Requirements Policy - GME		
Related Job Aids:			

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