

The End of Duration of Status: J-1 Research Scholars

International Scholar Services

August 10, 2026

The New Rule

Establishing a fixed time period of admission and an extension of stay procedure for nonimmigrant academic students, exchange visitors, and representatives of foreign information media.

Key Terms

- **DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility:** Document of eligibility to apply for J-1 status issued by the sponsor (Caltech).
- **I-94 record:** registration of your status in the U.S. granted upon entry.
- **Admit Until Date (AUD):** The last date that you are permitted to be in the U.S.
- **Arrival/Issued Date:** The date you enter the U.S. each trip.
- **Class of Admission:** Should indicate J-1 (or J-2). Contact ISS if CBP admitted you in another status.
- **Extension of Stay (EOS):** The USCIS application via Form I-539 to extend your J-1 status. Also referred to “extension of status.”
- **Grace Period:** Is **30 days** after your work authorization.
 - Unless you have filed a timely extension of status, you are not permitted to conduct any research or work on behalf of Caltech during the grace period.

What is the “fixed time period of admission?”

“Under new 8 CFR 214.2(j)(1), J exchange visitors will be able to receive an initial period of admission not to exceed the program end date as stated on the Form DS-2019, up to a period of 4 years.”

Admitted from your current **Arrival/Issued Date** until the **end date on the DS-2019 Certificate + the 30-day grace period**

OR

Admitted from your current **Arrival/Issued Date** until **4 years + the 30-day grace period** **IF** your DS-2019 end date **exceeds 4 years** from your **Arrival/Issued Date**.

Important Dates

September 15, 2026

If you enter the U.S. on or after September 15 you will be admitted for a fixed Admit Until Date.

J status needs to be extended via Form I-539 **on or after September 15.**

If Form I-539 is filed *prior to the end of your grace period* and *before March 18, 2027* you will be able to **continue working until the case is approved.**

March 18, 2027

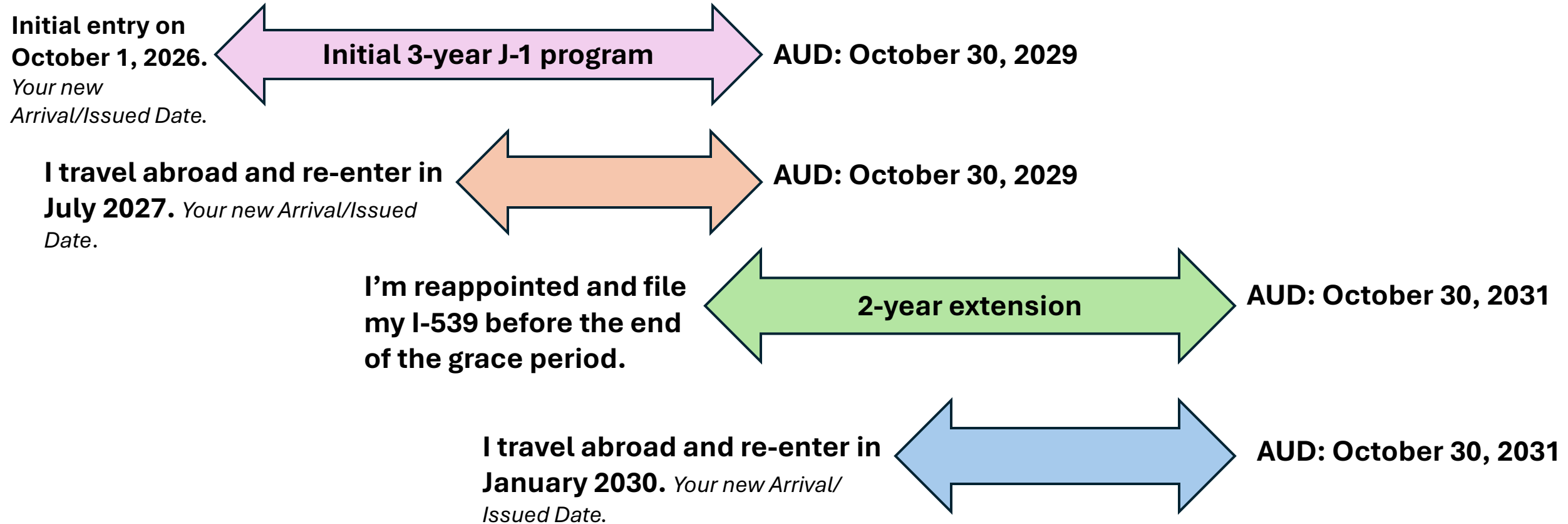
Form I-539 extensions will be granted **240-days** of continued work authorization for pending applications that are filed *before your program end date or 30-day grace period* on or after March 18.

In the event your application is pending **beyond** 240-days you must stop working and will be placed on an unpaid leave of absence until you obtain the work authorization.

If filed after the 30-day grace period, reinstatement/correction would be needed first and no work authorization while pending.

These dates could change!

J-1 Extension and Travel Example



Wait! Is J-1 Research Scholar still 5 years?

- The J-1 Research Scholar/Professor category is **still** a 5-year maximum duration
- You can apply for extensions of your J-1 status up to the end of the 5th year.
- We can't address direct requests to extend your J-1 to the 5th year ahead of 9/15.
You need a Caltech appointment for ISS to take any action.



There is no indication the government will shorten your J-1 record to 4 years on September 15!

What if you have no plans to leave the U.S.?

“DHS will generally allow all J nonimmigrants present in the United States on the final rule's effective date who are validly maintaining that status and who were admitted for D/S to remain in the United States J status, without filing an EOS request, up to the program end date reflected on their DS-2019 that is valid on the final rule's effective date, for a period not to exceed 4 years from the effective date of the final rule, plus an additional 30 days for J nonimmigrants to depart the country.”

If your DS-2019 end date exceeds 4 years from September 15, 2026 **which is September 15, 2030 + 30-day grace period**, you will need to take action on your J status by that date.

What if you have no plans to leave the U.S.? Pt 2

- If your DS-2019 is **shorter than 5 years** and you are reappointed on or after **September 15, 2026** you will need to file Form I-539 to extend your stay. Whether or not you have traveled travel on or after September 15.
- If your current DS-2019 is **5 years** you are at the maximum duration of a J-1 Research Scholar, no action is to be taken.
- As of, August 10, 2026 If you are from a country on a travel ban list, currently, you will be able to file an I-539 extension. The USCIS Adjudication Pause was vacated due to a court order.

J-2 Dependents

- J-2 dependents must file their own form I-539 to extend their status simultaneously or after the J-1.
- If they plan to work, J-2 dependents must submit their own form I-765 for the work authorization.
- If filing an I-539, and any family member's passport expires before the end date of the J, they will only be admitted to that date and everyone's J-2 status will be shortened.
- If a J-1 is denied the extension, the J-2 will be denied.

What YOU need to monitor

- **Your passport expiration date**
- **Your visa expiration date**
 - Yes! You still need a valid visa sticker for entry
 - Remember, your visa dates may not match your DS-2019 or I-94 AUD
- **Your program end date on your current, valid DS-2019**
- **Your I-94 details**
 - *Arrival/Issued Date* = the date you most recently entered the U.S.
 - *AUD* = your J-1 program end date + 30-day grace period
 - *Class of Admission* = J-1 or J-2
- **Your appointment end date**
 - Have discussions about reappointments early to plan for filing your extension

Best practices – Our advice has not changed

Print your I-94 record:

- All J-1s and J-2s are required to carry immigration documents that establish their status in the United States with them at all times. Therefore, foreign nationals who travel need to print their new I-94 records upon return to the U.S. to carry as physical proof of registration and review the record.

Reappointments:

- ISS is not a decision maker in the reappointment process, we are downstream!
- Our advice for reappointments from an immigration lens remains the same, “to reappoint as soon as possible, for as long as possible.”

Consult with ISS before:

- Applying for a 212e waiver
- Starting a green card application
- Changes in your work duties, title, worksite, funding etc.