

Non-U.S. Citizen Eligibility Requirements

Applicants who are not U.S. citizens must acquire or currently hold one of the following to begin training at UW Health in an ACGME accredited residency or fellowship program.

- **Permanent Resident Card**

A Permanent Resident Card, also known as a Green Card, authorizes the card holder the right to lawfully live and work in the United States permanently. More information on permanent resident cards can be found here <https://www.uscis.gov/green-card>.

- **Employment Authorization Document**

An Employment Authorization Card (EAD) provides temporary employment authorization to non-U.S. citizens in the United States. More information on applying for an EAD can be found here <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>. Note: An EAD tied to an F-1 visa (F-1 OPT EAD) is *not* accepted for graduate medical education training at UW Health.

- **J-1 visa status**

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) is authorized by the U.S. Department of State (DoS) to sponsor foreign national physicians as "Exchange Visitors" in the J-1 alien physician category. Review the EVSP Reference Guide, <http://www.ecfm.org/evsp/index.html>, for more information about the J-1 physician visa.

- ECFMG Certification

ECFMG certification is one of the eligibility requirements for J-1 visa sponsorship. ECFMG certification is reserved for international medical graduates (IMGs): Individuals who received their basic medical degree from a medical school located outside the United States and Canada. The location of the medical school, not the citizenship of the individual, is what determines whether they are IMGs. This means that U.S. citizens who graduated from medical schools outside the United States and Canada are considered IMGs. *Non-U.S. citizens who graduated from medical schools in the United States and Canada are not considered IMGs.*

- Canadian Citizens and Landed Immigrants

Canadian citizens applying for J-1 or- J-2 visa status are not required to obtain a visa stamp at a U.S. Consulate to enter the United States. However, Canadian citizens must use Form DS-2019 to secure J status at a U.S. port of entry.

- Change of J-1 visa category

A change in category from J-1 research scholar to J-1 alien physician is possible under certain circumstances. It requires pre-approval from the U.S. Department of State and must be initiated by ECFMG. The requirements for a change of category request and other details are outlined on the ECFMG website [here](#).

The following are not accepted for graduate medical education training at UW Health:

H-1B visa status

As an employer, UW Health does not sponsor H-1B visas for graduate medical education.

F-1 visa status

An EAD for Optional Practical Training (OPT) while in F-1 status is not accepted for graduate medical education. Non-U.S. citizens who attend medical school on an F-1 student visa are not eligible for J-1 visa sponsorship unless their most recent education or training is outside the U.S.

For questions, contact the UW Health GME Office at uwgme@uwhealth.org.