

H-1B Instructions and Application Packet (Initial and Extension)

H-1B Overview

H-1B Specialty Workers are authorized to work in specialized fields for a maximum period of six years. The University of South Alabama may sponsor an employee for H-1B authorization for a period of up to three years at a time. H-1B workers must be paid a salary that equals at least the US Department of Labor determined prevailing wage. To sponsor an H-1B worker, the University of South Alabama, through the Office of Immigration, must file petitions with the US Department of Labor (DOL) and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) indicating that the University will appoint and pay the individual the prevailing wage.

Eligibility

In general, to be eligible for H-1B sponsorship the position must be full-time and require a minimum of a bachelor's degree and the sponsored employee must meet that requirement and possess any necessary licensure. Some individuals, even if they meet the degree and licensure requirements, may not be eligible for H-1B status based on their immigration history. For example, those who have already used the six-year limit on H-1B status are ineligible for an additional period of H-1B status until they have resided and been physically outside of the U.S. for at least one year. Similarly, those who are subject to the two-year home residency requirement based on their current or prior J-1/J-2 Exchange Visitor status are ineligible for H-1B status until they have either fulfilled the requirement or obtained a waiver through the Department of State and USCIS. A person for whom a department wishes to sponsor an H-1B should contact the Office of Immigration to discuss his or her eligibility for an H-1B visa.

Prevailing Wage

In order to sponsor an employee for an H-1B visa, the University must pay at least the *prevailing wage* or the *actual wage* (the rate paid to similarly situated employees), whichever is higher. The US Department of Labor calculates the prevailing wage as the average salary or wage for similarly employed workers in the area of intended employment. If this prevailing wage exceeds the amount the department wishes to pay the employee, then the University cannot proceed with the H-1B petition. In this case, departments should consult with the Office of Immigration about other options for visa sponsorship.

Processing Times – Plan up to 6 Months in Advance

Because USCIS H-1B processing times vary, the Office of Immigration can only provide an *estimate* of the timing for a particular petition. We recommend that departments initiate an application as early as 6 months before the desired H-1B start date, which is the earliest that USCIS will accept an H-1B petition. Premium processing is available for a \$2,805 U.S. government fee; this guarantees a decision by USCIS within 15 calendar days. The Office of Immigration requires at least two months to process and submit an H-1B petition from the time the department and individual submits all required documents.

Required Fees

Departments are required to pay certain processing fees related to the H-1B petition. The immigration attorney handling fee is approximately \$2,400 depending on the attorney the department selects from the list of University-approved immigration attorneys. USCIS filing fee is \$460 for the I-129 application. In addition, departments must pay a \$500 anti-fraud fee for initial H-1B petitions and for cases in which USA is filing a change of employer petition (“portability”) for someone who already holds H-1B status with another employer. Extension petitions do not require the anti-fraud fee. The foreign national **cannot** pay these fees.

Optional Fees

The department and/or individual may request Premium Processing (guaranteed 15 calendar day decision). The department or the individual, whichever the premium processing benefits, may pay the additional \$2,805 fee to USCIS. Please indicate your department's willingness to pay for premium processing on page 9. If the foreign national wishes to apply for immediate family members to change to H-4 dependent status within the U.S., he or she must pay the I-539 change-of-status fee (either \$420 for electronic filing or \$470 for paper filing) and \$500 immigration attorney handling fee.

Changes in Terms of Employment or Termination

Departments must consult with the Office of Immigration prior to changing an H-1B employee’s terms of employment (including changes to job duties or department) to determine whether an amended petition is required.

Please inform the Office of Immigration immediately if an H-1B worker’s employment is terminated so that our office can notify the Department of Labor and USCIS to immediately withdraw the H-1B. Because H-1B status is an employment-based status, that status immediately ends upon termination. If the department terminates employment, the department **must** pay the reasonable cost of return transportation to the H-1B employee’s last place of foreign residence. **The department will continue to be liable for paying the individual’s full salary and benefits if the H-1B support is not withdrawn.**

H-1B Extensions

The process for requesting an extension of H-1B status is the same as for the initial period of H-1B employment. The extension petition must be filed prior to the current H-1B status end date to avoid interruptions in employment. The employee may continue to work for a period of 240 days beyond their current H-1B status expiration while an extension petition is pending, as long as it is filed in a timely manner (e.g. filed before the current end date with a receipt notice from USCIS).

Please note: An extension of H-1B status allows the employee to continue working in the U.S.; however, it does not extend his or her H-1B entry visa, which is required for re-entry into the U.S. after traveling abroad. If the H-1B employee wishes to travel outside the U.S. after the expiration date of his or her current entry visa, he or she must apply for a new entry visa at a U.S. Embassy.

H-1B Visas, Travel Information, and Possible Visa Delays

H-1B employees should contact the Office of Immigration for information on travel requirements. H-1B visa requirements can vary by consular location, therefore, please refer to the particular United States consulate/embassy that you will visit. A list of embassy websites is available at <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. Employees and departments should be aware that security clearances, which are part of visa processing, may delay an employee’s return to the U.S. to continue employment.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA APPROVED OUTSIDE IMMIGRATION COUNSEL

The University of South Alabama uses approved outside legal counsel for employment-based petitions, and select USA-sponsored H-1B filings. University departments MAY NOT hire an immigration attorney to file a USA employer-sponsored petition without approval of the sponsorship using this form. Departments with questions about the retention of immigration counsel to represent the University in the filing of an employer-sponsored H-1B petition may contact the Office of Immigration.

<p>Adam Cohen Siskind Susser, P.C. 1028 Oakhaven Road Memphis, TN 38119 acohen@visalaw.com 901-682-6455</p>	<p>Kathleen Gasparian Gasparian Spivey Immigration 1915 MLK, Jr. Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113 kathleen@gsimmigrationlaw.com 504-262-9878</p>	<p>Klari Tedrow Tedrow and Myers Immigration Law Group 2907 Central Avenue, Suite 109 Homewood, AL 35209 ktedrow@usimmigrant.net 205-871-8084</p>
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DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

- 1. Mandatory Recruitment:** USA and USA Health must undertake a recruitment process to demonstrate a good faith effort to recruit an American citizen for the job opportunity in the same salary range. All recruitment must specify the practice type or occupational classification, specific location, and the specific employer (USA, USA HealthCare Management, LLC). The recruitment must run for at least 45 days. Certain online platforms are allowed for national and in-state recruitment. Check with the Office of Immigration if you have questions regarding the recruitment process.
- 2. Request H-1B processing (Complete Appendix A):**

To initiate the H-1B process, the department should complete the Appendix A section of this packet, providing details on the job position and a copy of the appointment/job offer letter (if already prepared). This information, the Office of Immigration and International Admissions will determine the prevailing wage as established by the U.S. Department of Labor. The other component of wage determination is the review of Actual Wages paid to employees within the department. Once the Office of Immigration determines the prevailing wage and actual wage, we will consult with the department if it appears the offered salary does not meet the Department of Labor's wage requirement. The department must pay at least the prevailing wage or the actual wage (the rate paid to similarly situated employees), whichever is higher. If this minimum salary exceeds the amount the department wishes to pay the H-1B applicant, the Office of Immigration will consult the department about other options. The department might choose to increase the salary or explore other visa options for the applicant.
- 3. Complete the Export Control Questionnaire for Foreign National Employees (separate form)**

In support of your request for H-1B sponsorship, the Office of Immigration and International Admissions is required to certify on the USCIS I-129 petition whether or not a license for export controlled technology or technical data is necessary for the professor/researcher being sponsored. To facilitate this requirement, all host departments are required to complete an attestation as to whether or not the H-1B worker will require a license for export controlled technology or technical data.
- 4. Complete the H-1B Actual Wage Determination.**
- 5. Send documents to the Office of Immigration:** The H-1B Request (Appendix A), Completed Export Control Questionnaire, and the Actual Wage Determination may be sent as soon as they are complete. Please send the completed H-1B packet and all supporting documents noted on page 13 of 13 to the Office of Immigration located at Meisler Hall 2200.
- 6. Labor Condition Application (LCA) Electronic Notice:** The Department of Labor and H-1B petition procedures require employers to notify its workforce in the same occupational classification that an H-1B worker is being sought. To comply with this rule, the Office of Immigration will send an LCA e-Notification through email to all similarly employed personnel. If the H-1B worker is placed at an additional or different worksite within the same geographical location, notice must be given to the workers at the new worksite in the manner described above. **The notification must take place before the date the H-1B worker begins working at the new site not contemplated at the time the initial LCA was filed.**
- 7. Process Check/Direct Pay Request for USCIS Fees (please see Appendix B).**

PROSPECTIVE H-1B EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES

1. Provide immigration information and history (please complete Appendix C): The Office of Immigration or department's point of contact will communicate with the prospective H-1B worker to obtain the supporting documents noted on page 13 of 13.

2. H-4 Dependent Sponsorship. If a prospective H-1B employee has dependent family members (spouse or children) whom they would like sponsored for H-4 visa status in connection with their H-1B petition, the foreign national will need to consult with the Office of Immigration about processing the H-4 visa support. For sponsorship of dependents that are already in the US to either extend or obtain H-4 status, the prospective H-1B employee will need to submit documents for concurrent filing with the H-1B petition. The immigration attorney handling fee is approximately \$500 (subject to change). USCIS fee for the filing of an H-4 petition is \$420 for electronic filing or \$470 for paper filing. For dependents that are currently outside of the U.S. and will enter the U.S. in H-4 status at a later date, the Office of Immigration can advise on how they may obtain H-4 status abroad.

OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION PROCESSING

After the department and foreign national submit the required paperwork, the Office of Immigration will proceed as follows:

1. Request a prevailing wage determination from the National Prevailing Wage Center (NPWC). If needed, this process can take up to four months and provides the employer "safe harbor status." This means, if the employer's wage compliance is investigated for any reason, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division will not challenge the validity of the prevailing wage so long as it was applied properly (i.e., correct geographic area, occupation, and skill level); or, by accessing other legitimate sources of information such as the Online Wage Library found at the Foreign Labor Data Center.
2. Submit a Labor Condition Application (LCA) through the U.S. Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Application Gateway system for H-1B Non-Immigrants (Form ETA 9035). Certification of the LCA takes 7 – 10 business days.
3. E-Notification is sent by email to all employees in the same occupational classification.
4. A copy of the certified LCA is provided for the hiring department and the prospective H-1B worker.
5. Complete the necessary forms and send the H-1B petition to the immigration attorney for processing
6. Petition is sent to USCIS for adjudication. USCIS processing time of H-1B petitions varies throughout the year.

Upon receiving the Approval Notice (I-797) from USCIS, the Office of Immigration will notify the employee via email. If the individual is abroad awaiting the approval notice in order to apply for an H-1B entry visa at a U.S. Embassy, the Office of Immigration will mail Form I-797 directly to the prospective H-1B worker.

H-1B Packet Appendix A: Position & Wage Info

PART 1: PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE/DEPARTMENT INFORMATION – TO BE COMPLETED BY DEPT

1. Prospective H-1B employee name: _____
 Surname (Last), Given Name (First), Middle Name (if any)
2. Prospective H-1B employee’s email address: _____
3. Degree(s) which the prospective H-1B employee holds: _____
4. Hiring Department/Unit: _____
5. School/ Division: _____
6. Contact Person: _____ 7. Email: _____
8. Telephone: _____ 9. Fax: _____
10. Department Mailing Address: _____
11. FOAPAL for Mailing of Documents (attorney/employee abroad) - Please provide the department’s FOAPAL number:
 Div: _____ Div2: _____ Org: _____ Fund: _____
 Program: _____

PART 2: OCCUPATION INFORMATION – TO BE COMPLETED BY DEPARTMENT

PLEASE ENTER INFO ABOUT POSITION MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS, NOT EMPLOYEE’S QUALIFICATIONS

1. Position Title: _____
2. Salary: _____ Per calendar year OR Per academic year
3. Hours/Range of hours per week: _____ 4. FTE (.50 – 1.00): _____
5. Dates of proposed H-1B sponsorship (Total H-1B limit is 6 years – 3 years allowed per petition):
 From: _____ To: _____
6. List all worksites for this position: USA – Main Campus Building and Room #: _____
 USA - Other location(s): _____
7. Description of basic job duties - please list the absolute minimum duties/tasks to be performed, using non-technical terms **and attach the job description**): _____

PART 2: CONTINUED

8. Absolute **MINIMUM** qualifications required to perform the duties/tasks of this position:
- a. Level of higher education required: Bachelor's Master's Doctorate Other _____
 - b. State license or certificate required?: Yes or No If yes, what license or certificate is required for this job?

 - c. Degree major(s)/specialty required: _____
 - d. Absolute **minimum** number of years of employment experience required for the position: _____
 - e. Other minimum requirements, if any: _____
 - f. Position's **minimum** required training and experience (other than that which would or could have been obtained during the normal course of the degree program listed above). Please quantify required training and experience in number of months/years (if none, please write none): _____

9. **MINIMUM** number of employees (not including students or grad assistants) the H-1B worker must supervise: _____
10. Is travel required? Yes -or- No If yes, what is the expected travel percentage? _____
11. Are there any other working conditions that affect the rate of pay? Yes or No
If yes, please explain: _____
12. Occupational title of the employee's immediate supervisor: _____
13. Number of workers filling same position: _____
14. Salary of worker(s) in same position: _____

PART 3: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY & LEGALLY BINDING EMPLOYER ATTESTATIONS

By signing below, I attest that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. I can provide additional details pertaining to statements made regarding the actual wage for the occupation discussed if needed. I authorize the Office of Immigration and International Admissions to seek approval from the US Department of Labor and US Citizenship and Immigration Services for an H-1B temporary visa on behalf of the above named individual (in Part 2).

Furthermore, I attest that the University of South Alabama will comply with the following statements as required by the Immigration Act of 1990 and conforming regulations issued by the US Department of Homeland Security and Department of Labor. (*From US Immigration Service [8 CFR 214.2 (h)] & US Department of Labor [20 CFR Parts 655 and 656]*)

- 1) That the hiring department will pay the \$460 I-129 filing fee for H-1B sponsorship and subsequent H-1B extensions, the \$500 Anti-fraud Fee when petitioning for an initial H-1B, an H-1B change-of-status, or change of employer (all required by law), and the immigration attorney handling fees (University policy);
- 2) That the H-1B authorization is job-specific. Prior to making any changes to the alien employee's **salary, title, or duties**, the department will consult with Office of Immigration;
- 3) That the H-1B worker will be paid 100% of the actual or prevailing wage, **whichever is higher**.
- 4) That the H-1B worker will also be paid for non-productive time unless contract is for a specified time period common to the industry such as 9 month academic appointments;
- 5) That the H-1B worker will be offered benefits on the same basis as similarly employed US workers;
- 6) That the employment of H-1B workers will not adversely affect the working conditions of workers similarly employed in the area of intended employment;
- 7) That on the date this form is signed and submitted, there is no strike, lockout or work stoppage in the course of a labor dispute in the occupation in which the H-1B worker will be employed at the place of employment;
- 8) That no U.S. citizen in the same occupational classification will be terminated 90 days before or 90 days after the official employment start date of the foreign national H-1B worker; and,
- 9) That the reasonable cost of return transportation to the H-1B's home country will be covered by the employer in the event employment is terminated prior to the ending date on the H-1B petition submitted to US Citizenship and Immigration Services. (See dates entered in Part 1, Number 5).

Required Signatures:

Faculty Advisor/Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name and Title of Faculty Advisor/Supervisor: _____

Department Chair/Head or Dean Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name and Title of Department Chair/ Head or Dean: _____

Any misrepresentation of facts or employer's failure to comply may result in the following, affecting all of the University of South Alabama and USA Health, not just the department:

- Assessment of back pay for the foreign national and/or other employees in the occupational classification
- Maximum of \$1000 fine for each violation
- A suspension of University of South Alabama's labor condition applications and a prohibition of filing and approval of labor condition applications or applications for permanent alien employment certification for one year
- A prohibition of the filing of immigrant or nonimmigrant visa petitions with USCIS for at least one year
- Federal criminal penalties for knowing and willful submission of false statements to the Federal Government of \$10,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 5 years

H-1B PACKET APPENDIX B: FILING FEE REQUEST

Instructions for USCIS Fee Payment

Required fees:

\$460	Form I-129, H-1B petition
\$500	Fraud Prevention and Detection (<i>initial H-1B, H-1B coming from another employer</i>)
\$2,400	Approximate Attorney Handling Fees
\$2,805	Form I-907, Premium Processing, if applicable and requested
	Check the box if your department wants to pay for premium processing.

Below are the procedures for requesting USA checks or direct deposit to be issued for fee payments:

- An Invoice will be emailed to the hiring department from the Office of Immigration.
- The hiring department is responsible for submitting the request in Concur.
- Accounting will initiate a direct deposit or issue paper checks for the retained immigration attorney.
 - Adam Cohen – J00701495
 - Kathleen Gasparian – J00701624
 - Klari Tedrow – J00424930
- **Do not submit** payment request to Accounts Payable without A proper invoice from the Office of Immigration.
- Request the Accounting department notify the Office of Immigration via email when a direct deposit or paper checks have been issued.

H-1B PACKET APPENDIX C: EMPLOYEE'S INFORMATION

PART 1: H-1B APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

NAME AND RESIDENCE INFORMATION:

Full Name (as in passport): _____

Family Name (Surname)
Given Name (First)
Middle Name (if any)

All other names used : _____
 (Include maiden name and names from all previous marriages)

Place of Birth (required): _____ : _____ : _____

City
Province/ Territory
Country

Citizenship & Residence (required): _____ : _____

Country of Citizenship
Country of Permanent Residence

Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year): _____ Gender : Male Female

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Current Address: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone Number: _____

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA POSITION INFORMATION:

(Please provide contact information for your intended employer at University of South Alabama)

USA Academic Department: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____

PART 2: FOR APPLICANTS CURRENTLY IN THE UNITED STATES ONLY

Current Non-Immigrant Status: _____ Date Current Status Expires (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

If you are in H-1B Status with an employer other than USA, are you currently employed?: **YES** or **NO**

Employer's Name and Address: _____

Expected termination date of current H-1B Employment (Month/ Day/ Year): _____

Date of Last Arrival (stamped on I-94 Card, the White Card in Passport) (Month/Day/Year): _____

I-94 # (Eleven Digit Number on the White Card in Passport): _____

Are you currently on F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)? **YES** or **NO**

If YES, List dates of OPT (Month/ Day/ Year): _____ **through** _____

Do you have spouse/children who will file for H-4 status with this petition? **YES** or **NO**

PART 3: IMMIGRATION INFORMATION & HISTORY

Passport # : _____ Passport Country: _____

Passport Issue Date (Month/Day/Year): _____ Passport Expiry Date (Month/Day/Year): _____

U.S. Social Security Number (If any): _____

A #/Alien#/USCIS# - if any. (Alien/USCIS number is listed on EAD Cards, I-140, and I-485 Notices) : _____

At which consulate will you apply for your H-1B Visa stamp, either now or the next time you travel abroad?

City (outside of the U.S.): _____ Country: _____

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION TO BE SUBMITTED TO OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION

- Copy/Scan of Current CV/ Resume
- Copy/Scan of all University-level academic degrees, diplomas, and transcripts/mark sheets.
 - Diplomas and transcripts/mark sheets do not have to be originals
 - Documents not in English must be translated by someone competent to do so
 - Degrees or documents issued by non-U.S. institutions will have to have a foreign credential evaluation (Office of Immigration and International Admissions can recommend an evaluator)
- Copies/Scans of 4 most recent pay stubs/ paycheck notifications if currently employed in the United States
- Copy/Scans of ALL current and previous immigration documents:
 - Passport Identification Pages **
 - Current/ most recent Visa Stamp **
 - I-94 Card (FRONT AND BACK) or printout from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>**
 - All previous I-20s, DS-2019's, and H-1B/H-4 I-797 Approval Notices, etc. **
 - Employment Authorization Card (e.g. EAD Card for F-1 OPT or J-2 EAD Card) **
- Copy/Scan of I-612 waiver approval, Department of State recommendation for waiver, or completion of 212(e) Two-Year Home Residency Requirement if currently or previously on J Visa **
- H-4 Application: If you have dependent family members who are already in the U.S. in H-4 status or on another visa type, and you would like to change/extend their status as an H-4 dependent, would you like the attorney to process these forms for an additional fee? YES or NO, I will complete
 If yes, include the following:
 - Include the above starred (**) items for your family members
 - Check made payable to the immigration attorney or U.S. government agency as directed by the Office of Immigration.

Applicants Requiring a J-1 Waiver of the 212e Requirement: I understand and agree that in consideration for a waiver, which eventually may or may not be granted, I shall render primary or specialty medical care services to patients, including the indigent, for a minimum of forty (40) hours per week, or 160 hours per month, within a designated HPSA, MUA, MHPSA, or MUP located within SCRC's congressionally mandated footprint. Unless there are extenuating circumstances which SCRC approves, such service shall commence no later than 90 days after I receive approval by USCIS of my waiver request and shall continue for a minimum of three years or longer in accordance with the employment contract.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____