The Teacher Program

The teacher category of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program offers foreign teachers the possibility to teach full-time in accredited public and private primary and secondary schools in the United States. J-1 teachers may also teach at the pre-kindergarten level in language immersion programs.

The goal of the program is to promote cultural exchange between foreign teachers, their students abroad, and the U.S. school community. Teachers will return home after their exchange and share their knowledge of U.S. culture and educational practices in their home countries.

For an overview of eligibility requirements for interested teachers, please visit the U.S. Department of State J-1 Teacher Program website: [https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/teacher](https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/teacher).

### Teaching Positions

U.S. host schools or school districts must provide a full-time position as teacher of record, with a minimum of 32 hours per week of teaching or teaching-related administrative activities.

Teachers must be employees of either their U.S. host school, host school district, or their home school during the exchange. Positions are temporary, do not lead to tenure, and are commensurate in responsibility and compensation to those of similarly situated U.S. teachers in the host school or school district.

### Duration and Repeat Participation

The standard maximum duration for programs in the Teacher category is 3 years. At the end of the program,

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### IIE Program Fees

**Fees to be paid by the host school:**

- Initial sponsorship fee (up to 12 months) = $1500
- Extension of sponsorship, per year = $500
- Expedited processing service (optional) = $750
- Enrollment in IIE group insurance (optional) = Inquire directly

**Fees to be paid by either the host school or the teacher:**

- J-2 sponsorship fee, per dependent = $500
- Individual insurance meeting minimum J-visa requirements = varies, from $75 - $200 per month

### Other Fees

*These fees are not included in IIE’s services but must be paid during the J-1 Visa application:*

- $220 SEVIS Fee
- $160 nonimmigrant visa application fee

**Note:** If you are working with a placement agency, be sure to inquire directly about their fees, and what each fee covers. Check with your host school to see if you are responsible for any initial visa costs or fees, or if you will be responsible for covering the cost of any state teaching licensure requirements.
teachers must depart to put their experience to use in their home country. Past participants are eligible to apply for another J-1 Teacher program after a period of at least 2 years residency outside of the U.S.

**Cost of Living**

IIE recommends that each teacher have a minimum of $2500 per month available, either through wages or combination of wages and personal funds. Additional funding must be shown for J-2 dependents. Please be aware that wages and/or stipends from a host school, host school district, home school or home government might not cover all expenses and teachers should bring additional personal funds.

The cost of living can vary greatly depending on where the host school or school district is located. Prior to accepting a position, teachers should research online to budget accordingly. Housing in a large city can cost approximately $2000 per month, while housing in a smaller town might cost closer to $500 per month. Utilities may include electric or gas ($50 - $100 per month, depending on the size of the housing), cable and internet ($50 - $200 depending on plan). In a single-family home, the tenant may also be responsible for water and trash collection, about $150 - $200 annually. Cost of food may range from $200 - $500 per month, depending on location and preference to cook or eat out regularly.

**Transit**

Most urban areas have public transit, such as subways, buses, and trains and this is a great environmentally-friendly option. Price of a monthly public transit ticket may range from $25 - $125 for local service, or higher for regional service. Owning a car in the U.S. can be expensive, with gas prices between $2 - $4 per gallon. Drivers need to make sure they have or obtain the proper license (through the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state) and vehicle insurance.

**Payroll Deductions**

If the teacher is being compensated by the host school or school district, taxes will be deducted from each paycheck. J-1 exchange visitors are subject to federal, state, and local income taxes but are exempt from FICA and FUTA. The school will provide the teacher with estimated payroll deductions. Teachers are responsible for being aware of all personal filing requirements. Questions should be directed to a tax professional with experience in nonimmigrant filing.

Next Steps

Interested in exchange visitor sponsorship through IIE? A representative of the U.S. host school or school district should contact IIE to begin our online application process. IIE accepts applications for the Teacher program between March 1st and July 1st for the upcoming school year.

IIE recommends submitting the application at least 2-3 months in advance of the first day of school. Teacher programs must follow the U.S. academic year cycle.

All teacher candidates must have a high level of English proficiency.

The teacher’s passport should be valid at least 6 months past the expected program end date.

Information from this Fact Sheet references from [https://j1visa.state.gov/](https://j1visa.state.gov/) and eCFR Part 62