

Dear Doctor:

ECFMG is aware of the serious devastation to the Gulf Coast as a result of Hurricane Katrina. We extend our deepest sympathies to you and all those who have been affected by the storm.

In accordance with the J-1 regulations, ECFMG, as program sponsor, must maintain an accurate accounting of all J-1 sponsored physicians and their dependents. For this reason, ECFMG requests that you provide us with your updated contact information and a statement describing your current circumstances and training plans. Please submit the following information to ECFMG via e-mail at [gulfcoastaid@ecfm.org](mailto:gulfcoastaid@ecfm.org) or fax at 215-386-9766:

- Full name and ECFMG number
- Full names of J-2 dependents/if applicable
- Institution name, specialty and training level
- Temporary contact information including address, cell number, and e-mail address
- Description of your temporary plans (i.e., proposed training options, departure plans, etc.)
- Any special circumstances or needs
- Request for Duplicate Form DS-2019 for self and dependents, if needed\*

\*ECFMG realizes that your immigration documents may have been lost or destroyed during the emergency evacuation. Our office is prepared to FEDEX duplicate Form/s DS-2019 to you upon request. In addition, ECFMG may be able to provide you with copies of your passport page and most recent I-94 record, if contained in your J-1 sponsorship file. Please include all duplicate Form DS-2019 requests with submission of the information listed above. Be sure to include the mailing address you wish us to use in all correspondence.

The academic medical community is coordinating efforts and defining procedures for temporary training and program transfers of residents displaced by the hurricane. ECFMG is committed to working with you as you evaluate your options. It is important to keep in mind that U.S. graduate medical education guidelines require an official release from the current training institution before you are eligible to transfer to another residency or fellowship program. Similarly, J-1 program regulations require ECFMG's pre-approval of any changes in training plan, location or activity. Unauthorized employment is considered a violation of visa status. ECFMG is working closely with training institutions and U.S. government offices to ensure the continuity of your J-1 visa sponsorship. It is important for you to maintain contact with ECFMG throughout this critical transitional period. J-1 sponsorship updates will be posted on the ECFMG website and sent to you by email as they become available.

ECFMG recommends that view the websites of the U.S. Department of State at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education> and the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) at <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/index.htm> for details on temporary immigration provisions for hurricane victims. For residency program information please see the AAMC website at <http://www.aamc.org> and/or the ACGME website at <http://www.acgme.org>.

ECFMG is deeply concerned for you and your families during this difficult time. We invite you to contact our office at (215) 823-2121 with specific questions or concerns.

Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program