

## Important points for H-1B applicants in residency programs or other clinical positions

Office of International Students and Scholars at the University of Nevada, Reno

<http://www.unr.edu/oiss/scholars/index.htm> ; ph: 775-784-6874

1. USCIS requires that all applicants, who graduated from foreign medical school (including Canada), who are applying for H-1B status/visa must have USMLE step I, II & III scores at the time of applying. If you don't have USMLE step III, you should consider J-1 status. Please contact the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) for information on how to apply for J-1 alien physician category. Their contact info is [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org) ; ph. 215-386-5900.
2. The Office of Students and Scholars (OISS) at UNR cannot assist you to secure J-1 alien physician category but we do provide assistance with H-1B status. If you use our services, you do not need an immigration lawyer. You will be asked to complete an H-1B Employee Form downloadable from [http://www.unr.edu/oiss/forms/forms\\_2007/H1B%20Employment.pdf](http://www.unr.edu/oiss/forms/forms_2007/H1B%20Employment.pdf) and submit the form to your residency coordinator along with other documents listed on the checklist.
3. H-1B is an employer sponsored petition - the department must sponsor you for H-1B status. It is entirely up to the residency director to decide whether a resident will be sponsored for H-1B or J-1 status. Please contact your residency program director to discuss these options.
4. USCIS and OISS charge fees for processing of H-1B paperwork. USCIS filing fees are: \$820 for regular processing and **an additional** \$1,000 for premium processing. OISS fee for preparing the petition is \$1,200. The medical school is required to pay the USCIS filing fee of \$820. The payment of the premium processing fee (\$1,000) and OISS fee (\$1,200) is negotiable between you and the program director. At the medical school most often the resident is paying the premium processing and OISS fees. Personal checks are acceptable: \$1,000 premium processing fee is payable to the Department of Homeland Security and \$1200 for OISS fee to the Board of Regents.
5. Regular processing of H-1B petition ensures the approval of the petition within 3-4 months from the time the petition is received by USCIS. Premium processing speeds up the process to 2 weeks. **It is highly recommended that you pay the premium processing fee to ensure a timely approval of the petition!** Some departments i.e. Internal Medicine requires that all applicants pay for premium processing.  
Also keep in mind that an additional time of at least 4 weeks is needed by your department and OISS to prepare the paperwork required for filing the petition. You should start the process no later than early April.
6. All clinical positions require that you have a medical license by the start of your employment (July 1 in most cases). You should take steps to apply for a license with the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners (NSBME) as soon as possible. Securing a medical license is a joint process between you and your residency program. For more information and a list of documents to be

filed please contact the coordinator of your program and visit NSBME website <http://medboard.nv.gov>.

7. Once you have applied for the license, please ask the license specialist at NSBME to issue a “visa letter”. To provide this letter to a resident NSBME must have at the minimum 3 things on file: 1) a notarized application form, 2) Form 1- Verification of Medical Education completed and sent directly from your medical school, 3) official transcript of your medical degree also sent directly from your institution. If you have completed other training programs, you would also need to submit Form 2- Certificate of Completion of Progressive Postgraduate Training. We recommend that you communicate directly with your license specialist at NSBME to ensure a prompt response to your request. License specialists are assigned based on your last name; to find out whom you should contact please check <http://medboard.nv.gov/apply.htm>.  
**This letter is required to ensure a successful approval of H-1B petition by USCIS. If a letter is not included in the petition, USCIS may either deny the petition, or limit the duration to one year only!**
8. Be aware NSBME will only issue the medical license once **they have received ALL other documents listed on the application checklist AND verified your H-1B status with the immigration service**. As soon as you receive I-797 H-1B approval notice from OISS, please forward a copy to your NSBME license specialist to start the verification process. The verification may take 2 or more weeks, hence the emphasis on starting the H-1B process early.  
**Throughout the process please stay in constant communication with your license specialist!** Any delay in obtaining a medical license may result in a resident completing their residency off-cycle.
9. Those of you who are applying for H-1B from overseas please be aware that after H-1B approval is secured from USCIS, you still need to apply for entry visa to U.S. at the consulate abroad. You should contact the consulate to schedule an appointment and find out the processing times as these vary from post to post. You can enter U.S. only up to 10 days earlier than the start date of your approval listed on I-797 notice which is the same as the start of your residency program (July 1). This may affect your ability to start the orientation program on time, so please discuss this issue with your residency coordinator.
10. You will need a social security number in order to be employed in U.S. If you do not yet have a social security card, please be aware that you can only apply for SSN once you enter U.S. in H-1B status or the change of status to H-1B is approved. The medical license can be issued only after you have obtained a SSN. You should be able to find out your social security number before you receive the card. Please ask about that at the time of filing your application with social security office. More information about the social security card is available at <http://www.ssa.gov/>
11. At the start of your employment at UNSOM you will need to complete a check-in process with OISS. This can be done via mail, please contact Elizabeth Adamska [adamska@unr.edu](mailto:adamska@unr.edu) for more details.