

UTHSCSA Graduate Medical Education Policies

Section 2	General Policies & Procedures	Effective:	April 2004
		Revised:	August 2011 December 2012 December 2014 May 2017, June 2017, May 2018
Policy 2.14.b	Fellow Visas	Responsibility:	Designated Institutional Official

**Fellow Visas**

Policy

The University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSCSA) accepts international medical graduates (IMGs) who meet UTHSCSA and ACGME eligibility and selection requirements and Texas Medical Board licensure requirements into its graduate medical education programs. All IMGs except for those who graduated from an accredited (LCME or CACMS) medical school in the United States or Canada must have a current and valid ECFMG (Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates) certificate at the time of application. See [About ECFMG Certification](#) for information about the requirements to obtain an ECFMG certificate.

This policy applies to applicants to and enrolled fellows in **GME fellowship programs**. For applicants to and enrolled residents in **GME residency programs**, please see GME Policy 2.14.a.

Individuals who are not United States citizens must have U.S. Lawful Permanent Resident status, asylee or refugee status, an Employment Authorization Document, or must obtain a J-1 visa sponsored by ECFMG or an H-1B visa sponsored by UTHSCSA.

The decision on whether to sponsor a fellow requiring visa sponsorship for an ECFMG J-1 visa or H-1B visa will be left to the discretion of the department providing the training.

Foreign nationals applying for a J-1 exchange visitor visa must be eligible for visa sponsorship under the criteria set forth by the ECFMG. See the [Selected Federal Regulations for J-1 Physicians](#) for a list of key regulations for international medical graduates participating in clinical training programs on J-1 visas.

To be eligible to be sponsored for a H-1B visa, international medical graduates who did not graduate from an accredited medical school in the U.S. must have passed Parts 1, 2, and 3 of the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and have a license or other authorization required by the Texas Medical Board to practice medicine. The applicant must meet all other legal requirements for H-1B status which the Office of International Services (OIS) will determine upon reviewing the applicant's U.S. immigration documents and other relevant documents.

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Administrative and financial costs associated with support of H-1B visa are significant. The decision to financially support an H-1B visa will ultimately rest with the training program and the associated department. University Health System (UHS) will not serve as paymaster (provide salary or benefits) for an individual on an H-1B visa. Thus, the department will be responsible for paying the entire salary and benefits for fellows on H-1B visas in addition to the governmental filing and internal visa processing fees. Moreover, the U.S. Department of Labor determines the required wage for H-1B visas which may be more than the department initially intended to pay.

Understanding the financial obligations and compliance requirements in regards to H-1B visa sponsorship, the program director wanting to sponsor an applicant for a H-1B visa must first contact the OIS and receive their approval prior to the program ranking the applicant on a match list or extending an offer for appointment to the applicant. The program director must await approval of the request before making any commitment to the applicant.

UTHSCSA will not provide sponsorship of permanent residence for international medical graduates in GME training programs under any circumstances.