

**WAC 246-562-015 Intent of the visa waiver program.** (1) The purpose of the J-1 visa waiver program is:

(a) To increase access to physicians for low income, medicaid-covered and otherwise medically underserved individuals;

(b) To increase the availability of physician services in existing federally designated HPSA for applicants that have long standing vacancies;

(c) To improve access to physician services for communities and specific underserved populations experiencing difficulties obtaining physician services; and

(d) To serve Washington communities that have identified a physician currently holding a J-1 visa as an ideal candidate to meet the community's need for health care services.

(2) The visa waiver program is intended as a secondary source for recruiting qualified physicians and is not intended as a substitute for recruiting graduates from U.S. medical schools.

(3) Sponsorship may be offered to applicants that can provide evidence of sustained active recruitment for the vacancy in the practice location for a physician who has specific needed skills, consistent with the rules established in this chapter.

(4) Sponsorship is intended to support introduction of physicians into practice settings that promote continuation of the practice beyond the initial contract period.

(5) The J-1 visa waiver program will be used to assist applicants that provide care to all residents of the federally designated HPSA. When a HPSA designation is for a population group as approved by the federal Health Research and Services Administration as defined by 42 C.F.R. Part 5, Appendices A or C, the applicant must provide care to the population group.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.185.040. WSR 24-18-072, § 246-562-015, filed 8/29/24, effective 10/1/24.]