

Policy on Sponsoring H-1B Visas for Trainees in Residency and Fellowship Programs

The clinical departments of the Quillen College of Medicine each maintain policies for selecting and accepting candidates into graduate medical education (GME) residency and fellowship training programs. Foreign physicians accepted into GME programs should have J-1 exchange visitor visas sponsored by the Education Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG).

In very limited circumstances, departments may elect to sponsor an H-1B visa for GME trainees. As H-1B visas are not intended for those enrolled in educational programs such as GME residency or fellowship programs, the decision to sponsor an H-1B visa will only be made in such instances where the college will benefit significantly.

Should a clinical department propose to sponsor an H-1B visa, there should be written justification based on the following conditions:

1. The foreign national is judged to be a strong future prospect for a faculty appointment or would bring significant benefit to the training program
2. The foreign national has outstanding USMLE scores
3. The foreign national is a medical school honors graduate or otherwise achieved outstanding academic marks in medical school
4. The foreign national has received special recognition in the areas of research, publications, or service awards at a level significantly above other applicants to the GME program

The department will follow these steps in determining whether to sponsor an H-1B visa:

1. The foreign national submits a request to the residency or fellowship program director providing specific information regarding his or her ability to meet the above conditions
2. The residency or fellowship program director evaluates the request in terms of the above conditions and decides whether or not to recommend consideration of an H-1B sponsorship
3. The program director forwards a recommendation for H-1B sponsorship to the department chair who either endorses or rejects the request

Federal regulations require the sponsoring institution to pay all H-1B application fees including new petitions and renewals. The clinical department will be solely responsible for all sponsoring institution costs. If the clinical department terminates or doesn't renew a resident or fellow appointment before the individual's H-1B visa expires, the training program is responsible under U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services regulations to pay the H-1B physician's airfare back to his/her home country.

Under no conditions will determinations regarding sponsorship be based on considerations of race, gender, national origin, age or disability.