**Request for Visa Sponsorship**

**Graduate Medical Education Participants**

**Instructions:**

Please forward completed Questionnaire to Sally Loschiavo (HR) at [sloschia@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:sloschia@bidmc.harvard.edu); and copy Laurie Dubois (GME) at [ldubois3@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:ldubois3@bidmc.harvard.edu) and Christina Venckus (HR) at [cvenckus@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:cvenckus@bidmc.harvard.edu).

Visa processing is complex and involves interaction with several U.S. government agencies.  Processing times for an H-1B petition may take six to eight months to adjudicate, according to the U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services (USCIS) “normal” processing timelines. For candidates seeking a change of U.S. immigration status, or who need visa issuance abroad, speedy adjudication of the visa petition may be required in order for the candidate to have valid work authorization to begin working at BIDMC at the requested hire date.

**Processing Times:**

Once all information is received from the hiring department *and* candidate, it will take our attorneys approximately 7-14 days to draft the H-1B petition.  There is also a 7 to 10 day Labor Condition Application (LCA) processing time. Once the LCA is certified, the H-1B petition can be filed with USCIS. If the candidate (external hire) is already in H-1B status, he or she is authorized to commence or continue employment as soon as USCIS receives BIDMC’s H-1B petition.  If the candidate is ***not*** presently in H-1B status, or is abroad, he or she can begin employment at BIDMC only after USCIS approves the H-1B petition. Keep in mind that those candidates who are abroad, must also apply for a visa. That process can take several weeks minimum before the visa is issued.

**Premium Processing:**

The USCIS will expedite review of an H-1B petition upon payment of a “Premium Processing” fee of $2,805 (effective 2/26/2024). For all initial applications, this fee is incurred by the employee’s department.  Due to the continued trend in the lengthy turnaround time for an H-1B petition to be approved, it has become common practice to initiate Premium Processing at the same time when the initial petition is filed for a candidate (external hire). The same is true for a current employee whose status is changing, for example, from a J-1 visa or EAD to an H-1B visa. It is also possible to initiate Premium Processing after the initial petition has been filed; however, it is important to build in enough lead time to file and receive the adjudication before the candidate’s hire date, or the employee’s current status is due to expire.

For an employee who is currently on a BIDMC H-1B and for whom an extension will be filed, the employee has up to 240 days of continued employment authorization pending the approval of the H-1B petition. It may still be necessary to initiate Premium Processing if the petition has not been approved before the 240 day mark in order for the employee to maintain continued employment authorization. Please note: Trainees cannot travel outside of the country while an extension petition is pending. This is because the H-1B “extension” will be considered abandoned. The petition will continue to be adjudicated, although the trainee will then be required to apply for an H-1B visa abroad.

Departments are expected to cover premium processing fees if an emergency need arises (ex: care for a sick family member. If the candidate needs expedited adjudication of the H-1B for personal reasons for his/her benefit, then the individual has the option to pay the premium processing fee directly.

**Requested period of time for H-1B visa:**

An H-1B may be requested for a period of time that coincides with the validity of the limited medical license. All H-1B requests need to be pre-approved by the GME Office.

**Required Documents for Physician/Trainee:**

Most H-1B petitions prepared on behalf of a Physician/Trainee, can only be *filed* with USCIS when we have a copy of the following documents from the candidate:

(1) Massachusetts Medical License authorizing the physician to engage in clinical activity at BIDMC for the coming program year or for the period of time requested for the H-1B visa.

(2) USMLE results showing passage of all 3 steps.

(3) ECFMG certificate. (Graduates of LCME accredited Canadian medical schools are exempt from the ECFMG certificate requirement while graduates of accredited U.S medical schools are exempt from both the USMLE and ECFMG requirements.)

(4) Residency Certificate (if going into a Fellowship Program).

(5) All other educational documents including MD degree and transcripts.

**Return Fare Transportation:**

The employer is responsible for the reasonable cost of an H-1B worker’s return transportation home if they terminate an employee prior to the expiration of their H-1B petition.   The cost of the return fare transportation is incurred by the employee’s department.

[complete pages 3-4 below]

**Visa Questionnaire**

**Graduate Medical Education**

## General Intake Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Requested visa type: (i.e., H-1B, TN, Other) |  |
| Current immigration status  (F1/OPT, J1, H1B, n/a): |  |
| NEW Intake OR Extension/Renewal? |  |
| Current BILH employee (Y/N)? |  |

## Employee Personal Information

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Full Name: | Last | First | M.I. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Address: | Street Address | | Apartment/Unit # |
| City | State | ZIP Code |
| Telephone Number: |  | | |
| Email: |  | | |
| Indicate any upcoming travel plans: |  | | |

## Information about Department

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Department Name: |  |
| Training Program Name: |  |
| Department Contact Name: |  |
| Telephone number: |  |
| Email: |  |
| Name, title, and phone number of immediate Supervisor: |  |
| WorkDay Cost Center # and account number for \*Premium Processing (if applicable): |  |
| *\*Premium processing ($2,805 fee) is generally advised for all INITIAL H1B applications. In most cases*  *it is not needed for renewal processing of extensions for current employees. See additional detail in narrative description above.* | |

## Information Regarding the Job Offered

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Period of Proposed visa request (i.e., start and end dates; coincide with 1-yr training program dates): |  |
| BIDMC Job Title: |  |
| BIDMC Job Code: |  |
| BIDMC PGY Level: |  |
| Job Description: | Please provide a copy of the Program Description when returning the completed questionnaire. |
| Physical address(s) where work will be performed. Also list Institution name and full address of additional worksite(s), and the duration and frequency of employment at each site. \* | 1. BIDMC Campus-Building and Room #:   2)  **3)**  **4)** |
| Number of regularly scheduled hours per week: | a |
| Annual Rate of pay (do not include stipends): |  |

*\* For example, “Site 2, Mt. Auburn Hospital: one three week rotation during the program year; Site 3, Boston Children’s Hospital, three two week rotations during the program year.”*

*It is critical to provide all work sites in addition to BIDMC for the period of proposed employment for the requested visa petition including non U.S. locations.*

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