



# NAME International Newsletter

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1, 2025

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Once again, the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) had a very successful meeting in Denver, September 2024. **We had a record number of meeting attendees, 890!** Sixty-four (64) attendees were from outside the United States. These 64 attendees represented 19 countries including Canada! We hope to increase this number next year, so plan on attending!

At the meeting, we had 71 stellar platform presentations and 138 fabulous poster presentations! Cutting-edge information, collaborative research, and education were conveyed with plenty of time for questions and answers. But we also had time to socialize and network, getting to know our fellow partners in Medicolegal Death Investigation. If you were unable to join us in Denver, please plan to attend the future meetings of NAME! See below. We want to see you there!

# Future Annual Meetings

## **NAME 2025 Annual Meeting**

October 17 - 21, 2025  
Louisville Marriott Downtown  
Louisville, Kentucky

## **NAME 2026 Annual Meeting**

October 16 - 20, 2026  
Sheraton Kansas City Hotel at Crown Center  
Kansas City, Missouri

## **NAME 2027 Annual Meeting**

October 15 - 19, 2027  
Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront  
Portland, Oregon

# NAME International Reception

What a fun International Reception with International, Canadian, and US Friends held at the NAME meeting in Denver, September 2024. This year, we were fortunate to have the reception sponsored by NMS Labs (National Medical Services)! A very generous donation! It was great to see familiar faces of repeat attendees at the NAME meeting and to meet new individuals. Many professional connections were made, super conversations, and all-around comradery. We were honored to have the legendary Dr. Tom Noguchi join us at the reception. Dr. Noguchi is the founder of the International Relations Committee and has successfully developed international connections between NAME and forensic institutions throughout the world! Below are some pictures taken at the reception.







Dr. Tom Noguchi and Dr. Greg Schmunk









# NAME Feature

## NAME Visa Applicant Advisory Committee



**Clare Bryce**  
Chair, NAME Visa Applicant Advisory Committee

The Visa Applicant Advisory Committee serves as a resource for non-citizen pathologists who are seeking to train and/or practice as a forensic pathologist in the US. Committee members are also available to respond to visa-related queries that NAME receives and share their experiences of the immigration process with colleagues facing visa and immigration issues. We also work closely with the International Relations Committee. Those with visa-related questions can contact us via [name@thename.org](mailto:name@thename.org).

This year, our focus has been on creating an interactive map of states with offices and fellowship programs sponsoring visas, including up to date contact information. One of the difficulties international trainees and practicing pathologists face is identifying a sponsoring program that also has a vacancy available for training or employment. We are hopeful that this map will facilitate this process in the future. In the meantime, the FTOD (Forensic Training Organization Database) has a map that shows offices currently sponsoring visas for training. It can be found at: <https://itod.orainc.com/>

Obtaining a J-1 visa waiver is typically challenging, requiring a collaborative effort from both the employer and applicant. Below, Drs. Arunkumar and Gitto give their experience with this process:

**From the Employer/Office perspective – Ponni Arunkumar, MD**



“The Federal government recognizing a need for doctors, created a waiver to the two-year home-country requirement through the Conrad 30 waiver. This program allows J-1 foreign medical graduates (FMGs) to apply for a waiver of the two-year foreign residence requirement upon completion of the J-1 exchange visitor program. Each state (Department of Public Health) is granted thirty (30) J-1 visa waivers per federal fiscal year .

Medical Examiner Offices need to be included as part of medical facilities eligible for the Conrad 30 waiver program and this may need changing state law. In recent years, states have prioritized Conrad 30 waivers to rural communities. Applications for these waivers need to be submitted to the state by October or November for the following year, depending on the state’s processing deadlines.

Using a law firm that assists hospitals hire physicians through the Conrad 30 waiver program is very beneficial.

**From the Applicant perspective – Lorenzo Gitto, MD**

“Foreign medical graduates entering the U.S. often connect with the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), which facilitates their J1 visa sponsorship. However, many are unaware of the J1 visa’s “two-year-rule,” (or 212(e) as referred in immigration regulations) mandating a return to their home country for two years before changing status or seeking certain work visas or green-card. This rule poses a unique challenge for doctors, as standard J1-visa waiver paths don’t apply to them, requiring a specialized waiver.

As a former J1-waiver holder, I can say that securing this waiver for foreign medical graduates is akin to navigating a complex maze. The stringent requirements, such as committing to work in specific areas or fields for a period, coupled with limited available spots, intensify the challenge. This is particularly true in specialties like pathology since most waivers are granted to clinical-oriented fields. Forensic pathology, often not even listed for a waiver in many U.S. states, adds to the complexity.

To overcome these challenges, planning is crucial. Starting the research on waiver programs early, even during the first year of residence, is essential. Networking with experienced professionals, seeking mentorship, and staying updated on program changes are key. An immigration lawyer specialized in J1-waivers for doctors is invaluable and should be engaged early in the process. They know more than you can find online and may have some extra ideas to get you a waiver outside the traditional “Conrad 30” program. Communicating early with the prospective workplace is also vital to ensure they can provide J1-waivers or take necessary steps to become accredited to do so by the State.

Securing a J1-waiver isn’t impossible, but it demands preparation and vigilance to improve your chances. With patience, determination, perseverance, and a bit of luck, success is possible!”

# Do you have an idea, comment or Suggestion?

Please contact **Kim A. Collins**  
[kimcollinsmd@gmail.com](mailto:kimcollinsmd@gmail.com)





# Visa Information for International Medical Professionals seeking to visit Medical Examiner and Coroner's Offices in the US

## **Purpose**

This guide is intended to be an introduction to the various avenues available to medical professionals seeking to visit ME/Coroner's offices in the US.



## Target Audience

Foreign medical professionals and ME/Coroner's offices

## Visa Options

For many ME offices that are happy to accept international visitors/Observers, the B-1 Visa, J-1 Visa or Visa Waiver program would be good options. Which option to choose would depend on the length and purpose of the intended visit and sponsorship capabilities of the host organization.

## Glossary

**Visa:** An endorsement on a passport indicating that the holder is allowed to enter, leave or stay for a specified period of time in a country

**B-1:** Short term, non-immigrant visa for observership Maximum duration of 6 months

**J-1:** Non-immigrant visa for observership, training or research Maximum duration of 7 years

**H-1B:** Dual-intent visa i.e. a visa holder could apply for a green card Maximum duration of 6 years

**Visa Waiver:** No visa needed. For short observerships, no longer than 90 days

**Labor Condition Application (LCA):** An application filed by prospective

## B-1 VISA

- 1 Short-term, non-immigrant visa for observerships.
- 2 Maximum 6 months stay, although can occasionally be extended.
- 3 The visitor is responsible for applying for the visa and a fee is involved.
- 4 ME/Coroner Office must provide letter of invitation to applicant, stating purpose of visit (strictly observership), applicant's financial arrangement (no US funds used), and the start and end dates. Other than this, no sponsorship needed.

### Other requirements are that:

- 5 The visitor must have a profession or studies outside the U.S. to which he or she will return (may need documentation to prove this).
- 6 There must be evidence that the visitor has finances to fund the visit, including transportation and health insurance.
- 7 For those individuals with a medical degree; there are no patient care responsibilities, only observing.
- 8 Will not be paid a salary from a U.S. source.
- 9 The activity at the ME office will primarily benefit the visitor, not the ME office

Note: It is probably a good idea for B-1 visa applicants to consult with an immigration attorney to ensure the process is as smooth as possible.



## J-1 VISA

- 1 Non-immigrant visa for observerships, training or research.
- 2 Maximum length of stay varies depending on purpose of visit.
- 3 For physician residency training (including fellowship), maximum stay is 7 years.
- 4 Needs sponsorship by the host organization.
- 5 There are eligibility requirements to become a J-1 sponsor, and paperwork for both the host organization and visitor.
- 6 Sponsorship is best achieved through an affiliated academic institution or a private entity that contracts with the host organization to co-ordinate paperwork (See later section: Additional Considerations for Host ME/Coroner's Offices).

Note: An advantage of the J-1 visa is that a spouse of the visa holder is eligible to work in the US during their stay. The foreign physician is required to return to their home country after completion of the program of study, but in some cases a waiver of home residence requirement can be obtained: that discussion is beyond the scope of this guide, but further information about J-1 waivers is readily available online.

employers on behalf of workers applying for work authorization for the H1-B visa.

## Visa Waiver for Business Program

Short-term, non-immigrant program. Does not require a visa.

For this, the individual must stay no longer than 90 days; therefore, this option would only be appropriate for short term electives or observerships.

There is a list of 38 countries that participate on the US Department of State website at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visa-waiver-program.html>

Individuals eligible for this would need to obtain a travel authorization (ESTA) - an automated application can be done online at: [www.esta.us](http://www.esta.us)

Note: It is also advisable for the hosting office to provide a letter, similar to that used for the B-1 visa, to facilitate the visitor's entry to the US. This letter can be shown to an immigration officer at the port of entry if there are questions about the purpose of the visit.

## H-1B VISA

- 1 A dual-intent visa i.e. the visa holder could potentially apply for permanent resident status (green card).
- 2 The dual-intent nature of the visa means that the scrutiny for H visas is much heavier than for J-1 and B-1.
- 3 Maximum length of stay is 6 years (granted for 3 years initially, with option to renew for further 3 years if needed).
- 4 The processing time is long (usually 2-6 months but can be longer). This time can be reduced by paying a 'premium processing' fee.
- 5 H-1B visa applications are complex, usually requiring legal assistance.

Note: The employer needs to demonstrate that the applicant has specialized knowledge and qualifications that make them eligible for the position, and that there are no equivalent US citizens available to fill the position. Paperwork and expenses, such as application and legal fees, can be considerable. As with J-1 visas, sponsorship for an H-1 visa applicant is best achieved with the assistance of an affiliated academic institution or a private entity. If these options are not available, then the input of an immigration lawyer who specializes in work visas is advisable. The latter can add extra expense to the process, in addition to the visa application fees.

## Additional Considerations for Host ME/Coroner's Offices

- 1 ME/Coroner offices interested in hosting foreign visitors are advised to look into affiliation with a local institution ahead of time, if this is not already in place, and discuss sponsorship requirements with the institution's immigration office, as well as other necessary visitor requirements like medical insurance, so that they are prepared for potential applicants.
- 2 A key point is that ME offices accepting visitors would need to ensure the visitor has adequate health insurance coverage, up to date immunizations and, if required, adequate funds and return travel arrangements.
- 3 There are private entities available that contract with host institutions to facilitate the sponsorship process. They work with the State Department and the international visitor to manage and co-ordinate required paperwork, including insurance and immunizations. The assistance of these entities can considerably reduce the time burden and complexity of the process for the sponsoring office. One such organization is the Center for International Career Development (CICD). They have worked with several medical examiner offices to successfully sponsor a foreign physician visitor. Website links to this and another similar private organization are listed in the Useful Links section.



## O-1 VISA

- 1 Non-immigrant visa for outstanding aliens to do specialized work in the United States.
- 2 In the medical field, the O-1A visa applies to individuals who possess extraordinary ability in the fields of sciences.
- 3 Qualification requirements include: Scientific publications, being a reviewer and/or panel judge, employment in critical medical organizations or offices, national or international award recipient, critical membership positions in professional organizations, commanding a high salary or other significant remuneration compared to others in your specialty, have been on national or international media for a work achievement, made significant new developments or discoveries in your field.  
**Requires a job offer.**
- 4 Features and advantages of this visa: No annual cap on number of O-1 visas issued, not subject to “labor condition application”, dual intent is essentially permitted (however, see J-1 visa comments to the right), no maximum number of years for O-1 visa status (can renew in 3-year increments). The qualifying requirements are not strict – doctors can submit comparable experience from their own specialty to establish eligibility.

## It's a great option for J-1 visa doctors subject to the 'two-year rule' (INA Section 212(e)):

- 1 Doctors can switch from J-1 to O-1 if the visa is approved (exiting and re-entering the United States with an O-1 visa is required).
- 2 They still need to find a J-1 visa waiver to start the green card process.
- 3 The O-1 visa **does NOT** cancel the 'two-year rule' requirement, but it delays it: doctors can work in the United States while searching for a J-1 waiver.

Note: The application process is long and not easy. Many supporting documents need to be submitted. Working with an US immigration lawyer is generally recommended.

## Summary

There are several visa options available for foreign medical professionals wishing to visit a US ME/Coroner's Office. Selecting the appropriate option is an individual choice, both for the visitor and sponsoring institution, based upon a variety of factors such as the intended course of study, length of stay and sponsorship requirements.

Private organizations are available who can contract with the host office to considerably ease the process of sponsoring a foreign medical professional.

Foreign physicians and potential hosts interested in exploring these visa options are encouraged to connect with members of the International Relations Committee at the NAME meeting.

Many of the committee members have first-hand experience, both as visa holders and sponsors, and would be happy to discuss them further.

## USEFUL LINKS

### B-1 Visa

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-visitors-business/b-1-temporary-business-visitor>

<https://visaguide.world/us-visa/nonimmigrant/visitor/b1/>

### H-1B Visa

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-dod-cooperative-research-and-development-project-workers-and-fashion-models>

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/immigration/h1b.htm>

### J-1 Visa

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/exchange-visitors>

<https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/J1Visa-fact-sheet-2018.pdf>

<https://j1visa.state.gov/participants/>

<https://j1visa.state.gov/participants/common-questions/>

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## US Visas in general

<https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/BusinessVisa%20Purpose%20Listings%20March%202014%20flier.pdf>

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## Private Entities Contracting with Host Institutions to Facilitate Sponsorship Process

CICD: <https://www.cicdgo.com/>

IIE: <https://www.iie.org/en/Work-With-Us/US-Exchange-Visitor-Sponsorship>

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## Working in the US

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/working-us>

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# J IN US!



## *The National Association of Medical Examiners*

### The Organization for Forensic Pathologists and Medicolegal Death Investigators

[www.thename.org](http://www.thename.org)

#### Why Should You Join?

International Corresponding Membership is \$90 (US\$)/year

#### NAME international member benefits:

- ✓ Free American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology (AJFMP), journal, the peer-reviewed journal of NAME
- ✓ Discount registration at annual meetings
- ✓ Opportunity to serve on NAME committees
- ✓ NAME listserv; be a part of lively educational discussions via email! A true learning experience!
- ✓ Office accreditation opportunities
- ✓ Access to member only sites on NAME website
- ✓ Access to NAME consensus position papers
- ✓ Access to autopsy standards
- ✓ Access to policies and procedures for medical examiners and coroners
- ✓ Access to consultants
- ✓ NAME is the largest organization of forensic pathologists AND medicolegal death investigators
- ✓ Networking with local, national, and international colleagues
- ✓ Opportunities for visits or training at a US medical examiner's office
- ✓ NAME is a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, and experiences between forensic pathologists AND medicolegal death investigators

#### NAME is here for you!

When you contact NAME or attend the meetings, we want you to feel comfortable.



# JOIN NAME TODAY!

Contact Dee McNally

at [name@thename.org](mailto:name@thename.org)  
Or [KimcollinsMD@gmail.com](mailto:KimcollinsMD@gmail.com)

## Languages other than English Spoken By NAME Members 2025

- |                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. American Sign Language | 28. Lithuanian                   |
| 2. Afrikaans              | 29. Macedonian                   |
| 3. Amharic                | 30. Malayalam                    |
| 4. Antillean Creole       | 31. Maltese                      |
| 5. Arabic                 | 32. Mandarin Chinese             |
| 6. Armenian               | 33. Marathi                      |
| 7. Bemba                  | 34. Montenegrin                  |
| 8. Bengali                | 35. Nyanja                       |
| 9. Bosnian                | 36. Oriya                        |
| 10. Bulgarian             | 37. Persian                      |
| 11. Chinese               | 38. Polish                       |
| 12. Croatian              | 39. Portuguese                   |
| 13. Czech                 | 40. Punjabi                      |
| 14. Danish                | 41. Romanian. Arterial language. |
| 15. Dutch                 | 42. Russian                      |
| 16. Filipino              | 43. Sanskrit                     |
| 17. French                | 44. Serbian                      |
| 18. German                | 45. Sinhala                      |
| 19. Greek                 | 46. Slovenian                    |
| 20. Gujarati              | 47. Spanish                      |
| 21. Hebrew                | 48. Tamil                        |
| 22. Hindi                 | 49. Turkish                      |
| 23. Irish Gaelic          | 50. Ukrainian                    |
| 24. Italian               | 51. Urdu                         |
| 25. Japanese              | 52. Yoruba                       |
| 26. Kannada               |                                  |
| 27. Korean                |                                  |

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