



J-1 VISA STAFF ENGAGEMENT & ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to stay organized through every phase of the hiring and onboarding process for J-1 visa staff.

PRE-HIRING SEASON

PREPARE A WELCOME PACKET

Include essential information that helps international staff feel informed before arrival:

- What to bring and what is provided by camp
- Camp map
- Photos of living and shower quarters
- Typical daily schedule, session overview, and time-off details
- Camp mission, motto, values, and common slogans/terminology
- Off-campus opportunities and activities, plus how transportation works
- Local weather considerations and packing tips



PREPARE A STANDARD CONTRACT

Make sure the following details are clear and placed at the top for ease of visa sponsor processing:

- Role title
- Compensation and payout schedule (how, when, and frequency of payments)
- Employment dates
- Sick time policy and how compensation is handled



CHOOSE A COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

- Decide where your staff will connect (most camps use a private Facebook group or WhatsApp group).



CONFIRM RECRUITMENT SOURCES

- Reach out to existing recruitment agents and visa sponsors, or establish new partnerships.



PLAN ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

- Develop questions, prompts, and Google Forms (or similar tools) to encourage early interaction with staff.





J-I VISA STAFF ENGAGEMENT & ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

DURING HIRING SEASON

MAINTAIN REGULAR COMMUNICATION

- Provide weekly or bi-weekly updates via your chosen group platform.
- Clearly explain what staff can expect after being hired—and follow through consistently.

[Accompanying PRJ Article — *Couch to Camp: Help Your Staff Better Prepare for Your Program's Summer Marathon!*](#)



CHECK VISA PROCESSING

- Every 3–4 weeks, confirm progress with visa sponsors and/or recruitment agents.
- Track visa approvals, flight details, and airport pickup schedules.

PRIORITIZE CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- Introduce resources or training to prepare both domestic and international staff for cultural differences and cross-cultural teamwork.

[Accompanying PRJ Article — *A New Kind of Camp Culture*](#)



EXTRA NOTES



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THE WEEKS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

FINALIZE TRAVEL LOGISTICS

- Confirm flight and arrival details.
- Prepare for potential connectivity issues at airports or during travel.

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REQUEST SPONSOR DOCUMENTS

- Gather sponsor-provided paperwork early to begin Social Security office planning.

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BUILD EXCITEMENT

- Share fun camp announcements or updates.

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ASSIGN MENTOR PAIRS

- Match returnees with first-time staff to provide guidance and ease the transition.

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EXTRA NOTES



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IN THE DAYS AFTER ARRIVAL

FACILITATE EARLY COMMUNICATION

- Ensure new staff check in with their family and recruitment agent/ sponsor right away.

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SUPPORT INTERNET ACCESS

- Make sure staff can connect to the internet with camp-appropriate options.

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PLAN PRACTICAL OUTINGS

- Organize a shopping trip to help staff get essentials.

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OFFER A FUN INTRODUCTION

- Schedule at least one off-campus activity such as the movies, bowling, a hike, or local tourist icons before camp officially starts to build camaraderie.

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EXTRA NOTES
