

April 30, 2026

Thank you for your interest in our observership program.

We would like to provide clarification regarding the short-term duration of our observership offerings. At this time, our program structure is shaped in part by current U.S. immigration restrictions that affect visa issuance and entry for certain foreign nationals. These limitations require us to ensure that all observerships remain brief, non-clinical, and fully compliant with federal regulations.

The current restrictions stem from **Presidential Proclamation 10998**, which took effect **January 1, 2026**, and expanded earlier restrictions under **Proclamation 10949**. The policy fully or partially suspends visa issuance and entry for nationals of countries the United States has identified as having significant deficiencies in security, vetting, or information sharing.

These restrictions apply to individuals **outside the United States** who did **not** already hold a valid visa before **December 31, 2025**. Exceptions exist for lawful permanent residents, certain diplomatic categories, dual nationals traveling on a non-restricted passport, and other narrow categories.

Since UCHealth does not sponsor visas for observerships, the application includes questions related to travel eligibility. These questions are not intended to identify citizenship or nationality. Their purpose is to ensure that applicants are able to enter the United States independently, particularly given the evolving landscape of federal travel and entry restrictions. Confirming travel eligibility helps us determine whether an applicant can participate in the program without interruption.

We request that you review the lists of restricted countries below, and if you determine that any of these restrictions may apply to you, please notify us as soon as possible.

I. Countries Under Full Restrictions

Full restrictions mean **all immigrant and all nonimmigrant visas** are suspended for nationals of these countries.

- **Afghanistan**
- **Burkina Faso**
- **Burma / Myanmar**
- **Chad**
- **Republic of the Congo**
- **Equatorial Guinea**
- **Eritrea**
- **Haiti**
- **Iran**
- **Laos**
- **Libya**
- **Mali**
- **Niger**
- **Sierra Leone**
- **Somalia**

- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Syria
- Yemen
- Palestinian Authority travel-document holders

These reflect the combined restrictions continued or expanded under Proclamation 10998.

“Full restrictions” mean that the United States has suspended the issuance of *all* visa types—both immigrant and nonimmigrant—for nationals of the listed countries.

In practical terms, this means:

- **No new visas of any category can be issued** to individuals who are nationals of these countries.
- This includes **tourist visas (B-1/B-2), student visas (F-1), exchange visitor visas (J-1), work visas (H-1B, O-1, etc.), and immigrant visas** (green card processing).
- **Entry into the United States is also suspended**, even if the individual attempts to enter under a visa-exempt category or through a third country.
- The restriction applies **regardless of the purpose of travel**, including short-term educational activities such as observerships.
- The only exceptions are narrow and specifically defined in the proclamation (e.g., lawful permanent residents, certain diplomatic categories, or dual nationals traveling on a passport from a non-restricted country).

In other words, if someone is a national of a country under full restrictions and does not already hold a valid U.S. visa issued before December 31, 2025, **they cannot obtain a new visa of any kind and cannot be admitted to the United States at this time.**

II. Countries Under Partial Restrictions

Partial restrictions suspend **immigrant visas** and **B-1/B-2, F-1, and J-1 nonimmigrant visas** for the following:

- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Benin
- Burundi
- Côte d’Ivoire
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Gabon
- The Gambia
- Malawi
- Mauritania
- Nigeria
- Senegal
- Tanzania

- **Togo**
- **Tonga**
- **Turkmenistan** (*immigrant visas only*)
- **Venezuela**
- **Zambia**
- **Zimbabwe**

“**Partial restrictions**” mean that the United States has suspended **some**, but not all, visa categories for nationals of the listed countries. Unlike full restrictions—which block every type of visa—partial restrictions **target specific visa classifications**.

In practical terms, this means:

- **Immigrant visas are suspended.** Individuals from these countries cannot obtain visas that would allow them to immigrate permanently to the United States (i.e., visas leading to a green card).
- This includes **tourist visas (B-1/B-2), student visas (F-1), exchange visitor visas (J-1)**:
- **Entry into the United States under the suspended visa categories is not permitted**, even if the individual attempts to apply through a third country.
- **The restrictions apply only to individuals who did not already hold a valid visa before December 31, 2025.** If someone already has a valid visa issued before that date, they may still be able to enter the United States, depending on the category and the terms of the proclamation.
- **Exceptions are narrow**, such as:
 - lawful permanent residents
 - certain diplomatic or official visa holders
 - dual nationals traveling on a passport from a non-restricted country
 - individuals granted waivers under specific circumstances

In short, **partial restrictions limit access to key visa categories that are commonly used for short-term educational, training, or observational activities**, which is why they are highly relevant to observership applicants.

Given recent changes in federal travel and entry policies, it has become increasingly important for us to verify that applicants can obtain the necessary authorization to travel to the U.S. for the duration of the observership. Please complete the attached observation questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible.

III. Conclusion

Given that visa eligibility and entry restrictions under Presidential Proclamations 10998 and 10949, our observerships are designed to remain fully compliant with federal requirements and we seek to ensure travel eligibility. Offering the program in a short-term format enables us to provide valuable educational experiences while upholding all immigration regulations.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work to maintain a program that is both accessible and compliant within the current environment.