



ODU J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE

Visa & Immigration Service Advising (VISA) | Center for Global Engagement
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WELCOME

Welcome to Old Dominion University!

We are pleased that you chose ODU for your J-1 Exchange Program and hope that you will find your time in Norfolk productive, rewarding, and enjoyable. Your host department will serve as your most valuable resource during your stay. Visa & Immigration Service Advising (VISA) will also be here to assist or refer you to an office that can provide help.

Visa & Immigration Service Advising (VISA) is responsible for administering and signing all documentations for the Exchange Visitor Program at Old Dominion University. The Department of State (DoS) oversees all exchange visitor programs. The information below will be helpful to you as you plan for your arrival at Old Dominion University as an exchange visitor. If you have any questions after reading the following information, please contact Visa & Immigration Service Advising at intlstu@odu.edu.



DEFINITION OF THE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR STATUS

The Exchange Visitor Program brings qualified students, teachers, professors, and research scholars to the United States for a variety of educational purposes. The exchange visitor is under the sponsorship of an agency, institution or organization that has been approved by DoS.

An Exchange Visitor at Old Dominion University retains a field of specialized knowledge or possesses a specialized skill. Individuals in the student category are, more than likely, here via an exchange with a school abroad.



Eligibility Requirements for Exchange Visitor Categories

Exchange Visitors are to enter the U.S. for the purpose of participating in a designated exchange program. Conditions vary based on the type of J-1 you hold.

- Professors or Research Scholars
 - Must be participating in the exchange for the purpose of stimulating international collaborative teaching and research, or to promote exchange between research and educational institutions in the U.S. and other countries
 - May only participate in an exchange for a maximum of 5 years
- Short-Term Scholars
 - Come to the U.S. for up to six months to lecture, observe, consult, or participate in seminars, workshops, conferences, professional meetings, etc.
 - May only be here for a maximum of six months; it is not possible to extend their visa beyond that length of time
- Student Interns
 - Enter for the purpose of undertaking an internship in the U.S. to fulfill educational objectives in their current degree program at their home institution
 - May have full-time internships (at least 32 hours per week), but may not have the internships for more than 12 consecutive months per educational level
 - Must be returning to complete their degree at their home institution

Requirements of Exchange Visitors



Purpose: Exchange Visitors are admitted pursuing a certain objective and cannot change educational objectives while in the United States. In addition, it is not possible to switch from one category to another (e.g., from short-term scholar to research scholar, student to research scholar, etc.).



Cultural Exchange: Another important purpose of the program is to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges”. Therefore, the VISA office and sponsoring department work towards providing visiting scholars with opportunities to participate in educational and cultural events to facilitate cultural exchange.



Two-Year Home Country Residence Requirement: After completing the Exchange Visitor Program in the United States, certain exchange visitors are required to live in their home countries for a total period of two years before they are eligible to apply for a green card, an H visa, or an L visa. The purpose of the two-year home residency requirement (also known as “**212e**”) is to enforce the return of exchange visitors to carry out the educational exchange objectives of the program.

Waivers of the residency requirement can be recommended by DoS and granted by USCIS but are difficult to obtain. The two-year requirement applies to the exchange visitors who

- are financially supported by the U. S. government or their home governments.
- have skills which are needed in their home countries, as specified on the Exchange Visitors Skills List

Other Conditions and Restrictions: Exchange visitors cannot change program sponsorship without a release from VISA. The transfer of programs must be consistent with the exchange visitor’s educational or research objectives.



Procedures for Obtaining an Entry Visa

Now that you have your DS-2019, follow these steps to apply for a J-1 visa on the U.S. embassy or consulate website.

1. Pay the SEVIS fee (\$270) at www.fmjfee.com.



Your SEVIS number is listed on the upper right corner of your DS-2019 and starts with “N.”

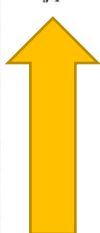
Old Dominion University’s program number is **P-1-03464**. This information will help you to pay the SEVIS fee.

2. Complete the [Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, Form DS-160](#) online. If you have any questions about filling out DS-160, check the [DS-160: Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

Traveling with family: When you select “Email Confirmation” on your Confirmation Page, you will be directed to a “Thank You” page. On the “Thank You” page you will see an option to create a family or group application.

J-1 interns only: Complete a Training/Internship Placement Plan, Form DS-7009.
3. One (1) 2x2 photograph: See the required photo format explained in [photograph requirements](#).
4. Obtain a passport valid for travel to the U.S. that is valid for at least six months beyond the applicant’s intended period of stay in the U.S.
5. Review the additional documentation items required by the [U.S. embassy or consulate website](#).
6. Pay the visa application fee and request a visa interview appointment via the U.S. embassy or consulate website.

DRAFT

1. Family Name: SOBAN		First Name: SOBAN		Middle Name:		Gender: MALE		ID: 8001234567	
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): 09-09-1988		City of Birth: SOBAN		Country of Birth: POLAND		Citizenship Country Code: PL		Citizenship Country: POLAND	
Legal Permanent Resident Country Code: PL		Legal Permanent Residence Country: POLAND		Position Code: 215		Position: UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS		 J-1	
Primary Site of Activity: 123 Main Street, Anywhere, NY 10013									
2. Program Sponsor: InterExchange, Inc.		Participating Program Official Description: SEMINAR TRAVEL/WORK		Exchange Visitor Program Number: P-1-0000					
Purpose of this form: Begin new program; accompanied by number (0) of immediate family members.									
3. Form Covers Period: From (mm/dd/yyyy): 06-01-2011 To (mm/dd/yyyy): 09-30-2011		4. Exchange Visitor Category: SEMINAR TRAVEL/WORK		Subject Field Code: 1234		Subject Field Code Remarks: LABOR			
5. During the period covered by this form, the total estimated financial support (in U.S. \$) to be provided to the exchange visitor by:									
4. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE: (FOR USE OR CERTIFICATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER OR ALTERNATE RESPONSIBLE OFFICER THAT A NOTIFICATION COPY OF THIS FORM HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE. (PLEASE DATE))				J. JEAN DUPONT Title of Official Providing Form InterExchange, 161 6th Ave New York, NY 10013 Location of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer		Alternate Responsible Officer Title: _____ Telephone Number: 212-924-0446 Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 01-13-2011			
8. Statement of Responsible Officer for Relinquishing Sponsorship of TRANSFER OF PROGRAM (Effective 08/01/2011) 1. Number of this exchange visitor from program number sponsored by the program specified in item 2 is necessary or highly desirable and is in conformity with the objectives of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.									
PRELIMINARY ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULAR OR IMMIGRATION OFFICER REGARDING SECTION 312(a) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION ACT AND PL 96-484, AS AMENDED. (see item 4a of page 2). The Exchange Visitor in the above program: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not subject to the two-year residence requirement. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Subject to two-year residence requirement based on: A. <input type="checkbox"/> Government financing and/or B. <input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange Visitor Skills List and/or C. <input type="checkbox"/> PL 96-484 as amended.					(ALL EXCH. PARTY PLANTS G-2-0004 AND ALL ALIEN PETITION SPONSORS RESPONSIBLE ARE SUBJECT TO THE TWO-YEAR RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT) TRAVEL VALIDATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (Minimum validation period is 1 year) *EXCEPT: Minimum validation period is up to 6 months for Silver term Scholars and 4 months for Camp Counselors and Summer Work/Travel. (1) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time. Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer (2) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time. Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer				
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ Signature of Consular or Immigration Officer _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE FINAL DETERMINATION REGARDING 312(a). EXCHANGE VISITOR CERTIFICATION: I have read and agree with the statement in item 2 on page 2 of this document. Signature of Applicant _____ Place _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy) _____									

When filling out all paperwork—for all VISA, immigration, and consular forms—it is extremely important to always be consistent with the spelling and ordering of your name (if your name is composed of several names). Always write your name as it is shown in your passport. This is especially critical for names translated from other languages and scripts.

Entering the Country

Exchange Visitors will be admitted to the United States with the following:

- Valid passport
- Valid U. S. J-1 visa in the passport
- Valid DS-2019 and proof of sufficient funds.

If you have an immigration emergency at the point of entry (first airport you land in the US) and the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer is not able to verify your information, you can contact us at our immigration emergency number at 1-804-505-4291.

Bringing Your Family

Before your arrival: If your dependent(s) information was not included in the original DS-2019 request, please email our office at intlstu@odu.edu with the following information to request the DS-2019(s) for your dependents. Dependents documents can be created for your spouse and your children under age 21.

- Family name, first name
- Birth date
- Gender
- City & country of birth
- Country of citizenship
- Relationship to Exchange Visitor

After your arrival: If you wish for your dependents to join you here in the U.S., please contact our office.

Employment: Your spouse may apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS; the income cannot be used to support the J-1. The EAD must be renewed every year and VISA will assist with the initial request. Processing time with USCIS is approximately 90 days.

Schools

Day care/ Preschool (under age 5): Daycare and preschool is privatized. ODU has [Children's Learning & Research Center](#) on campus that offers full-day and half-day programs for infants and preschool children. The waitlist can be long; we encourage you to contact and submit a waitlist application as soon as you start planning your visit.

If you would like to browse other options beside ODU Day Care, please see Virginia Department of Social Services' Child Day Care Search Engine:

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/cc.cgi>



Kindergarten (5-6 age): Kindergarten in Norfolk and Virginia Beach is free depending on your neighborhood residency. To enter kindergarten, your child must be 5 years old by September 30th of the current school year.

Elementary/Middle/High Schools: If you will be coming to ODU with your child, your child will be assigned a public school depending on your residency.

NORFOLK: Public Kindergarten & Schools

Your child will be assigned a public school depending on your residency. You can find your school at <http://www.nps.k12.va.us/>

VIRGIANIA BEACH: Public Kindergarten & Schools

Your child will be assigned a public school depending on your residency. You can find your school at https://www.vbschools.com/academic_programs/programs

Immunization Forms

As part of enrollment documents, you will need to submit physical and immunization forms completed by a doctor. You can visit any Urgent Care facility to have the form completed with your immunization records (translated to English) you brought with you. You do not need to make an appointment at an Urgent Care, and you will be charged a fee for a visit approximately \$40.)

Health Insurance Requirement

Healthcare in the U.S. is complicated and very expensive; while in many countries the governments bear the cost of health care, individuals in the U.S. are responsible for these costs themselves. One illness or injury can cost you hundreds of thousands of dollars. Therefore U.S. Department of State regulation **[22 CFR 62.14]** requires all J-1 Exchange Visitors to have medical, evacuation and repatriation insurance for themselves and their dependents for the entire duration of the J-1 program (from the start to end date on your DS-2019). This is to protect you from significant expenses and to ensure treatment, since some medical facilities will not treat you if you do not have insurance.

Note that an exchange visitor who knowingly and willfully fails to maintain the minimum required insurance coverage while participating in an exchange program is in violation of his/her visa status and it may be necessary to terminate his/her SEVIS record.

ODU/ ODU Research Foundation employee

If you have been hired in a full-time paid position by ODU or ODU Research Foundation; then, ODU or ODU Research Foundation Human Resources Department will provide you information on employee health insurance plans. You will be provided detailed information about the health benefits and enrollment deadline at the New Employee Orientation.

When you receive a copy of your ODU/ODURF Health Insurance Plan, please submit a copy to our office.

Vision and Dental Care: ODU/ODURF Human resources will provide you options to purchase additional vision and dental coverage. If you choose not to enroll, please take care of such needs before leaving home (e.g. purchase additional pair of glasses).

The only requirement that is not covered by the plan is medical evacuation and repatriation plan. This means that you **MUST** purchase a supplementary plan for yourself and your family that will cover medical evacuation and repatriation to your home country. The majority of scholars purchase [BETA Scholastic plan](#), [International Student Protection](#), Seven Corners, International Student. Please research your options and purchase a plan **ONLY** covers medical evacuation and repatriation in the amount:

- Medical evacuation in the amount of \$50,000; and
- Repatriation coverage up to \$25,000.

Self/Home Institution/Other Funded:

Minimum Insurance Plan Requirements: Because of high medical costs, all J visa holders in the U.S. (including dependents) must show, from the start to end date of their program, the minimum coverage required by the federal regulations (as listed below).

- \$100,000 per accident or illness
- Medical evacuation in the amount of \$50,000
- Repatriation coverage up to \$25,000
- Deductible of no more than \$500 per illness or accident

Sponsors are to require that their participants (and any dependents entering the United States as holders of a J-2 visa) have insurance in effect during the period they are in the sponsor's program. An insurance policy secured to meet the benefits requirements must be underwritten by an insurance corporation with an A.M. Best rating of "A-" or above, an Insurance Solvency International, Ltd. (ISI) rating of "A-I" or above, a Standard and Poor's Claims Paying Ability rating of "A-" or above, or a Weiss Research, Inc. rating of B+ or above. Alternatively, the sponsor may ascertain that the participant's policy is backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country. For other options, see **[22 CFR 62.14]**.

Coverage:

The insurance should cover you from the moment you arrive until the moment you leave. Old Dominion University's health insurance plan with [UnitedHealthcare StudentResources](#) (UHCSR) is available for purchase for you and your dependents. The registration process can be completed during your check-in appointment at our VISA office. You may purchase a different insurance plan if it meets the minimum requirements.

If you will be employed and paid by ODU or ODU Research Foundation, you may be offered benefits that include medical coverage. However, ODU and ODU Research Foundation's employer insurance plans do not provide the required medical evacuation (minimum \$50,000) and Repatriation coverage (minimum \$25,000). Therefore, you will be required to purchase a supplementary plan that only provides these two benefits.

Vision and Dental Care: In the United States, Vision and dental care is not usually covered by medical insurance. Therefore, please take care of such needs before leaving home (e.g. purchase additional pair of glasses) or purchase a separate coverage for these needs through a separate company.

Arrival in Norfolk

Please be sure to report to the office immediately after your arrival so that we may make the proper updates in the Immigration's database (SEVIS), make copies of you immigration documents and passport, and get your current address.

If you must arrive later than the original arrival date set on the DS-2019, please notify VISA *immediately*. Not doing so can block your entry into the United States. To inform staff members concerning a change in your arrival, please send an e-mail to intlstu@odu.edu with "Arriving Scholar" in the subject line.

You should plan to arrive a few days before the beginning of your program (but not more than 30 days prior to the start date on your DS-2019) to look for available housing if you will not be in on-campus housing. For the most part, it is not possible to make rental agreements by mail.

Norfolk

Norfolk, one of the oldest cities in Virginia, is located at the center of the Hampton Roads metropolitan area in Eastern Virginia. It is a unique city with three public universities and one private, the largest Navy base in the world, and the only three bridge-tunnel complexes in the United States. Your new home is the center of cultural events from numerous great festivals and outdoor concerts at the Town Point Park, to the Chrysler Museum of Art which houses the Glassblowing studio, to the last battleship to be built in the U.S. (USS Wisconsin) at Nauticus, and the professional baseball team the Norfolk Tides.

Weather

Virginia's climate is moderate. In January, the average low temperature is 33°F (0.6°C) and the average high temperature is 48°F (8.9°C). In July, the average low temperature is 72°F (22°C) and the average high temperature in July is 87° F (30.5° C). A medium weight overcoat should keep you warm in the winter, except on especially colder days when you might need additional sweaters or heavier overcoats. Bring gloves, a raincoat, and an umbrella, as the average rainfall in Norfolk is 46.55 inches (1.18 meters) and the average snowfall is 5 inches (0.13 meters) per year.

What to Bring

- Documentation of your original degrees, awards, transcripts, and diplomas. In some cases, these may need to be shown again for additional verification.
- Dependents' documentation such as school and immunization records for children.
- Your driver's license or international driver's license.
- A copy of any prescriptions of medications or glasses.
- Clothing: Class and work dress is informal. When more formal dress is appropriate, women usually wear a dress and men wear a shirt and tie. Also, if your country has a national dress, instrument, craft, or other traditional materials, please bring these items with you if luggage space permits. There will be opportunities offered for you to introduce and share your culture and customs with Americans.

Wilberforce Pamphlet: Know Your Rights, Protections & Resources

The pamphlet linked below informs you of your rights as a nonimmigrant visa holder in certain employment- and education-based categories. The U.S. government created this pamphlet at the prompting of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (Public Law 110-457), which reaffirms and strengthens the U.S. government's commitment to fight human trafficking and labor abuses.

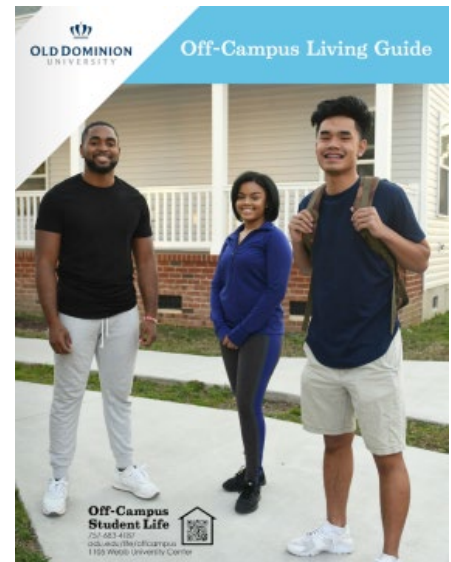
The Wilberforce Pamphlet outlines your rights in detail as well as versions in several languages.

Housing

Apartments and houses are available for rent close to the ODU campus, but they are difficult to locate at times due to high demand. The department who requested your DS-2019 will assist you with finding a place to live. The rent for a one-bedroom, unfurnished apartment can cost \$800+. Most apartments and houses charge an initial deposit of one month's rent, and you may be responsible for setting up utilities such as water, electricity, gas, etc. Therefore, be sure to bring adequate start-up funds for your initial expenses (approximately \$2,500), and enough money to sustain yourself until your funds are received from your regular financial support. We strongly recommend getting a renters insurance (approximately \$10/month.)

Before signing a lease, please carefully read the contract, check the distance to ODU and compare prices. Off-Campus Student Life Office can be a resource to you for:

- [Off-Campus Housing Listings](#)
- [Utility Set-Up Information](#)
- [Checklist for Leasing Off-Campus](#)
- [ODU Housing Sublets & Roommates](#)
- [Ghent NFK, Housing Rentals, and Roommates](#)



Check out Off-Campus Living Guide ↑

Off-Campus Student Life

1105 Webb University Center

offcampuslife@odu.edu

www.odu.edu/life/housing/off-campus/housing

Furniture and house goods

Many apartments and houses for rent are not furnished. Single, furnished rooms are extremely rare. Here are some places from where you may be able to find furniture and house goods at low cost:

- Used items from thrift stores: The closest store from the campus is the Hope House located on 1800 Monticello Avenue, Norfolk, VA. Other thrift stores in the area are the Salvation Army, Goodwill, and CHKD thrift stores.
- [Facebook Marketplace in the Ghent Area](#)
- New Items: The supermarket IKEA, Walmart, Target, and online retailer Amazon.com sell inexpensive furniture and house goods. The ODU Shuttle service has a route to Walmart on the weekends.
- The VISA office also has a small supply of kitchen items.

Transportation

ODU Safe Ride: provides safe transportation for students, faculty and staff who would otherwise have to walk alone at night. SAFE RIDE helps the ODU community get home safely. For more information, please visit odu.edu/parking.

ODU Shuttle provides the campus community with regular daytime, evening and weekend shuttle bus service. There is no shuttle service in the summer semester or during holiday breaks. The Monarch Loop is the primary shuttle route that circumvents the campus. On weekends, additional shuttles depart from the Parker Ave. roundabout to popular destinations including: Walmart, Kroger, Ghent and the MacArthur Center (Downtown Norfolk). For more information, please visit odu.edu/parking. **ODU ID CARD is required to ride the shuttle.**

ZipCars: Zipcars are cars that students, faculty, and staff can reserve online or on your mobile device 24/7. Low hourly rates include gas, insurance and 180 miles per day. ODU has four Zipcars, parked in Lot 23, behind the baseball field off Elkhorn Ave. To learn more about the Zipcars [visit ODU's Transportation and Parking Services](#) page.

Uber/Lift: You can get a private car or rideshare through a smartphone app Uber. Uber pricing is similar to taxis and you will know the cost before you ride.

Buying a Car: When purchasing a used car, it is recommended to test-drive the car and to have a mechanic inspect it before you purchase it. This is to ensure that there are no major defects. For a small fee you can also purchase a vehicle history report from **carfax.com** by providing the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) from the car. Please be aware that in addition to the cost of buying the car, there are other regular costs involved:

- Required automobile insurance
- Gasoline, regular motor oil changes, and other car maintenance and repair costs
- Annual inspections, registration, and taxes.

Driver's Licenses: You can drive with your home country's driver licenses for 60 days from your arrival date. Afterwards, you must get a Virginia driver's license. You may obtain a Virginia driver's license or state ID card from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) at www.dmv.state.va.us. If you experience an issue, please contact VISA with the name of the branch you visited and we will contact their headquarters. For more information, please visit the [Obtaining a Driver's License or State ID Card](#) page.

Public Transportation: Public transportation in Hampton Roads is not as advanced as in other metropolitan cities. [Hampton Roads Transit](#) (HRT) has two bus routes that pass through ODU, Route 2 and Route 4. In addition to bus lines, HRT offers light rail and ferry services. The easiest way to plan your trip on the public transportation is to visit gohrt.com or www.maps.google.com. For more information about HRT, GoPass and routes, please visit gohrt.com or odu.edu/parking.

Living Expenses:

	1- Month Total	3- Month Total	6-Month Total	12-Month Total
Visitor alone	\$ 1975	\$ 5925	\$ 11850	\$ 23700
Visitor & spouse	\$ 2400	\$ 7200	\$ 14400	\$ 28800

Visitor & child—no spouse	\$ 2500	\$ 7500	\$ 15000	\$ 30000
Visitor, spouse & one child	\$ 2750	\$ 8250	\$ 16500	\$ 33000
Visitor, Spouse & two children	\$ 3000	\$ 9000	\$ 18000	\$ 36000
Visitor, spouse & three children	\$ 3100	\$ 9300	\$ 18600	\$ 37200
Visitor, spouse & four children	\$ 3200	\$ 9600	\$ 19200	\$ 38400
Beyond four children	Add \$100 for each additional child	Add \$300 for each additional child	Add \$600 for each additional child	Add \$1200 for each additional child

Emergency and Campus Contact Information

Emergency	
Sign-up for Campus Safety Alerts	www.odu.edu/alerts
VISA Immigration Emergency Number	804-505-4291
CAMPUS Police	757-683-4000
Non-Emergency	757-683-5665
Fire, Police, Ambulance Public Emergency	911
Poison Emergency	800-222-1222
Road Conditions	511 or 800-367-7623

Other University Resources	
University Operator	757-683-3000
Webb Center Information Desk	757-683-5914
Transportation and Parking Service	757-683-4004
Women's Center	757-683-4109

Banks		
PNC Bank	North Mall, Webb Center	(757)364-7988
Bank of America	1916 Colonial Ave., Norfolk, VA 23517	(757)664-1677
SunTrust Bank	777 W 21 st Street Norfolk, VA 23517	(757)278-3203