

Businesses most likely to need supplemental employees are located in less populous areas and have higher numbers of full-time and seasonal jobs. Those less likely to use the program operate in central and southwest Ohio and have more part-time employees than their colleague businesses.

Due to the location of these businesses in less populous areas, the economic impact of reduced business would be widespread, as many of these businesses are located in communities where travel is among the top employers and economic drivers. With limited economic diversity, these communities would be hit harder than those where there are other industries to support jobs, tax revenue and local businesses.

Loss of J-1 Program Means Loss of American Jobs

All of the businesses (100%) surveyed said they would have to reduce operating hours and/or days, or close parts of their business, if they could no longer hire J-1 workers. Faced with this reduction in hours, days and offerings, businesses would hire fewer American workers, eliminating some full-time, part-time and seasonal positions. Some businesses indicated they would have to close completely without having J-1 workers to supplement American staff.

There aren't Enough Qualified Americans to Employ

None of the businesses surveyed said J-1 workers are replacing American workers. In fact, 100% said there are not enough willing and qualified Americans to fill all the jobs open at their place of business.

On a scale of 1 (Not Very Difficult) and 10 (Very Difficult), businesses reported a 7.3 level of difficulty in finding qualified workers. As expected, those who hire J-1 workers answered this question at a higher 8.8 difficulty compared to those who do not use these workers (6).

Having enough qualified employees is a major business concern for 71% of all surveyed businesses, whether they hire J-1 workers or not. Fifty-nine percent (59%) said they can't find qualified people to fill jobs, and that school calendar creep, internships and summer school limit availability of teen employees to fill positions. Shoulder season jobs (April to May and September to October) are hardest to fill (53%).

Comments from Ohio Businesses

Elimination of the J-1 Summer Work Travel program would mean there would not be enough employees for our seasonal business to operate and this could possibly impact being able to keep the place open.

Our business is in a very small town that cannot support the seasonal employment needs. Our food service would not be able to operate as each year we find only one or two local people to work our kitchen.

We tried for years to find local employees available to work during our operating season, April through October. It is very, very difficult to find anyone interested working in the hotel if we cannot offer a year-round position. The J-1 workers are able fill in the spots, with some arriving in the beginning of our business season, and some staying through almost the end of our season. Without the J-1 workers we unfortunately have to turn down some hotel bookings, since we cannot find replacement employees to serve our guests. My husband and I cannot handle the hotel duties without the sufficient work force, and we cannot provide an excellent service for our guests. Eliminating the J-1 program would have a very bad impact on our hotel business, and definitely very negative impact on our guests and tourism in our area, where we depend on the summer season.

Both my American workers and my customers enjoy having the novelty of the international students working in our business. We've employed J-1 visa students for more than 25 years, and our regular customers love to see them return for multiple summers, better their English while becoming more fluent in American culture as well. Our business would be greatly impacted, as due to summer internship requirements by universities, we're struggling to find enough American workers to fill our needs. Also, the J1 students often take time off from students for their American adventure in work and travel. They arrive in the US in June, work through the shoulder season of September and October, when our American employees have returned to school, then take the opportunity to travel to fabulous cities such as Las Vegas, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York before returning home with tuition money, lifetime friends, and an amazing experience. About 60% of our J1 visa students come to us through recommendations from previous students, which is a testament to their experience with our organization and the J-1 visa program. If this program is eliminated, the J-1 students will suffer, our business will suffer, and my American workers will lose the opportunity to become more aware of other countries, cultures, etc.

Since we have been unsuccessful in finding American employees to fill our housekeeping positions, we rely on our J-1 visa students for our seasonal housekeeping positions. Not having the opportunity to hire J-1 visa students would cripple our small business, forcing us to limit the amount of rooms we can rent, as well as shortening our season in our family-owned and operated bed and breakfast.

If the J-1 program was eliminated it would be detrimental to our business. We are a seasonal, completely family-owned summer business that operates from May through October. We are extremely high volume and employ more than 220 total staff members company-wide. We are able to fill a good majority of our positions with American workers, however about 90% of them are college students. American schools and universities go back to school in the beginning and middle of August so we lose most of our workforce. We rely on our J-1 students to help us finish out the season which is still EXTREMELY busy the entire month of August and September. We shuffle staff around during our end of season, and our J-1 students learn multiple positions and are able to be scheduled in many areas which is so valuable to us. We literally would not be able to open our doors in many parts of our business if we are not able to hire J-1 students. Our business is also located on an island in Lake Erie, so this makes it even harder for us to find a seasonal workforce, especially end of season, because if we were to find people willing to work they have to rely on a ferry to get here which is not reliable in the fall. Overall, these students are amazing. We are one big family here, and we love meeting them each year and working alongside of them to make sure they have a great experience, while also being able to keep our business staffed, with our doors open. We hope lawmakers will be open to hearing our stories. Our livelihood depends on keeping our doors open the whole season. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this.

Now that Ohio colleges and universities are all on semesters, it is impossible to hire enough seasonal help to carry us through the fall. The labor pool in Ohio has gotten to the point that we are struggling to keep various parts of our business open even with the J-1 visa program. The financial impact of winding down this program would be downright devastating to our seasonal operation.

We would cut hours. We cannot get American kids to work at these positions.

We are seasonal, and there aren't enough Americans to fill the seasonal positions that we need to fill. We would have to reduce our hours and what our businesses offer to our tourists.

First and foremost, the J-1 Summer Work Travel program has provided all of our businesses with a unique cultural environment. For more than 20 years, we have welcomed international staff to our workplace. Their interaction with our American staff has really provided a very positive effect on each of them. It saddens me to think that this J-1 Program could be eliminated. These international students come to experience our culture, improve their English, travel our country and make some money along the way. The J-1 Program is also an important resource we use to staff our seasonal business. There just has NEVER been enough American students to fill all the positions. The

elimination of the J-1 Program would seriously affect our ability to operate our businesses. These students are a welcome addition to our staff. We have always abided by the guidelines of the Department of State and have worked with sponsor agencies who are very clear on the requirements that we, as a Host Company, must meet. We have been very fortunate to invite international staff to experience our country and culture and have always welcomed them into our resort community. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share our POSITIVE experiences regarding this J-1 Program. We are hopeful that lawmakers will agree and push for the continuation of this program.

We run a small hotel with 48 beds. We would have to reduce how many rooms we can make available do to a lack of cleaning staff. Fourteen (14) weeks in our seasonal business generates 90 percent of our revenue. We need J-1 workers to operate our business.

We would lose half my workforce in my retail stores, and we would have to close earlier in our seasonal business, due to the fact US college students in Ohio return to school end of August. Our J-1 students are here till mid-September. They are our workforce and keep our businesses open in the fall. Our J-1 visa students are part of our work team, and they work alongside Americans as equals. It's imperative to "not to think any less of them," due to the fact they come from other countries. Our business has had J-1 work students for more than 20+ years, have made wonderful connections with most and continue to keep in touch with ones who have come and gone.

We cannot get American workers who can complete our operating seasons as they all go back to school.

We struggle to find staff even with the international staff coming over. With the elimination of the J-1 program, we would not be able to serve as many campers due to a lack of staff.

We would not be able to adequately staff our business during non-summer months. There are not enough qualified people in our resort town to handle the influx of tourists and staff.

We would have to scale back the number of seats in our establishment, as we would not be able to handle the volume of diners we handle on a daily basis, especially on weekends due to lack of servers and kitchen staff. This would severely impact our profitability as a seasonal business.

Since schools return so early, we lose ALL of our high school students the last two weeks of the year. We will have to CLOSE our Family Entertainment Center for two weeks in August, as the few high school students that work after school is NOT enough to maintain our facility and open our attractions.

We would not be able to open all the locations or stores within our business, or possibly cut hours or days

The diversity and learning experience involved in meeting and living with people from other countries is tremendous. It might be one of the best USA public relations things we do. We do not have enough qualified American staff to work our programs. Even if we did, I would still want to have several international students with us for the educational value.

Operating days while American colleges are in session would be jeopardized and may be eliminated due to inadequate staffing levels. Millions of dollars in revenue would be placed at risk. Guest experience would be compromised. Our associate experience for domestic associates would be diminished as well. Cultural exchange and the opportunity to meet fellow college students from around the world is an integral part of the work experience for our domestic associates.