Frequently Asked Questions – For Sponsors

1. **What is the definition of an academic and/or service provider “visitor”?**

   **Answer:** A Visitor is defined as a person who receives at least one of the following privileges:
   - Identification (ID) Card
   - Facility access key or keycard
   - E-mail, VPN or other IT account
   - Parking lot sticker (not temporary hangtag)
   - Limited library checkout privileges (no online services)

   For Visitor Guidelines and the Academic Visitor Manual instructions go to [https://visitor.rice.edu/](https://visitor.rice.edu/)

2. **How do I get a Rice resource (ID card, parking sticker, library access, etc.) for my visitor?**

   **Answer:** Register your visitor at [https://visitor.rice.edu/](https://visitor.rice.edu/), click on Initiate Visitor Account, select the appropriate visitor type and enter visitor information.

3. **What if my visitor does not need Rice resources as noted in #2?**

   **Answer:** If your visitor does not need a Rice resource, there is no need to use the Rice visitor registration process.

4. **What if my visitor only needs a parking hangtag?**

   **Answer:** If the only resource needed is a parking hangtag there is no need to use the Rice visitor registration process. Instead, direct the visitor to the parking office (Additional charges might apply). Contact the parking office at [https://parking.rice.edu/](https://parking.rice.edu/)

5. **What do I do if I need access to a building or other privileges but do not qualify as a visitor?**

   **Answer:** Work with your Rice University sponsor to obtain the necessary privileges you need to come to campus. Also see answer to #4.

6. **What kind of visitors are at Rice?**

   **Answer:** Service provider visitors, academic visitors and transient visitors.

7. **How do I know if my visitor is a service provider visitor or an academic visitor?**
Service Provider Visitors: Individuals whose primary purpose at Rice is to provide nonteaching and non-research goods and/or services to Rice, usually under specification of a contract or agreement.

Academic Visitors: Individuals whose primary purpose at Rice is academic (research, teaching/training, or being trained) for the benefit of the individual, Rice, or both.

Transient Visitors: Individuals who are at Rice for a short period of time, such as those who tour campus through the Welcome Center, groups hosted by Housing & Dining, Friends of Fondren, UH/TMC students who receive library privileges only or community members who use the Gibbs Recreation Center. These groups of individuals are not subject to the visitor registration process.

8. How long does the process take?
   Answer: Typically five business days. It may take longer if an approval authority has additional questions about the information the visitor provided.

9. Who should be the visitor’s sponsor?
   Answer: A sponsor must be an exempt Rice faculty or staff employee.

10. Who should the visitor approver be?
    Answer: The sponsor’s direct supervisor at Rice. The one over approver (OOA) can name a third party as their designee, as long as the designee is not the sponsor.

11. Can someone else enter the initial information for the sponsor?
    Answer: The sponsor can name a third party as their designee to enter initial information on behalf of the sponsor.

12. What should the visitor do after the visitor account is approved?
    Answer:
    • Visit the Parking Office to get a parking sticker and pay for parking.
    • Visit RUPD to get picture taken for an ID card and pick up keys, if appropriate.
    • Visit Fondren Library to setup book checkout privileges.
    • Go to https://apply.rice.edu to activate Net ID and email account.
    • Visit IT (Mudd Building) to get any additional resources activated (e.g., VPN).

13. Can a visitor receive access to the Recreation Center?
14. What beginning date do I use, if I need the process to begin ASAP?

Answer: Urgent cases should be initiated on a very rare occasions. Use the entry date as the start date, to show its urgency. Again, this should be an exception.

15. Will I still need to complete a PA form, as has been the process in the past?

Answer: No. PAs are used only for employees and adjunct faculty.

16. What are some of the benefits associated with implementing this system?

Answer: Visitors add value to our community and fill vital roles important to Rice. In the past some of these visitors did not follow a structured vetting process to obtain these Rice privileges, use them, renew them and terminate them when no longer needed. A non-Rice person having access to sensitive information and/or a highly secured lab could be problematic if no one is aware of their activity. While we recognize the importance of visitors, we must also be cognizant of liabilities associated with having them on campus. To manage these liabilities, Rice has adopted a series of formal registration processes and operating procedures to regulate how the University extends visitor privileges. The overriding principle for the design of these processes is to provide the necessary level of accountability without overburdening the Visitor or the Rice Sponsor.

17. How do I know what type of safety training is needed prior to allowing my visitor access to the laboratory or work space?

Answer: Go to the visitor information training page at: [http://safety.rice.edu/Visitors/Visitors_to_Rice_University/](http://safety.rice.edu/Visitors/Visitors_to_Rice_University/)

18. Who can I contact if I am unsure how to proceed?

Answer: Email visitorportal@rice.edu

19. What if I am having difficulty logging on to the visitor portal?

Answer: If you are having difficulty, try a different web browser such as google chrome, safari, etc.

20. What if I do not receive an email message after I have initiated the visitor process?
**Answer:** If you have not received an email message, check your spam filter for notification.

21. Should I use a prefix or suffix when inputting information on the visitor portal?

**Answer:** You do not need to use a prefix or suffix.

22. How do I extend a service provider visitor appointment?

**Answer:** You will receive an email notification entitled “Action Required - Terminated visitor sponsors or designees” one month before the visitor entry expires. Login to [https://visitor.rice.edu/](https://visitor.rice.edu), click on My Visitors. Select your visitor entry, change the appointment end date and approve. The system approval cycle will begin once this update is in the portal.

23. How do I extend an academic visitor appointment?

**Answer:** You will receive an email notification entitled “Action Required - Terminated visitor sponsors or designees” one month before the visitor entry expires.
- Login to [https://esther.rice.edu/](https://esther.rice.edu/),
- Visitor Portal
- My Visitors
- Click on Visitor’s Name
- Dates and Sponsor
- Change the “To” date only. **Do not change the “From” date.**
- Click Next
- Certify the change and approve.

24. What do I do if a visitor name is misspelled?

**Answer:** Email visitorportal@rice.edu

25. What do I do if I need to add or remove resources initially requested?

**Answer:** The sponsor, one over approver or two over approver can modify an active application. Under Active visitors, click on the visitor application and update the resources you want to add or remove. After you select the resources, click the Next arrow to save and submit.

26. How long will the visitor have to complete the initial application?

**Answer:** The visitor has 30 days to complete the application. The entry will expire if not acted upon in 30 days.

27. Who should a visitor contact to reset his/her Esther Pin

**Answer:** Email visitorportal@rice.edu
28. Can a sponsor be related to a visitor he/she is sponsoring?

Answer: No. The sponsor cannot be related to an individual they wish to sponsor.