

Visas

for a USA visit

The type of visa you must obtain is defined by U.S. immigration law, and relates to the purpose of your travel. A visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to the U.S. port-of-entry and the Department of Homeland Security U.S. Customs and Border Protection immigration inspector authorizes or denies admission to the United States.

Before traveling to the United States

Select one:



Business visitors,
or tourists



Students,
or exchanges



Temporary workers
in the U.S.



Living permanently
in the U.S.

Note:

U.S. visa policy permits citizens of certain countries to travel to the U.S. without a visa, when they meet certain requirements, under U.S. laws.



- » [Visa Waiver Program \(VWP\)](#)
- » [Mexican and Canadian NAFTA Professional Worker](#)
- » [Citizens of Canada and Bermuda](#)

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Eligibility

The visitor visa is a type of nonimmigrant visa for persons desiring to enter the United States temporarily for business (B-1) or for pleasure, tourism or medical treatment (B-2). International travelers with visitor visas comprise a large portion of temporary visitor travel to the United States every year.

There are specific requirements which must be met by applicants to qualify for a visitor visa under provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The consular officer at the embassy or consulate will determine whether you qualify for the visa.

The presumption in the law is that every visitor visa applicant is an intending immigrant. Therefore, applicants for visitor visas must overcome this presumption by demonstrating that:

The purpose of their trip is to enter the U.S. for business, pleasure, or medical treatment;

- That they plan to remain for a specific, limited period;
- Evidence of funds to cover expenses in the United States;
- Evidence of compelling social and economic ties abroad; and
- That they have a residence outside the U.S. as well as other binding ties that will insure their return abroad at the end of the visit.



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How to Apply

Applicants for visitor visas should generally apply at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate with jurisdiction over their place of permanent residence. Although visa applicants may apply at any U.S. consular office abroad, it may be more difficult to qualify for the visa outside the country of permanent residence. It is important to apply for your visa well in advance of your travel departure date.

An interview at the embassy consular section is required for visa applicants from age 14 through 79, with few exceptions. Persons age 13 and younger, and age 80 and older, generally do not require an interview, unless requested by embassy or consulate. Making your appointment for an interview is the first step in the visa application process.

During the visa application process, usually at the interview, an ink-free, digital fingerprint scan will be quickly taken. Some visa applications require further administrative processing, which takes additional time after the visa applicant's interview by a Consular Officer.

Required documentation:

- Online Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, Form DS-160. Visit our DS-160 webpage to learn more about the DS-160 online process.
- A passport valid for travel to the United States and with a validity date at least six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the United States.
- One (1) 2x2 photograph. See the required photo format explained in Photograph Requirements.



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For current fees, and visa type descriptions, for Department of State government services select **Fees**. You will need to provide a receipt showing the visa application processing fee has been paid when you come for your visa interview.

If the visa is issued, there will be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, if applicable. Please consult the **Visa Reciprocity Tables** to find out if you must pay a visa issuance reciprocity fee.

Nonimmigrant visa application processing fee (non-refundable) for all categories below

- Non-petition-based nonimmigrant visa (B, C-1, D, F, I, J, M, TN/TD, T, U - except E): **\$160.00**
- Petition based visa categories (H, L, O, P, Q, R): **\$190.00**
- Treaty Trader/Investor, Australian Professional Specialty category visa (E): **\$270.00**
- Fiancé(e) or Spouse of U.S. citizen category visa (K): **\$240.00**

Border crossing card fees

- Border crossing card - age 15 and over (Valid 10 years): **\$160.00**
- Border crossing card - under age 15; for Mexican citizens if parent or guardian has or is applying for a border crossing card (valid 10 years or until the applicant reaches age 15, whichever is sooner): **\$15.00**

Other Fees

- L visa fraud prevention and detection fee - for visa applicant included in L blanket petition (principal applicant only): **\$500.00**
- Border Security Act fee – for visa applicant included in L blanket petition, where petition indicates subject to fee (principal applicant only): **\$2,250.00**



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