

Visa Information and Resources

(1) F1 Visa: Student Visa

Questions To Ask¹:

- **Have you been admitted to the school you want to attend?** If you are admitted to a different school after scheduling your appointment and are given a different I-20, you can inform the consular officer of the new I-20 at the time of the interview.
- **If you've been admitted, has the school given you an I-20 or DS-2019 form yet?** You are encouraged to apply for a F1 as soon as you have your I-20. F1 visas can be issued up to 120 days before the start date for your course.
- **Have you paid the SEVIS fee?** When you are admitted to a US school, the school registers you on the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). To complete registration, you must pay a **SEVIS I-901 fee**. For the F1 visa, this fee is \$200. You can pay your I-901 SEVIS Fee online at [FMJfee.com](https://fmjfee.com) or by using [Western Union Quick Pay](#). You **must present the receipt** as proof of payment when you apply for your visa.

Steps to obtain a student visa from South Korea²

1. **Complete the [DS-160 Form](#).** This takes approximately 90 minutes. Others are legally permitted to help the applicant complete the application so long as the applicant personally signs and submits their application. All answers **must be in English**, using only the English alphabet, except when you are asked to provide your full name in your native alphabet - translations are available from the drop-down menu in the right-hand corner of the application.
 - o Documents to have while filling out the DS-160:
 - Passport
 - Travel itinerary, if you have already made travel arrangements.
 - Dates of your last five visits or trips to the United States, if you have previously traveled to the United States. You may also be asked for your international travel history for the past five years.
 - Résumé or Curriculum Vitae - You may be required to provide information about your current and previous education and work history.
 - SEVIS ID, which is printed on your I-20 or DS-2019. You also will be asked to provide the address of the school/program at which you intend to study. This information should also be on your I-20 or DS-2019 form.
 - As part of the application process, you are required to upload a digital photograph (5cm x 5cm// 2"x2") taken **within the last 6 months**. The photograph requirements can be found [here](#).
2. **Print the DS-160 barcode page** (no need to print the whole application). This is also referred to as the "confirmation page." You will need to bring this with you to your interview.
 - o Once you have printed this page, click the "Back" button on your web browser and email yourself a backup copy of the DS-160.
3. **Pay the visa fee.**

¹ *Apply for a U.S. visa.* Apply for a U.S. Visa | Student Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typefandm.asp>

² *Apply for a U.S. visa.* Apply for a U.S. Visa | Student Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typefandm.asp>

- You will be required to pay a \$160 visa fee (192,000 KRW), sometimes referred to as the MRV fee. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable (you cannot transfer it to another person).
 - Although fees are listed in U.S. dollars, payment must be made with a domestic bank account using KRW. You can pay your fee by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) or cash at any Citibank location in South Korea. Citibank locations can be found [here](#)³.
 - **Paying with Electric Fund Transfer:** You may pay your nonimmigrant visa (NIV) application fee with an electronic funds transfer (EFT) directly from your bank account. Use the links on [this webpage](#) to make the payment. **If you choose this option, you will receive a Unique Beneficiary Account Number, regarding which you will need to make an interview appointment with the U.S. Embassy.**
 - i. Applicants who wish to schedule an appointment as soon as possible are advised to pay via the EFT option which will enable you to schedule your appointment within 2 hours if paid between 8am and 10pm Monday through Friday. (Applicants paying via 신한은행 will have to wait until 7:30pm on the day of payment to schedule their appointments.)
 - **Paying with cash:** you can also pay your NIV application fee with cash (Korean Won) at any 신한은행 in South Korea. Before going to Citibank, you must print the applicable U.S. visa application deposit slip available on [this page](#). Take the printed deposit slip and an acceptable I.D. (passport/주민등록증) with you to pay your fee. **If you choose this option, you will receive a receipt with a transaction reference number, which you will need to make an interview appointment. SAVE YOUR RECEIPT.** It cannot be replaced if it is lost.
4. Pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee
- Go to the [SEVIS I-901 Fee Processing Website](#) and enter the SEVIS identification number listed on your I-20.
 - Once you have paid the fee, **make sure to save your receipt** (either printed or sent through mail). You will need this receipt for your visa interview.

5. Schedule Visa Interview with the U.S. Embassy

- Important changes to interview requirements (applicable through Dec 31): [here](#)
- You can schedule an appointment online here: <https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/?!language=English&country=Korea>
- To schedule a visa appointment, you will need:
 - i. A passport valid for your intended period of stay in the US.
 - ii. The “Unique Beneficiary Account Number” that you use to make Electronic Fund Transfer payment (for the visa MRV fee) or the "Transaction Reference Number" appearing on your Citibank receipt.
 - iii. Your DS-160 confirmation page which you received upon completing the DS-160 form.
 - iv. Your email address.

³ Apply for a U.S. visa. Apply for a U.S. Visa | Bank Locations - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-loc-bank.asp>

- Current appointment wait times for student visas hover around 7 calendar days. The estimated time can change weekly, and you can check current wait times on this website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html/>
- Expedited appointments may be available if there is an urgent, unforeseen situation such as a funeral, medical emergency, or school start date. The procedure is outlined here: <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-expeditedappointment.asp>

6. Go to interview at the US embassy in Seoul

- Bring the following essential documents (in English, or with official translation attached)⁴
 - i. Passport
 - ii. DS-160 confirmation page
 - iii. Your completed I-20 form (official copy)
 - iv. Application fee payment receipt received from bank
 - v. SEVIS payment confirmation receipt
 - vi. 2 copies of your photograph
- Bring the following supporting documents (originals are preferable to copies)⁵:
 - i. Documents demonstrating strong financial, social, and family ties to your home country that will compel you to return to your country after your program of study in the U.S. ends.
 - 1. Useful documents include: a job offer letter upon completion of studies, assets, bank accounts
 - ii. Financial and any other documents you believe will support your application and which give credible evidence that you have enough readily-available funds to meet all expenses for the first year of study and that you have access to funds sufficient to cover all expenses while you remain in the United States.
 - 1. Useful documents include: Certificate of Balance/Bank Statement, family bank letters, company sponsorship, stock statements, income certificate, scholarship letter, business license, etc.)
 - iii. Academic documents that show scholastic preparation.
 - 1. Useful documents include: school transcripts (original copies are preferred) with grades, public examination certificates (A-levels, etc.), standardized test scores (SAT, TOEFL, etc.), and diplomas.
- Be Aware:
 - i. Photocopies of bank statements will **not** be accepted unless you can also show original copies of bank statements or original bank books.
 - ii. If you are financially sponsored by another person, bring proof of your relationship to the sponsor (such as your birth certificate), the sponsor's most recent original tax forms and the sponsor's bankbooks and/or fixed deposit certificates.

⁴ *F1 student visa - the application process and interview tips*. International Student. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://www.internationalstudent.com/immigration/f1-student-visa/>

⁵ *Apply for a U.S. visa*. Apply for a U.S. Visa | Student Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typefandm.asp>

- iii. Applicants with dependents (see below) also need to provide proof of relationship to the dependents (e.g. marriage and birth certificates).

Embassy Directions

Address

188 Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu, Seoul 03141, Korea
Phone: 82-2-397-4114

Getting there⁶

The U.S. Embassy is located near Gwanghwamun Station, subway line 5 (purple), exit 2. From exit 2 of Gwanghwamun Station, walk straight ahead 100 meters and you will see the U.S. Embassy on the right side. The U.S. Embassy is across the street from the Sejong Cultural Center and next to the Ministry of Information and Communication/KT Building. Multiple bus lines stop at both the Sejong Cultural Center directly across the street from the U.S. Embassy and at the KT Building next to the U.S. Embassy. **Please use the side entrance of the Embassy for visa interviews.** Note that there is no parking at the Embassy.

What to expect during your interview

- The consular officers may ask questions related to your study plans, university choice, academic capability, financial status, and post-graduation plans. The interview is generally conducted **in English**.
- Digital fingerprint scans will be taken, and your passport will be taken so that you can receive your visa.

After the Interview

- Allow for a minimum of **5-6 weeks** for your visa processing time. You may check your DS-160 and visa application status [here](#) by entering your location and DS-160 barcode number.
- **Denial:** if your visa is denied, you will be informed why. There are many reasons a visa applicant could be found ineligible for a visa. These reasons, called ineligibilities, are listed in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and other immigration laws. Some ineligibilities can be overcome, either by you, the visa applicant, or the U.S. petitioner, in certain immigrant visa cases. Other ineligibilities are permanent. Common ineligibilities, and processes for reapplication, are outlined [here](#).
- **Approval:** If your application is approved, your passport and visa will be returned to you via the document delivery option of your choice. You can have them returned to your home address in South Korea, or collect them from one of the pick-up locations.
- More information on the services and locations, as well as the relevant charges attached to each, can be found [here](#). Please note you will need to bring supporting documents to collect your passport (information at the bottom of the page).
- You can track your passport [here](#) by entering your passport number.

⁶ *Important visa information.* U.S. Embassy & Consulate in the Republic of Korea. (2022, April 26). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://kr.usembassy.gov/visas/important-visa-information/>

Dependents⁷

- Spouses or unmarried children (under age 21) who want to join the dependent in the US for the duration of their studies need a derivative F visa.
- It is preferable that families apply for their visa at the same time. If family members apply later (i.e. after the original F1 visa has been issued), they will need to bring a copy of the original applicant's passport and visa.

Arriving in the US

- You must enter the US no more than 30 days before the program start date listed on your I-20. Contact your Designated School Official (DSO) immediately once you enter the country, and again once you arrive at school.
- If you cannot enter the U.S. for the term listed on your I-20 form, contact your school officials as soon as possible so that they can update your record in SEVIS.
- Preparing for departure: Before travelling to the U.S., it is a good idea to get **at least two copies of these documents** (one to leave with your family before you depart, and one to give to school officials). Carry these with you at all times (*not* in your checked baggage.)
 - Passport
 - Visa
 - I-20 Form
 - It is also advisable to have your acceptance letter, proof of financial ability and any other supporting documentation with you, in case the Customs and Border Protection officer asks for them.
 - It is also recommended to have contact information for your school's international student office readily available.
- Landing in the US⁸: Upon landing, you will meet a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer at the port of entry, who will verify your information and determine if you may enter the country.
 - The inspector will first attempt to verify your status by using SEVIS. In the event that the CBP officer needs to verify information with your school or program, you are strongly advised to have the name and telephone number of the designated school official (DSO) at your school on hand. If you arrive during non-business hours (evening, weekends, holidays), you should also have an emergency or non-business hour phone number available for this official.
 - If the officer cannot initially verify your information, or if you do not have all of the required documentation, you may be directed to an interview area known as "secondary inspection."
 - If the CBP officer admits you into the country, you will be given [Form I-94](#), "[Arrival/Departure Record](#)." This form shows that you have been legally admitted into the United States, the class of admission and your authorized period of stay. It is very important that the information on the record is correct. **Double check this thoroughly.**

⁷Apply for a U.S. visa. Apply for a U.S. Visa | Student Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typefandm.asp>

⁸What is secondary inspection? Study in the States. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/what-is-secondary-inspection>

Maintaining F1 Status⁹

- You must maintain your F1 status for the duration of your studies. This means fulfilling the purpose for which the Department of State issued you the visa (to study) and following associated regulations.
- **Education:** You must
 - Attend and pass all your classes.
 - Take a full course of study each term.
 - Complete the program by the end date listed on your I-20 form.
 - If you believe you cannot complete any of the above steps, you should contact your DSO immediately.
- **Annual vacation:** You must complete at least one full academic year at your school before being eligible for annual vacation. You must intend to register for classes in the term following your vacation to maintain your visa. You do not have to take courses during your vacation.
- **Work:** You may only work when authorized - by a DSO in some cases, by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in others. Full-time F students may seek on-campus employment for up to 20 hours per week. After your first year as a student, you may also apply for employment off campus with authorization from USCIS. Please contact your student advisor for more information.
- **Practical training:** Students who have received an F-type visa are eligible for curricular practical training (CPT) at either the undergraduate or the graduate level during the program of study. CPT employment must be an integral part of an established curriculum and the position must directly relate to your major area of study. Your DSO can give you the school's policy on this option. Such students are also eligible for optional practical training (OPT) during or following the program of study. OPT is a form of temporary employment that directly relates to your program of study.
- **Talking to your DSO:** your DSO should be your first point of contact if you wish to do any of the following
 - Change your major/program/degree level
 - Transfer to a new school, or take a leave of absence
 - Take a break from school
 - Travel outside the US
 - Move to a new address
 - Request a program extension
 - If your DSO is unable to assist you or you want to contact someone else, you can contact the SEVP Response Center at sevp@ice.dhs.gov

Upon Program Completion

- After you finish your studies, you must either depart the US (within 60 days of the program end date listed on your I-20) or take action to maintain legal status. If you wish to extend your stay (e.g. pursue further education, change to another visa status), talk to your DSO.

Resources

⁹ *Maintaining status.* Study in the States. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/maintaining-status>

General Student Visa Information:

<https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typefandm.asp>

<https://uhakglobhks.tistory.com/4631> (출처: 고우해커스 유학비자 정보

https://www.gohackers.com/?c=prepare/prepare_info/godiaryb&uid=48695)

DS 160: <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-ds160info.asp>

F1 Visa Application: <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>

(2) Refugee Resettlement Visa

1. File Application to Obtain Refugee Status in Rep. of Korea

- The application to obtain refugee status can be found [here](#) (under 난민업무 관련 → 난민신청서)
- ****NOTE:** UNHCR does NOT conduct Refugee Status Determination (RSD); it is the **Korean government who receives refugee applications and conducts the RSD** process with full authority, and UNHCR has no authority to intervene in its procedure or/and the decision in Korea.

2. Complete Pre-Screening Interview¹⁰

- If the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) approves your case, a Resettlement Support Center (RSC) will make preparations for onward movement to the United States by **arranging medical examinations and a resettlement agency sponsor.**
- What to expect at the pre-screening interview:
 - When you arrive at the RSC or interview location, you will go through a **security screening (metal detector)** and you will be required to **leave all electronics, including mobile phones**, in a secure location for the duration of your time at the RSC.
 - A government official will ask important questions about how/why you fled your country of origin and will compile necessary biographic information (for yourself and many of your relatives) for initial security checks.
 - Your photograph will be taken. Your height, weight, and fingerprint (for applicants aged 14+) will be taken.
 - If you do not speak your caseworker's language, there will be an interpreter provided by the RSC.
 - At any time during this interview **you may ask any questions or request that the caseworker repeat or rephrase a question if you do not understand or if something is unclear. You may also talk to an RSC staff if you do not feel comfortable or do not feel like you can communicate well with your interpreter.**
 - You must always be accurate and truthful in **every detail**. Never make up answers. If you do not know the answer to a question, you should state that you do not know. Your

¹⁰ U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. U.S. Department of State. Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/prm/ra/admissions/index.htm>

answers should be as **specific, accurate, and complete as possible**. The caseworker will record your account of your claim for refugee status, **especially the reasons that led you to leave your country and make you unwilling to return**. This information will be maintained in your file which will be submitted to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, or USCIS.

- **You must go to your pre-screening interview with whatever identifying documentation you have for yourself and all family members on their case.** Bring as many of the following documents as you have available¹¹:
 - UNHCR refugee certificates / UNHCR refugee ID cards / UNHCR registration documents
 - Passports or travel documents (including expired travel documents)
 - National identification cards
 - Citizenship certificates
 - Temporary identification cards for foreigners
 - Birth certificates
 - Death certificates
 - Marriage licenses
 - Divorce documents
 - Custody documents
 - Adoption documents
 - Death certificates, if relevant to the persecution claim
 - Religious documents (baptism, marriage, temporary marriage certificate, death)
 - Employment documents, if relevant to your refugee claim
 - Educational documents/diplomas
 - Important medical documents (findings and prescriptions)
 - Medical form with a due date in case of pregnancy
 - Threat letters
 - Police/military summoning letters
 - Court documents for any crimes you have been charged with or convicted of, anywhere in the world (prison records, arrest warrants)
 - Media publications regarding your case (newspaper articles, relevant e-mails)
 - Military books and other documents such as identification cards, certificates, military discharge, or permit to carry weapons
 - Red Cross certificate (in case of being registered as a prisoner of war)
 - Recommendation letters, if relevant to your claim
 - Names, addresses, and phone numbers of U.S. ties (friends and relatives already living in the United States)
 - Affidavits of or letters from government officials
 - Union, political party, or organization membership cards
 - Your children may not be left unattended at any time. Please bring snacks for your children, diapers (if needed), and toys or other activities to keep them occupied.
- What to expect and do after your pre-screening interview:

- Expect many months between the initial pre-screening interview and the USCIS interview.
- **Keep in touch with the RSC regarding any changes to your case** such as the birth of a child, death of a family member, marriage of a family member, or changes in your location or contact information.
- If you have any questions regarding this process or want further consultation, the UNHCR in Korea is available for consultation every **Monday and Wednesday from 2-5pm KST**. Consultation is available by prior appointment via phone, email, or in-person visits. The UNHCR does not conduct refugee status determination, but is available to assist with any questions regarding the process.

UNHCR in the Rep. of Korea Contact Information¹²

- Counseling hours: Every Monday and Wednesday Afternoon (2pm - 5pm)
- Counseling number: 02 - 773 - 7003 // Fax: 02 - 773 - 7014
- Toll-free Call: 1541 - 02 - 773 - 7003# // 1633 - 02 - 773 - 7003#
- Counseling Email: info.korea@unhcr.org
- Address: 7F Kumsegi Building, Mugyo-ro 6, Jung-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea

4. USCIS Interview¹³

- If your case passes through the initial security screening, you will be contacted by the RSC and scheduled for an interview conducted by specially trained U.S. Government officers from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). **U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) screens arriving refugees** for admission at the port of entry.
- What to expect for your USCIS interview:
 - A USCIS officer will ask you **many of the same or similar questions that you answered in the pre-screening interview**, and you will need to explain again how and why you became a refugee.
 - When you meet with the USCIS officer, they will have read your entire file including all the information you provided during your pre-screening interview. The USCIS officer will still **need to verify the information you provided and ask you additional questions to determine whether you are eligible for resettlement**.
 - As with the pre-screening interview, interpretation will be provided by the RSC.
 - Again, **you must be honest**. You will be asked to swear under oath that everything you say during this interview is true. Your request for resettlement in the U.S. will be decided based on your testimony and other available evidence. To be eligible for admission to the United States as a refugee you must be truthful. **Failure to tell the truth can result in a denial of your application**.
 - If your contact information such as address, email, phone number, and U.S. tie information has changed since your pre-screening interview, you will need to confirm all updated information at this time.

¹² *Contact Us*. UNHCR Republic of Korea. (n.d.). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://help.unhcr.org/southkorea/contact/>

¹³ *U.S. resettlement process: USCIS interview - settle in U.S.* Settle In. (2022, July 21). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://settlein.us/about-refugee-resettlement/uscis-interview/>

- If you were not fingerprinted on the day of your pre-screening interview, everyone age 14 and older will also be fingerprinted during this visit.
- Bring the following documents with you:
 - Any identifying documentation you have for yourself and all family members on your case, EVEN IF you have already brought these documents to the pre-screening interview. Bring the **originals** of any documents you have; if you do NOT have the originals, bring **copies**.
- What to expect after your USCIS interview:
 - Once you have completed your interview, you will be escorted back to the waiting area while your application is reviewed. You will be informed by RSC staff when you may leave the RSC or interview location. **Please DO NOT leave before you are notified.**
 - Once USCIS has made a decision about your case, the RSC will notify you of the decision (not on the same day). You will receive one of the following three decisions:
 - 1. Your case is eligible for resettlement to the U.S.
 - 2. Your case is NOT eligible for resettlement to the U.S.
 - No formal procedure for **appealing the denial of refugee status**; HOWEVER, an applicant may file a **Request for Review (RFR)** of his case to DHS on the basis of additional evidence or information not available at the time of the interview. You will receive instructions on how to do this when you are informed of this decision.
 - 3. More time is needed to investigate your eligibility.

5. Medical Screening Process¹⁴

- You and each family member on your case will be scheduled for a **mandatory medical examination**. **Please bring all available medical and vaccination records with you to your appointment.** The validity of the medical examination ranges from 3 to 6 months. You may be required to complete another medical examination if you do not depart for the United States prior to the expiration date of your initial medical screening.
- The medical screening includes: an assessment of conditions of public health significance, identification of health conditions requiring additional arrangements at pre-departure, travel, and post-arrival phases of resettlement, fitness-to-travel assessments, treatment, and medical escorts, when required (individuals with serious medical conditions will be assigned a medical escort to provide support during their journey to the United States.)
- What to expect during the medical screening?
 - Your blood pressure, height, weight, and vision checked
 - Your blood drawn
 - A chest x-ray taken
 - A physical exam performed
 - Vaccinations given
- What to expect after the medical screening?

¹⁴*U.S. resettlement process: Medical screening - settle in U.S.* Settle In. (2022, June 21). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://settlein.us/about-refugee-resettlement/medical-screening/>

- Once you have completed your Medical Screening, it may **take several weeks before the results are finalized and shared** with the Resettlement Support Center. As part of this process, **you may be required to have further testing**. If this is the case, you may be contacted by the doctor or by RSC staff to schedule a follow-up appointment

6. Cultural Orientation¹⁵

- At some point before your departure to the United States, the Resettlement Support Center will also schedule you to attend a Cultural Orientation class where you will receive valuable information about your journey to the United States and what to expect when you arrive.
- These classes will provide practical information on the culture and laws of the U.S. All eligible family members are highly encouraged to attend.
- You are encouraged to review all the materials well before your departure. You will receive additional Cultural Orientation in the United States.

7. Travel¹⁶

- As an approved refugee, you are eligible to receive an interest free travel loan to cover the cost of your airfare and you must sign a Promissory Note in which you promise to **repay the travel loan within three and a half years after arrival** in the United States.
- You should wait until your travel details are confirmed by IOM before selling your belongings, leaving your job, or leaving your home.
- You will receive assistance with:
 - obtaining travel documents including exit permits, whenever possible, and transit and entry visas
 - pre-departure orientation regarding transportation to and assistance at embarkation airports (flight check-in, as well as customs and immigration formalities at the airport)
 - operational or medical escorts
 - assistance in transit (direction to connecting flights, any necessary booking adjustments, and meals and accommodation as needed during transit, by IOM or an IOM contracted service provider)

8. Arrival and Post-Arrival¹⁷

- When you arrive at your final destination in the United States, a representative of the Resettlement Agency will meet you at the airport.
- Your Resettlement Agency is responsible for helping you with basic services for your first 30-90 days in the United States. Resettlement Agency staff will make sure that you have housing during your first month in the United States, and they will look for housing that is clean, affordable, and in a safe neighborhood.
 - There are no refugee camps in the United States; therefore, you will not live in a camp. Housing varies from one location to another. In general, the housing provided is a modest

¹⁵*U.S. resettlement process: Cultural orientation - settle in U.S.* Settle In. (2022, June 21). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://settlein.us/about-refugee-resettlement/cultural-orientation/>

¹⁶*U.S. resettlement process: Travel - settle in U.S.* Settle In. (2022, June 21). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://settlein.us/about-refugee-resettlement/travel/>

¹⁷*U.S. resettlement process: Arrival to the United States - settle in U.S.* Settle In. (2022, June 21). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://settlein.us/about-refugee-resettlement/arrival/>

apartment furnished with items that have been donated by other members of the local community

- You will have the legal right and responsibility to work in the United States and the Resettlement Agency will connect you to employment services. If you have school-age children, they can attend free, public schools.
- Resettlement Agency will help you access job search assistance wherever you are resettled.
 - Your first job will probably not be in the same profession or field as your job in your home country. It may be an entry level, non-professional job, and may even be temporary or part-time. Because the cost of living is high in the United States, it is common, and often necessary, for both men and women to work outside the home.

(3) H1-B: Non-Immigrant Specialty Occupation Visa

Description¹⁸:

U.S. H-1B is an employment-based, non-immigrant visa for skilled and educated individuals employed in specialized occupations outside of the United States. The H-1B visa enables these foreign workers to temporarily work for a specific employer in the United States.

This nonimmigrant classification applies to people who wish to perform services in a specialty occupation, services of exceptional merit and ability relating to a Department of Defense (DOD) cooperative research and development project, or services as a fashion model of distinguished merit or ability.

Annual Quota¹⁹:

The H-1B classification has an annual numerical limit (cap) of 65,000 new statuses/visas each fiscal year. An additional 20,000 petitions filed on behalf of beneficiaries with a master's degree or higher from a U.S. institution of higher education are exempt from the cap. Additionally, H-1B workers who are petitioned for or employed at an institution of higher education or its affiliated or related nonprofit entities, a nonprofit research organization or a government research organization are not subject to this numerical cap.

Period of Stay:

As an H-1B specialty occupation worker or fashion model, you may be admitted for a period of **up to three years**. Your time period may be extended, but generally cannot go beyond a total of six years,

¹⁸ *H-1B Specialty Occupations, DOD Cooperative Research and Development Project Workers, and Fashion Models*. USCIS. (2022, July 21). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>

¹⁹ *H1B visa requirements*. Path2USA. (2022, August 16). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://www.path2usa.com/us-visas/h1b-visa/h1b-visa-petition-requirements>

though some exceptions do apply under sections 104(c) and 106(a) of the American Competitiveness in the Twenty-First Century Act (AC21), 8 CFR 214.2(h)(13)(iii)(D) and (E).

Your employer will be liable for the reasonable costs of your return transportation if your employer terminates your employment before the end of your period of authorized stay. Your employer is not responsible for the costs of your return transportation if you voluntarily resign from your position.

Eligibility Criteria²⁰:

Classification	General Requirements (among others)	Is the Labor Condition Application required?
H-1B Specialty Occupations	<p>The occupation requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge; and ● Attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States. <p>The position must also meet one of the following criteria to qualify as a specialty occupation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor's or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum entry requirement for the particular position ● The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, the job is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree ● The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position ● The nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that the knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree.* <p>For you to qualify to perform services in a specialty occupation you must meet one of the following criteria:</p>	<p>Yes. The prospective petitioner must include a Form ETA-9035/9035E, Labor Condition Application (LCA) certified by the Department of Labor (DOL), with the Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker. See the links to the DOL's Office of Foreign Labor Certification and USCIS forms.</p> <p>For more information see the Information for Employers & Employees page.</p>

²⁰H-1B Specialty Occupations, DOD Cooperative Research and Development Project Workers, and Fashion Models. USCIS. (2022, July 21). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university ● Hold a foreign degree that is the equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university ● Hold an unrestricted state license, registration, or certification that authorizes you to fully practice the specialty occupation and be immediately engaged in that specialty in the state of intended employment <p>Have education, specialized training, and/or progressively responsible experience that is equivalent to the completion of a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree in the specialty occupation, and have recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions directly related to the specialty.**</p>	
<p>H-1B2 DOD Researcher and Development Project Worker</p>	<p>The job must require a bachelor's or higher degree, or its equivalent, to perform the duties. The petition must be accompanied by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A verification letter from the DOD project manager for the particular project stating that the beneficiary will be working on a cooperative research and development project or a co production project under a reciprocal Government-to-Government agreement administered by DOD. Details about the specific project are not required. 2. A general description of the beneficiary's duties on the particular project and the actual dates of the beneficiary's employment on the project. 3. A statement indicating the names of noncitizens currently employed on the project in the United States and their dates of employment and the names of noncitizens whose employment on the project ended within the past year. <p>To be eligible for this classification you must have a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent in the occupational field in which you will be performing</p>	<p>No.</p>

	<p>services. This requirement can be met based on one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree required by the duties from an accredited college or university ● Hold a foreign degree that is the equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited college or university ● Hold an unrestricted state license, registration, or certification that authorizes you to fully practice the duties of the job and be immediately engaged in that specialty in the state of intended employment ● Have education, specialized training, or progressively responsible experience in the specialty that is equivalent to the completion of a U.S. bachelor's or higher degree, and have recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions directly related to the specialty.** 	
<p>H-1B3 Fashion Model</p>	<p>The position/services must require a fashion model of prominence.</p> <p>To be eligible for this visa category you must be a fashion model of distinguished merit and ability.</p>	<p>Yes. The prospective petitioner must include a Form ETA-9035/9035E, Labor Condition Application (LCA) certified by the Department of Labor (DOL), with the Form I-129. See the links to the Department of Labor's Office of Foreign Labor Certification and USCIS forms to the right.</p>

What is a typical process to obtain an H1B Visa?

- Must qualify and be eligible for H-1B criteria.
- Employers get Labor Condition Application (LCA) approval from the Department of Labor in the US.
- A US employer should [file an H-1B petition](#) with USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) and get approval for it.
- Foreign workers must apply for the Visa and get the stamping at the [US consulate](#) (see above for directions to the U.S. Embassy and Consulate).

- Come to America and work for this designated Employer.
- H-1B Visa is subject to approval. Each applicant must have a valid passport and need to complete a Visa application form, pay the fee, and appear for the visa interview at the nearest applicable US consulate in the home country.

H-1B Electronic Registration Process²¹:

Prospective petitioners seeking to file H-1B cap-subject petitions, including for beneficiaries eligible for the advanced degree exemption, must first electronically register and pay the associated \$10 H-1B registration fee for each beneficiary. Under this process, prospective petitioners (also known as registrants), and their authorized representatives, who are seeking to employ H-1B workers subject to the cap, complete a registration process that requires only basic information about the prospective petitioner and each requested worker. The USCIS will open an initial registration period for a minimum of 14 calendar days each fiscal year. The H-1B selection process will then be run on properly submitted electronic registrations. Only those with selected registrations will be eligible to file H-1B cap-subject petitions.

In order to submit an H-1B registration, you must first [create a USCIS online account](#).

The initial registration period for FY 2022 will open at noon Eastern Time (ET) on March 9 and run through noon ET on March 25. Both representatives and registrants must wait until March 9 to create and complete H-1B registrations.

Prospective petitioners (also known as registrants) must use a “registrant” account within myUSCIS to submit registrations. Registrants will not be able to add additional information after they select “I am an H-1B registrant” account type until the initial registration period opens. Registrants submitting their own registrations will enter their company information as part of their first H-1B registration. Registrants working with a representative will review company information that the representative enters. Please view the [video](#) on the USCIS “H-1B Electronic Registration Process” website for step-by-step instructions about setting up registrant accounts.

Representatives can create an account at any time by using the same kind of account already available to representatives. Representatives who already have a representative account may use that account; they do not need to create a new account. Unlike registrants, representatives enter information about their law firm or organization as part of setting up an account. Please view the [video](#) on the USCIS “H-1B Electronic Registration Process” website for step-by-step instructions about setting up an attorney or representative account.

Required Fees:

\$10 for each registration. Each registration is for a single beneficiary.

H-1B Registration Process Timeline:

²¹*H-1B Electronic Registration process.* USCIS. (2022, April 25). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-and-fashion-models/h-1b-electronic-registration-process>

- March 2: Petitioners and registrants can begin creating H-1B registrant accounts at noon Eastern.
- March 9: H-1B registration period opens at noon Eastern.
- March 25: H-1B registration period closes at noon Eastern.
- March 31: Date by which USCIS intends to notify selected registrants.
- April 1: The earliest date that FY 2022 H-1B cap-subject petitions may be filed.
- August 2: The earliest date that FY 2022 H-1B cap-subject petitions selected for the second filing period may be filed.

Petition Filing Process²²:

Step 1: (only required for specialty occupation and fashion model petitions): Employer/Agent Submits LCA (Labor Condition Application) to DOL (Department of Labor) for Certification.

The employer/agent must apply for and receive DOL certification of an LCA. For further information regarding LCA requirements and DOL's process, please visit the [Foreign Labor Certification, Department of Labor](#) website page.

Step 2: Employer/Agent Submits Completed Form I-129 to USCIS.

The employer/agent should file Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, with the correct USCIS service center. Please see the [I-129 Direct Filing Chart](#) page. The DOL-certified LCA must be submitted with the Form I-129 (only for specialty occupation and fashion models). See the [instructions to the Form I-129 \(PDF, 452.47 KB\)](#) for additional filing requirements.

Step 3: Prospective Workers Outside the United States Apply for Visa and/or Admission.

Once the Form I-129 petition has been approved, the prospective H-1B worker who is outside the United States may apply with the U.S. Department of State (DOS) at a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad for an H-1B visa (if a visa is required). Regardless of whether a visa is required, the prospective H-1B worker must then apply to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for admission to the United States in H-1B classification.

Labor Condition Application (LCA):

Prospective specialty occupation and distinguished fashion model employers/agents must obtain a certification of an LCA from the DOL. This application includes certain attestations, a violation of which can result in fines, bars on sponsoring nonimmigrant or immigrant petitions, and other sanctions to the employer/agent. The application requires the employer/agent to attest that it will comply with the following labor requirements:

- The employer/agent will pay the H-1B worker a wage which is no less than the wage paid to similarly qualified workers or, if greater, the prevailing wage for the position in the geographic area in which the H-1B worker will be working.
- The employer/agent will provide working conditions that will not adversely affect other similarly employed workers.
- At the time of the labor condition application there is no strike or lockout at the place of employment.

²²H-1B Specialty Occupations, DOD Cooperative Research and Development Project Workers, and Fashion Models. USCIS. (2022, July 21). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>

- Notice of the filing of the labor condition application with the DOL has been given to the union bargaining representative or has been posted at the place of employment.

Family of H1-B Visa Holders²³:

Your spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age may seek admission in the H-4 nonimmigrant classification. Beginning May 26, 2015, certain H-4 dependent spouses of H-1B nonimmigrants can file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, as long as the H-1B nonimmigrant has already started the process of seeking employment-based lawful permanent resident status.

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-and-fashion-models/h-1b-electronic-registration-process>

<https://www.path2usa.com/h1b-visa-petition-requirements>

Exchange Visitor Visa (J)

Description²⁴:

Exchange visitor (J) visas are nonimmigrant visas for individuals approved to participate in exchange visitor programs in the United States.

Exchange Visitor Categories:

- Au pair and EduCare
- Camp Counselor
- Government Visitor
- Intern
- International Visitor (Dept. of State use)
- Physician
- Professor and Research Scholar
- Short-term Scholar
- Specialist
- Student, college/university
- Student, secondary
- Summer Work Travel
- Teacher
- Trainee

²³H-1B Specialty Occupations, DOD Cooperative Research and Development Project Workers, and Fashion Models. USCIS. (2022, July 21). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/h-1b-specialty-occupations>

²⁴ Study & Exchange - United States Department of State. Exchange Visitor Visa. (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>

Example Exchange Visitor Pilot Programs²⁵:

- Summer Work Travel Pilot Program: Australians
- Summer Work Travel Pilot Program: New Zealanders
- Intern Work Travel Pilot Program: Irish
- WEST (Work, English Study, and Travel) Program: South Koreans
 - In 2008, the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Government of the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing an eighteen month work, English language instruction and travel program to be known as the WEST (Work, English Study, and Travel) Program. This innovative reciprocal exchange program will be conducted as a five year pilot program under which qualifying university students and recent graduates from the Republic of Korea will enter the United States to study English, participate in internships, and travel independently.
 - To be eligible you must:
 - Be a citizen of the Republic of Korea.
 - Be approved for participation by the Republic of Korea.
 - Be a bona fide post-secondary student or recent graduate. A recent graduate is defined as a Korean citizen who has graduated from a post-secondary college/university in their home country no more than 12 months beyond graduation. The applicant must provide evidence from his/her post-secondary institution of student status or graduation. Vocational students pursuing studies at a tertiary level accredited academic institution are not eligible for participation.
 - Provide proof of sufficient financial resources, prior to coming to the United States, to support themselves throughout their program and for their return home.
 - Not be accompanied by a spouse or dependents.

Exchange Visitors cannot travel on the Visa Waiver Program or with Visitor Visas - An exchange visitor visa (J) is required to participate in an exchange visitor program in the United States. Foreign nationals may not study after entering on a visitor (B) visa or through the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

Acceptance in Exchange Visitor Program - The first step is to apply for and be accepted into an exchange visitor program through a designated sponsoring organization in the United States. Visit the Department of State [J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program](#) website to learn about program requirements, regulations, and more.

After the exchange visitor program accepts your participation, you will be registered for the [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\)](#) and must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee (except in certain cases – consult your exchange visitor program sponsor). Visit the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)](#) website to learn more about SEVIS and the SEVIS I-901 Fee.

²⁵ U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Guidelines for Administration of the WEST (Work, English Study, and Travel) Program Eighteen-Month Intern Pilot Program*. Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/pilot-program-west.pdf>

How to Apply²⁶: There are several steps to apply for a visa. The order of these steps and how you complete them may vary by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Please consult the instructions on your respective [embassy or consulate website](#).

1. Complete the Online Visa Application

- **Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160** – [Learn more](#) about completing the [DS-160](#). You must: 1) complete the online visa application and 2) print the application form confirmation page to bring to your interview.
- **Photo** – You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. Your photo must be in the format explained in the [Photograph Requirements](#).

2. Schedule an Interview

- Interviews are generally required for visa applicants who are between the ages of 14 and 79. Consular officers may require an interview of any visa applicant.
- You should schedule an appointment for your visa interview in the [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) in the country where you live. You may schedule your interview at another U.S. Embassy or Consulate, but be aware that it may be more difficult to qualify for a visa outside of the country where you live.
- Wait times for interview appointments vary by location, season, and visa category, so you should apply for your visa early.

3. Prepare for Your Interview

- **Fees - Pay the non-refundable visa application fee (\$160)**, if you are required to pay it before your interview. If your visa is approved, you may also need to pay a visa issuance fee, if applicable to your nationality.

4. Gather Required Documentation

Bring the following required documents for your visa interview:

- **Passport** valid for travel to the United States - Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond your period of stay in the United States (unless exempt by [country-specific agreements](#)). Each individual who needs a visa must submit a separate application, including any family members listed in your passport.
- **Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160 confirmation page.**
- **Application fee payment receipt**, if you are required to pay before your interview.
- **Photo** – You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. If the [photo upload fails](#), you must bring one printed photo in the format explained in the [Photograph Requirements](#).
- **Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status, Form DS-2019** – Your program sponsor will provide you a SEVIS-generated Form DS-2019 after the sponsor enters your information in the [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\)](#) database. All exchange visitors must be registered in SEVIS. Your spouse and/or minor children, if they intend to live in the United States with you, will each receive a separate Form DS-2019.
- **Training/Internship Placement Plan, Form DS-7002** – In addition to the Form DS 2019, participants in the J-1 Trainee and Intern categories require Form DS-7002 (based on Box 7 on Form DS-2019). Learn more about the [Trainee](#) and [Intern](#) programs.

²⁶ U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Exchange Visitor Visa*. U.S. Department of State. Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html#:~:text=There%20are%20two%20nonimmigrant%20visa,of%20Education%20and%20Cultural%20Affairs>

Additional Documentation May Be Required²⁷ A consular officer will interview you to determine your qualifications for an exchange visitor visa, and may request additional documents, such as evidence of:

- The purpose of your travel;
- Your intent to depart the United States after your travel;
- Your ability to pay all travel costs.

Evidence of your employment and/or your family ties may be sufficient to show the purpose of your travel and your intent to return to your home country. If you cannot cover all the costs for your travel, you may show evidence that another person will cover some or all costs for your travel.

Review the instructions for how to apply for a visa on the website of the [embassy or consulate](#) where you will apply

Read about your Legal Rights and Protections

You must read the [Legal Rights and Protections](#) pamphlet to learn about your rights in the United States and protection available to you. Review this important pamphlet before applying for your visa.

5. Attend Your Visa Interview

- A consular officer will interview you to determine whether you are qualified to receive an exchange visitor visa. You must establish that you meet the requirements under U.S. law to receive a visa.
- Ink-free, digital fingerprint scans are taken as part of the application process. They are usually taken during your interview, but this varies based on location.
- After your visa interview, the consular officer may determine that your application requires further [administrative processing](#). The consular officer will inform you if this is required.
- After the visa is approved, you may need to pay a visa issuance fee (if applicable to your nationality), and make arrangements for the return of the passport and visa to you. Review the [visa processing times](#) to learn more.

Two-year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement²⁸: When you agree to participate in an Exchange Visitor Program and your program falls under the conditions below, you will be subject to the two-year home-country physical presence (foreign residence) requirement. This means you will be required to return to your home country for two years at the end of your exchange visitor program. This requirement under immigration law is based on Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Two-year Home-country Physical Presence Requirement Conditions - An exchange visitor is subject to the two-year home-country physical presence requirement if the following conditions exist:

²⁷ Exchange visitor visa - United States Department of State. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>

²⁸ Eligibility for a Waiver of the Exchange Visitor Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor/eligibility.html>

- **Government funded exchange program** - The program is financed in whole or in part directly or indirectly by the U.S. government or the government of the exchange visitor's nationality or last residence;
- **Graduate medical education or training** - The exchange visitor entered the United States to receive graduate medical education or training;
- **Specialized knowledge or skill: Skills List** - The exchange visitor is a national or permanent resident of a country which has deemed the field of specialized knowledge or skill necessary to the development of the country, as shown on the Exchange Visitor Skills List. **Review the [Exchange Visitor Skills List 2009](#).**

Restrictions²⁹ - If you are subject to the two-year home-country physical presence requirement, you must return to your home country for a cumulative total period of at least two years before you can do any of the following:

- [Change status](#) while in the United States to the nonimmigrant categories of temporary worker (H) or intracompany transferee (L);
- [Adjust status](#) while in the United States to immigrant visa/lawful permanent resident status (LPR);
- Receive an immigrant visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate; or
- Receive a temporary worker (H), intracompany transferee (L), or fiancé (K) visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Waiver of Two Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement - If you are not able to fulfill the home country presence requirement, you may apply for a waiver. Select [Waiver of the Exchange Visitor Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement](#) to learn more about this requirement and how to request a waiver.

Entering the United States:

- A visa does not guarantee entry into the United States. A visa only allows a foreign citizen to travel to a U.S. port-of-entry (generally an airport) and request permission to enter the United States. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port of entry have authority to permit or deny admission to the United States.
- After you present your passport, visa, and DS-2019 at the port-of-entry, a CBP official will make this decision. Once you are allowed to enter the United States, the CBP official will provide an admission stamp or paper Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record.
- Learn about procedures for students (with F or M visas) entering the United States on the CBP website under [Arrival Procedures for Students or Exchange Visitors](#). Learn more about admissions and entry requirements, restrictions about bringing food, agricultural products, and other restricted/prohibited goods, and more by reviewing the [CBP website](#).

²⁹ Exchange visitor visa - United States Department of State. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>

Extending Your Stay³⁰:

- See [Program Extension](#) on the Department of State Exchange Visitor Program website to learn about requesting to extend your exchange visitor program beyond the date listed on your Form DS-2019.
- Additional information to maintain exchange visitor status is on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement SEVP website under [Maintaining Your Immigration Status While a Student or Exchange Visitor](#).
- Failure to depart the United States on time will result in being [out of status](#). Under U.S. law, visas of individuals who are out of status are automatically voided ([Section 222\(g\) of the Immigration and Nationality Act](#)). Any multiple entry visa that was voided due to being out of status will not be valid for future entries into the United States.
- Failure to depart the United States on time may also result in you being ineligible for visas in the future. Review [Visa Denials](#) and [Ineligibilities and Waivers: Laws](#) to learn more.

Change of Status:

- If your plans change while in the United States (for example, you marry a U.S. citizen or receive an offer of employment), you may be able to request a change in your nonimmigrant status to another category through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). See [Change My Nonimmigrant Status](#) on the USCIS website to learn more.
- While you are in the United States, receiving a change of status from USCIS does not require you to apply for a new visa. However, once you depart the United States, you must apply for a visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the appropriate category for your travel.

Additional Information³¹:

- There is no guarantee that you will be issued a visa. Do not make final travel plans or buy tickets until you have a visa.
- For information about working in the United States during your exchange program, review [Exchange Visitors](#) and [Employment Authorization](#) on the USCIS website.
- Spouse and children
 - Your spouse and unmarried, minor children may be able to apply for J-2 visas to accompany or join you at a later date to reside with you during your J program, if permitted on your exchange program category. While SEVIS fee payment is not required, your sponsor must issue them separate DS-2019 Forms, which are required when they apply for their visas, along with a copy of the primary visa holder's J-1 visa and proof of relationship.

³⁰Exchange visitor visa - United States Department of State. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>

³¹Exchange visitor visa - United States Department of State. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html>

- Your minor children are permitted to attend school while in the United States on J-2 visas and are not required to obtain [student \(F\) visas](#).
- U.S. Embassies and Consulates will adjudicate visa applications that are based on a same-sex marriage in the same way that we adjudicate applications for opposite gender spouses.
- A valid U.S. visa in an expired passport is still valid. Unless canceled or revoked, a visa is valid until its expiration date. Therefore, a valid U.S. visa in an expired passport is still valid. If you have a valid visa in your expired passport, do not remove it from your expired passport. You may use your valid visa in your expired passport along with a new valid passport for travel and admission to the United States.

(4) Tourist Visa (B-2)

What does this visa cover?³²

- Tourism
- Vacation (holiday)
- Visit with friends or relatives
- Medical treatment
- Participation in social events hosted by fraternal, social, or service organizations
- Participation by amateurs in musical, sports, or similar events or contests, if not being paid for participating
- Enrollment in a short recreational course of study, not for credit toward a degree.

Note that **study (with credit, toward a degree) and employment** are *not covered by this visa*. In order to qualify for the B-2 visa, you must demonstrate to a consular officer that you are intending to stay in the US only for a limited time. This includes by showing:

- That the purpose of your trip is for a temporary visit
- That you plan to remain in the US for a specific, limited period of time
- Evidence of funds to cover your expenses while in the US
- That you have a residence outside the US, as well as other binding social or economic ties, that will ensure your return abroad at the end of your visit.

Application Items³³

You must submit the following:

1. [A Non-Immigrant Visa Electronic Application \(DS-160\) form](#) - see below for more info.

³² Apply for a U.S. visa. Apply for a U.S. Visa | Business/Tourist Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typeb1b2.asp>

³³ Apply for a U.S. visa. Apply for a U.S. Visa | Business/Tourist Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typeb1b2.asp#apply>

2. A passport valid for your intended period of stay in the US.
3. One 5cm x 5cm photo taken in the last six months. More information about the photo requirements can be found [here](#).

In addition, you must bring an interview appointment letter proving that you booked an interview through [this service](#). More information on the interviews is below.

Application Steps³⁴

1. **Complete the Non-Immigrant Visa Electronic Application (DS-160) form.** This takes approximately 90 minutes. Others are legally permitted to help you complete the application so long as you personally sign and submit your application. All answers must be in English, using only the English alphabet, except when you're asked to provide your full name in your native alphabet - translations are available from the drop-down menu in the right-hand corner of the application.
 - Documents to have while filling out the DS-160:
 - Passport
 - Travel itinerary, if you have already made travel arrangements.
 - Dates of your last five visits or trips to the United States, if you have previously travelled to the United States. You may also be asked for your international travel history for the past five years.
 - Résumé or Curriculum Vitae - You may be required to provide information about your current and previous education and work history.
 - SEVIS ID, which is printed on your I-20 or DS-2019. You also will be asked to provide the address of the school/program at which you intend to study. This information should also be on your I-20 or DS-2019 form.
 - As part of the application process, you are required to upload a digital photograph taken within the last 6 months. The photograph requirements can be found [here](#).
2. **Print the DS-160 barcode page** (no need to print the whole application). This is also referred to as the "confirmation page." You will need to bring this with you to your interview.
 - Once you have printed this page, click the "Back" button on your web browser and email yourself a backup copy of the DS-160.
3. **Pay the visa fee.**
 - You will be required to pay a \$160 visa fee (192,000 KRW), sometimes referred to as the MRV fee. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable (you cannot transfer it to another person).
 - Although fees are listed in U.S. dollars, payment must be made with a domestic bank account using KRW. You can pay your fee by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) or cash at any Citibank location in South Korea. Citibank locations can be found [here](#).

³⁴ *Apply for a U.S. visa.* Apply for a U.S. Visa | Business/Tourist Visa - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-typeb1b2.asp#apply>

- Paying with Electric Fund Transfer: You may pay your nonimmigrant visa (NIV) application fee with an electronic funds transfer (EFT) directly from your bank account. Use the links on [this webpage](#) to make the payment. **If you choose this option, you will receive a Unique Beneficiary Account Number, which you will need to make an interview appointment.**
 - i. Applicants who wish to schedule an appointment as soon as possible are advised to pay via the EFT option which will enable you to schedule your appointment within 2 hours if paid between 8am and 10pm Monday through Friday. (Applicants paying via Citibank will have to wait until 7:30pm on the day of payment to schedule their appointments.)
- Paying with cash: you can also pay your NIV application fee with cash at any Citibank in South Korea. Before going to Citibank, you must print the applicable U.S. visa application deposit slip available on [this page](#). Take the printed deposit slip with you to pay your fee. **If you choose this option, you will receive a receipt with a transaction reference number, which you will need to make an interview appointment.**
 - i. ****Save your receipt. It cannot be replaced if it is lost.**

4. Schedule visa interview.

- Important changes to interview requirements (applicable through Dec 31): [here](#)
- You can schedule an appointment online here:
<https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/?language=English&country=Korea>
- To schedule a visa appointment, you will need:
 - i. A passport valid for your intended period of stay in the US.
 - ii. The “Unique Beneficiary Account Number” that you use to make Electronic Fund Transfer payment (for the visa MRV fee) or the "Transaction Reference Number" appearing on your Citibank receipt.
 - iii. Your DS-160 confirmation page
 - iv. Your email address
- The current appointment wait time for student visas is around 23 calendar days. The estimated time can change weekly, and you can check current wait times on this website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html/>
- Expedited appointments may be available if there is an urgent, unforeseen situation such as a funeral, medical emergency, or school start date. The procedure is outlined here: <https://ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-expeditedappointment.asp>

5. Go to interview at the US embassy in Seoul

- Bring the following essential documents (applications without these items will not be accepted)
 - i. Printed copy of your appointment letter
 - ii. Passport
 - iii. DS-160 confirmation page
 - iv. One copy of a photograph taken within the last 6 months
 - v. Your current and all old passports

- vi. Application fee payment receipt
- You should also bring the following documents (originals are preferable to copies):
 - i. Current proof of income, tax payments, property or business ownership, or assets.
 - ii. Your travel itinerary and/or other explanation about your planned trip.
 - iii. A letter from your employer detailing your position, salary, how long you have been employed, any authorized vacation, and the business purpose, if any, of your U.S. trip.
 - iv. Criminal/court records pertaining to any arrest or conviction anywhere, even if you completed your sentence or were later pardoned.
- According to your status, you should also bring the following:
 - i. **Students:** Bring your latest school results, transcripts and degrees/diplomas. Also bring evidence of financial support such as monthly bank statements, fixed deposit slips, or other evidence.
 - ii. **Working adults:** Bring an employment letter from your employer and pay slips from the most recent three months.
 - iii. **Businessmen and company directors:** Bring evidence of your position in the company and remuneration.
 - iv. **Previous visitors to the US:** If you were previously in the United States, any documents attesting to your immigration or visa status.

Embassy Directions

Address

188 Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu, Seoul 03141, Korea

Phone: 82-2-397-4114

Getting there

The U.S. Embassy is located near Gwanghwamun Station, subway line 5 (purple), exit 2. From exit 2 of Gwanghwamun Station, walk straight less than 100 meters and you will see the U.S. Embassy on the right side. The U.S. Embassy is across the street from the Sejong Cultural Center and next to the Ministry of Information and Communication/KT Building. Multiple bus lines stop at both the Sejong Cultural Center directly across the street from the U.S. Embassy, and at the KT Building next to the U.S. Embassy. **Please use the side entrance of the Embassy for visa interviews.** Note that there is no parking space at the Embassy.

What to expect during your interview

- The consular officers may ask questions related to your plans in the US. Typical questions include
 - What is the purpose of your visit to the US?
 - Have you been to the US before?
 - Do you have relatives/friends currently there?
 - Where will you be residing in the US? How long will you be staying in the US?
 - What do you do in a living? How are you financing your trip?
 - Do you have any intention of remaining in the US? How can you reassure me you will return to South Korea after your visit?
- Digital fingerprint scans will be taken, and your passport will be taken so that you can get your visa.

After the Interview³⁵

- You may check your DS-160 and visa application status [here](#) by entering your location and DS-160 barcode number.
- **Denial:** if your visa is denied, you will be informed why. There are many reasons a visa applicant could be found ineligible for a visa. These reasons, called ineligibilities, are listed in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and other immigration laws. Some ineligibilities can be overcome, either by you, the visa applicant, or the U.S. petitioner, in certain immigrant visa cases. Other ineligibilities are permanent. Common ineligibilities, and processes for reapplication, are outlined [here](#).
- **Approval:** If your application is approved, your passport and visa will be returned to you via the document delivery option of your choice. You can have them returned to your home address in South Korea, or collect them from one of the pick-up locations.
- More information on the services and locations, as well as the relevant charges attached to each, can be found [here](#). Please note you will need to bring supporting documents to collect your passport (information at the bottom of the page).
- You can check on the status of your passport [here](#) by entering your passport number.

Entering the US

- **Landing in the country:** at the port of entry, you will meet officials from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) who have authority to permit or deny admission to the United States. If you are allowed to enter the United States, the CBP official will provide an admission stamp or a paper Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record.
- **Extending your stay:** you may request to extend your stay beyond the date indicated on your admissions stamp/Form I-94. For more information, see [this page](#).
- **Change of status:** you may request to change your nonimmigrant status while in the US. For more information, see [this page](#).

³⁵ *Apply for a U.S. visa.* Apply for a U.S. Visa | Track & Retrieve My Passport / Passport/Visa Collection Locations - South Korea (English). (n.d.). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/kr/kr-niv-passporttrack.asp>