

Applying for a Visa

Overview

Canadian citizens are exempt from the visa requirement and should present themselves with the required documents at the Port of Entry.

If you are coming to the University of Michigan from abroad, you will need to apply for the appropriate visa to enter the US. To do so:

- Make an appointment with the nearest US embassy or consulate.
- Please refer to the website of US embassy where you intend to apply for more information on the required documents. The exact visa application procedures and [wait times vary](#) [1] from country to country and even from consulate to consulate. (Note that the wait times are estimates, are not guaranteed and do not include the time necessary for additional processes, such as background checks.)
- For a list of all consulates and embassies, please refer to www.usembassy.gov [2].

Individuals traveling to Canada and/or Mexico only may be eligible for the [Automatic Visa Revalidation Process](#) [3]. People who are eligible for this process do not need to apply for a new visa if their visa has expired.

Required Documents

The following documents are commonly required of visa applicants. Please confirm with the U.S. consulate where you intend to apply whether there are any additional required documents.

- *Passport*: It is strongly recommended that your passport is valid for the whole period covered by your H-1B Approval plus an additional 6 months.
- [Photograph: Uploaded with your DS-160](#). [4]
- [DS-160 Confirmation Page: Form DS-160](#) [5], a web-based non-immigrant application, required at all U.S. posts.
- *Application Fee*: Each applicant must pay a nonrefundable application fee, so be sure to bring the barcoded receipt to your interview. There may be additional reciprocity fees for certain countries. To find out if your country of citizenship merits additional reciprocity fees, refer to the official [Department of State Reciprocity Table](#) [6]
- I-797 Approval Notice, if applicable

- Copy of your immigration status application:
 - H-1B petition
 - O-1 petition
 - TN letter E-3 LCA and/or petition
- *Form I-797 Approval Notice for I-612 Waiver of 2-year foreign residency requirement* – if you were subject to the 2-year requirement and are applying for an H-1B visa. Eligibility for an H-1B visa requires presentation of actual waiver from USCIS, not the recommendation letter from the U.S. Dept. of State.
- *Additional documents*: Your CV, a list of your publications and an itinerary or general statement about your plans in the U.S. Please refer to the website of the consulate where you intend to apply for a complete overview of additional documents

Background Checks

Please note that you may be selected for “administrative processing,” more commonly called a “background check,” by the consular official when you apply for your visa. Background checks can be imposed for a variety of reasons, including your personal background or the scientific or technical field in which they work. The government issues a new Technology Alert List (TAL) every year, which lists professions identified by the U.S. State Department as being a higher risk to national security. Working in a field included in this list does not necessarily mean that your visa application will be delayed, but you should be prepared for the possibility. The TAL is a classified document and not available to the public. Some fields on the TAL include nuclear technology, chemical, biotechnology, and biomedical engineering, advanced computer/ microelectronic technology, materials technology, and information technology, robotics, and urban planning.

Unfortunately, FSIS cannot exert any control on the background check process. Because a background check is always an option, it is recommended you apply for your visa as soon as possible.

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/fsis/applying-visa>

Links

[1] <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>

[2] <https://www.usembassy.gov/>

[3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/fsis/automatic-visa-revalidation>

[4] <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/requirements/photos.html>

[5] <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>

[6] <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country.html>