

U.S.A

NON IMMIGRANT VISAS: TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT & STUDY AND EXCHANGE

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U.S. VISAS

In order to enter to the territory of the United State you should **obtain a valid U.S. visa**. [What is U.S Visa?](#)

- **Visa is an endorsement that is placed within a passport that grants the holder official permission to enter, leave or stay in U.S. for a specified time period.**

There are two types of Visas that U.S. provides to the foreign citizens:

1. **Non - immigrant visas:** Non-immigrant visas are for foreign nationals wishing to enter the United States on a temporary basis - for **tourism, medical treatment, business, temporary work, study, or other similar reasons.**
2. **Immigrant visas:** Immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals who intend to live permanently in the United States.

Non – immigrant visas (NIV) are:

Tourism and Visit

Visitor visas are non-immigrant visas for persons who want to enter the United States temporarily for **business (visa category B-1), tourism, pleasure or visiting (visa category B-2)**, or a combination of both purposes (B-1/B-2).

Here are some examples of activities permitted with a visitor visa:

- *Tourism: a short visit for vacation, for visiting family and friends, or for medical treatment.*
- 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
- enrolment in a short recreational course of study, not for credit toward a degree (for example, a two-day cooking class while on vacation)

Temporary Employment and Business

Temporary employment visas are for persons who want to enter the United States for employment lasting a fixed period of time, and are not considered permanent or indefinite.

Each of these visas **requires the prospective employer to first file a petition with [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#). An approved petition is required to apply for a temporary employment visa.**

To determine which visa category might be appropriate for your purpose of travel to the United States, please see visa categories below.

Temporary worker visa categories

Visa category	General description – About an individual in this category:
H-1B: Person in Specialty Occupation	To work in a specialty occupation. Requires a higher education degree or its equivalent. Includes fashion models of distinguished merit and ability and government-to-government research and development, or co-production projects administered by the Department of Defense.
H-1B1: Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Professional – Chile, Singapore	To work in a specialty occupation. Requires a post-secondary degree involving at least four years of study in the field of specialization. (Note: This is not a petition based visa. For application procedures, please refer to the website for the U.S. Embassy in Chile or the U.S. Embassy in Singapore.)
H-2A: Temporary Agricultural Worker	For temporary or seasonal agricultural work. Limited to citizens or nationals of designated countries, with limited exceptions, if determined to be in the United States interest.
H-2B: Temporary Non-agricultural Worker	For temporary or seasonal non- agricultural work. Limited to citizens or nationals of designated countries, with limited exceptions, if determined to be in the United States interest.
H-3: Trainee or Special Education visitor	To receive training, other than graduate medical or academic, that is not available in the trainee’s home country or practical training programs in the education of children with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities.
L: Intracompany Transferee	To work at a branch, parent, affiliate, or subsidiary of the current employer in a managerial or executive capacity, or in a position requiring specialized knowledge. Individual must have been employed by the same employer abroad continuously for 1 year within the three preceding years.
O: Individual with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement	For persons with extraordinary ability or achievement in the sciences, arts, education, business, athletics, or extraordinary recognized achievements in the motion picture and television fields, demonstrated by sustained national or international acclaim, to work in their field of expertise. Includes persons providing essential services in support of the above individual.

P-1: Individual or Team Athlete, or Member of an Entertainment Group	To perform at a specific athletic competition as an athlete or as a member of an entertainment group. Requires an internationally recognized level of sustained performance. Includes persons providing essential services in support of the above individual.
P-2: Artist or Entertainer (Individual or Group)	For performance under a reciprocal exchange program between an organization in the United States and an organization in another country. Includes persons providing essential services in support of the above individual.
P-3: Artist or Entertainer (Individual or Group)	To perform, teach or coach under a program that is culturally unique or a traditional ethnic, folk, cultural, musical, theatrical, or artistic performance or presentation. Includes persons providing essential services in support of the above individual.
Q-1: Participant in an International Cultural Exchange Program	For practical training and employment and for sharing of the history, culture, and traditions of your home country through participation in an international cultural exchange program.

Note! More information on the Temporary (non – immigrant visas) should be checked here: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/temporary-nonimmigrant-workers>

Study and Exchange

The United States supports international education and welcomes foreign students and exchange visitors. Before applying for a visa, **students and exchange visitors must be accepted by their schools or program sponsors.**

Student Visa: You must have a student visa to study in the United States. Your course of study and the type of school you plan to attend determine whether you need an F visa or an M visa.

To enter the United States to attend:	You need the following visa category:
University or college	F
High School	
Private elementary school	
Seminary	
Conservatory	
Another academic institution, including a language training program	M
Vocational or other recognized non-academic institution, other than a language training program	

Students cannot travel on Visitor Visas: A student visa (F or M) is required to study in the United States. Foreign nationals may not study after entering on a visitor (B) visa, except to undertake recreational

study (non-credit) as part of a tourist visit. Study leading to a U.S. conferred degree or certificate is never permitted on a visitor (B) visa, even if it is for a short duration. For example, a student in a distance learning program that requires a period of time on the institution's U.S. campus must obtain a student (F or M) visa prior to entering the United States.

Student Acceptance at a SEVP Approved School: The first step is to apply to a Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-approved school in the United States. After the SEVP-approved school accepts your enrolment, you will be registered for the [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\)](#) and must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee. The SEVP-approved school will issue you a Form I-20. After you receive the Form I-20 and register in SEVIS, you may apply at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate for a student (F or M) visa. You must present the Form I-20 to the consular officer when you attend your visa interview.

If your spouse and/or children intend to live with you in the United States while you study, they must also enrol in SEVIS, obtain individual Form I-20s from the SEVP-approved school, and apply for a visa (but they do not pay the SEVIS fee).

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.

Visit the Department of State [EducationUSA](#) website to learn about educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate study, and an overview of the application process. You can also visit the DHS [Study in the States](#) school search page to search for SEVP-certified schools.

Exchange Visitor Visa: Exchange visitor (J) visas are non-immigrant visas for individuals approved to participate in exchange visitor programs in the United States.

The Cultural Affairs section in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad arranges a variety of U.S.-government sponsored exchange programs that link Iraqis and Americans. These programs are intended to introduce participants to the United States and American people and culture, as well as provide them with a chance to exchange ideas with their American colleagues. Educational and cultural exchanges create human bonds and enduring relationships that build bridges of cooperation and understanding between peoples.

These programs and scholarships cover a wide range of interests including communications and journalism, law, human rights, economic development, science and technology, teaching English, and other disciplines.

The invitation to visit the U.S. under the auspices of the majority of these exchange programs is extended by U.S. embassies. For that reason, individuals cannot apply to participate in these programs. Please visit the [EducationUSA](#) website for information about studying in the U.S.

[Visit U.S. Embassy in Iraq page to see the latest list of EXCHANGES FOR IRAQI STUDENTS](#)

The J-1 visa in the United States is for people who wish to take part in work-and-study-based exchange and visitor programs in the U.S. These programs are sponsored by an educational or other non-profit institution, which must be accredited through the [Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)](#). J-1 exchange visitors come to the United States to teach, study, receive training, or demonstrate special

skills. The J1 visa is meant for students who need practical training that is not available to them in their home country, and the training must be directly related to their academic program.

Each program available under the J-1 visa has specific requirements and regulations. Please choose the program below that you are interested in learning more about:

Exchange Visitor Categories Include:

1. Au pair and EduCare	8. Short-term Scholar
2. Camp Counsellor	9. Specialist
3. Government Visitor	10. Student, college/university
4. Intern	11. Student, secondary
5. International Visitor (Dept. of State use)	12. Summer Work Travel
6. Physician	13. Teacher
7. Professor and Research Scholar	14. Trainee

Contact U.S. Embassy in Baghdad for

FulbrightIraq@state.gov: for Fulbright Program questions

IraqExchangePrograms@state.gov: for all other youth/professional exchange programs questions

IraqCulturalAffairs@state.gov: for cultural program questions

AmericanCornersIraq@state.gov: for American Corner questions

IraqiAlumni@state.gov: for alumni of U.S. government exchange programs questions

BaghdadEducationAdv@state.gov: for study in the U.S.A. questions

HOW TO APPLY for NON – IMMIGRANT VISAS (NIV)

Important: As of January 1, 2020, all consular services are suspended at U.S. Embassy Baghdad.

Non - immigrant visa applicants can apply at any U.S. embassy or consulate in another country or at the [U.S. Consulate General in Erbil](#).

Address: 413 Ishtar, Ankawa, Erbil, Iraq

Phone: 066 211 4000

To contact the Consulate General, please send an email to: ErbilPublicAffairs@State.gov.

For visa-related inquiries, please send an email to: ErbilNIV@state.gov

The Consular Section at the U.S. Consulate General in Erbil only provides non-immigrant visa services to those seeking to enter the United States for a temporary period. The consulate does not process official government visas or immigrant visas, including fiancé visas in Erbil.

To apply for a non-immigrant visa, please follow the steps below:

1. **Fill out the DS-160** for each applicant (including children): <https://ceac.state.gov/GenNIV/>
2. **Obtain a visa appointment:**
 - For non-emergency appointments, please schedule through our online appointment [website](#) *

- If your situation qualifies for an expedited appointment, please see the instructions:

Please bring the following to your visa interview:

- a MRV fee (visa fee) receipt from the Bank of Baghdad for each applicant
- one 5cm-by-5cm photo for each applicant
- one pre-paid DHL air waybill for your group

All non-immigrant visa application fee (also known as the MRV fee) payments made on or after October 1, 2022, are valid for 365 days from the date a receipt is issued for payment of the MRV fee. Applicants must schedule an interview appointment or submit an interview waiver application during this 365-day period. Please note applicants must only schedule their interview or submit their waiver application within the 365-day period. There is no requirement the interview must occur during the 365-day period. All receipts for payment of MRV fees issued before October 1, 2022, were extended until September 30, 2023, and remain valid until this date.

For more information regarding applying for non- immigrant visas, please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html>.

Summary of non – Immigrant visas

The chart below contains many different purposes of temporary travel and the related non-immigrant visa categories available on the U.S. State department website. Select a visa category below to learn more:

Purpose of Travel	Visa Category	Required: Before applying for visa*
Athlete, amateur or professional (competing for prize money only)	B-1	(NA)
Au pair (exchange visitor)	J	SEVIS
Business visitor	B-1	(NA)
CNMI-only transitional worker	CW-1	(USCIS)
Crewmember	D	(NA)
Diplomat or foreign government official	A	(NA)
Domestic employee or nanny - must be accompanying a foreign national employer	B-1	(NA)
Employee of a designated international organization or NATO	G1-G5, NATO	(NA)
Exchange visitor	J	SEVIS
Foreign military personnel stationed in the United States	A-2 NATO1-6	(NA)
Foreign national with extraordinary ability in Sciences, Arts, Education, Business or Athletics	O	USCIS
International cultural exchange visitor	Q	USCIS
Intra-company transferee	L	USCIS
Medical treatment, visitor for	B-2	(NA)
Media, journalist	I	(NA)
Performing athlete, artist, entertainer	P	USCIS
Physician	J , H-1B	SEVIS
Professor, scholar, teacher (exchange visitor)	J	SEVIS
Religious worker	R	USCIS
Specialty occupations in fields requiring highly specialized knowledge	H-1B	DOL then USCIS
Student: academic, vocational	F , M	SEVIS
Temporary agricultural worker	H-2A	DOL then USCIS
Temporary worker performing other services or labour of a temporary or seasonal nature.	H-2B	DOL then USCIS
Tourism, vacation, pleasure visitor	B-2	(NA)
Training in a program not primarily for employment	H-3	USCIS
Treaty trader/treaty investor	E	(NA)
Transiting the United States	C	(NA)
Victim of Criminal Activity	U	USCIS
Victim of Human Trafficking	T	USCIS
Non-immigrant (V) Visa for Spouse and Children of a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)	V	(NA)

*What the abbreviations above mean - Before applying for a visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate, the following is required:

- [DOL](#) = The U.S. employer must obtain foreign labour certification from the U.S. Department of Labour, prior to filing a petition with USCIS.

- [USCIS](#) = U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) approval of a petition or application (The required petition or application depends on the visa category you plan to apply for.)
- [SEVIS](#) = Program approval entered in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)
- (NA) = Not Applicable - Additional approval by another U.S. government agency is not required prior to applying for a visa

Important Note: About this chart – It is not a complete list of all travel purposes for the visa category. Select a visa category webpage for more information. The chart lists almost all non-immigrant visa categories, with the exception of several not listed above. Refer to the Foreign Affairs Manual, [9 FAM 402.1](#) for all non-immigrant visa categories.