

FAQ's Frequently Asked Questions on Student Visas (Collected and sorted from All Consulate Websites)

Q. What is a visa?

Chennai: If you are a citizen of a foreign country, in most cases you will need a visa to enter the United States.

There are two categories of U.S. visas: Immigrant and nonimmigrant.

Non-immigrant visas are for people with permanent residence outside the U.S. but wish to be in the U.S. on a temporary basis - for tourism, business, temporary work, study or medical treatment.

Immigrant visas are for people who intend to live permanently in the U.S.

A visa does not permit entry to the U.S. A visa simply indicates that a U.S. consular officer has reviewed your application, and that the officer has determined you are eligible to apply for entry to the country for a specific purpose.

Under U.S. law the authority to issue or refuse visas is vested solely in consular offices abroad. Consular officers have the authority to decide whether the evidence submitted in support of an application is sufficient to establish an applicant's eligibility for a visa. Consular officers may request additional confirmation or documentation depending on their assessment of each person's situation.

U.S. law requires that most people who apply for nonimmigrant visas must provide evidence that they do not intend to immigrate to the United States. It is up to the consular officers at U.S. embassies and consulates to determine eligibility on an individual based on the merits of each case.

Providing the requested documents does not guarantee that you will receive a visa. Each person's personal situation is different so people applying for the same visa may be asked different questions and be required to submit different documents.

There is no entitlement to a visa.

A visa allows you to travel to the United States as far as the port of entry (airport or land border crossing) and ask the immigration officer to allow you to enter the country. There, the immigration officer has the authority to permit you to enter the United States, and decide how long you can stay for any particular visit.

New Delhi: If you are a citizen of a foreign country, in most cases you will need a visa to enter the United States.

A visa does not permit entry to the U.S. A visa simply indicates that your application has been reviewed by a U.S. consular officer at an American Consulate or Embassy, and that the officer has determined you are eligible to apply for entry to the country for a specific purpose. Consular matters are the responsibility of the Department of State.

A visa allows you to travel to the United States as far as the port of entry (airport or land border crossing) and ask the immigration officer to allow you to enter the country. Only the immigration officer has the authority to permit you to enter the United States. He or she decides how long you can stay for any particular visit. Immigration matters are the responsibility of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

There are two categories of U.S. visas: Immigrant and nonimmigrant.

Immigrant visas are for people who intend to live permanently in the U.S.

Non-immigrant visas are for people with permanent residence outside the U.S. but wish to be in the U.S. on a temporary basis - for tourism, business, temporary work, study or medical treatment.

U.S. law requires that people who apply for nonimmigrant visas provide evidence that they do not intend to immigrate to the United States. It is up to the consular officers at U.S. embassies and consulates to determine eligibility on an individual basis on the merits of each case. Providing the requested documents does not guarantee that you will receive a visa. There is no entitlement to a visa.

Each person's personal situation is different so people applying for the same visa may be asked different questions and be required to submit different documents. Under U.S. law the authority to issue or refuse visas is vested solely in consular offices abroad. Consular officers have the authority to decide whether the evidence submitted in support of an application is sufficient to establish an applicant's eligibility for a visa. Consular officers may request additional confirmation or documentation depending on their assessment of each person's situation.

Q. What is a non-immigrant visa?

Mumbai, Kolkata: A non-immigrant visa is most frequently a tourist, business, student or specialty worker travel document that permits you to travel to the United States during the validity of the visa to accomplish a specific purpose, such as visiting, studying or working in a specialty job.

Q. What is the difference between a "non-immigrant visa" and an "immigrant visa"?

Mumbai, Kolkata: Individuals who are traveling to the United States for a temporary purpose are classified under U.S. law as non-immigrants, since they do not intend to remain there permanently. These persons must obtain a "non-immigrant visa" (NIV). Individuals who are traveling to the United States to live and work permanently are classified as immigrants and must obtain an "immigrant visa" (IV) permitting them to stay indefinitely.

Q. How do I arrange an interview?

To arrange an interview, you must log on to www.ttsvisas.com. A family can schedule appointments for all family members together in the same slot. When the appointment is confirmed, the applicant will get a return email within half an hour with the instructions. Mumbai residents can use www.Visa-services.com to take visa appointments.

Q. Is there any preference given when adjudicating visa applications? Is any type of applicant more likely to receive a visa?

Visas are adjudicated individually, and each applicant is evaluated on his/her own merits. There is no preference given for any group of applicants, be they students, parents visiting children or businesspeople going to conferences. Each case is judged on its own merits.

Q. Is there a quota for the number of student visas issued each year?

No, all qualified students receive visas.

Q. There are no interview slots available for the next few days and I need to travel urgently. Can I attend the interview without an appointment?

No, you need to schedule a web appointment. New Delhi & Chennai consulates kept some slots for urgent matters. Visit their websites to know how to go for the emergency quota. This web appointment requirement cannot be waived.

Q. How long may I stay in the United States?

Chennai: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) inspector at the port of entry decides your length of stay in the United States.

Calcutta: A U.S. nonimmigrant visa grants you permission to travel to a Port of Entry (airport/seaport) in the United States. When you arrive at your destination Port of Entry,

the U.S. Immigration Inspector who processes your entry will determine the length of time that you may remain in the country during this visit. You may travel to the Port of Entry during the validity of your nonimmigrant visa up to and including the last day. The visa duration does not determine the length of time that you may remain legally in the United States; only the Immigration Inspector can decide this upon your arrival in the United States.

Q. What are the penalties for overstaying?

A non-immigrant who remains in the United States beyond the authorized period of stay or who violates his or her non-immigrant status may become subject to arrest and deportation.

Q. When will I get my passport after the interview?

If you qualify for a visa, courier will return the passport with the visa to you in a few days. **Calcutta:** Please allow 6-8 working days from the time you are interviewed to receive your passport and visa, which will be returned to you by courier.

Q. Can I get my passport immediately after the interview?

It is the policy of the Consulate to send your visa to you using our courier service.

Q. I already have a valid Visa, do I need to come in for fingerprinting?

No, if you already hold a visa, you need not come to the consulate for fingerprinting. You may travel as long as your visa is valid.

Q. What About the Visa Refusal Rate?

It is important to remember that there is no set issuance/refusal rate. The consular officers who adjudicate nonimmigrant visas are obligated to issue all visas that are issuable and to refuse those that must be refused.

Q. How can I help my friend get a visa?

Q. Can the sponsor send documents directly to the Consulate?

Applying for a visa can seem complicated at times. Understandably, many individuals, many American citizens may want to help a friend, colleague or loved one go through the visa process.

One of the most common misconceptions regarding nonimmigrant visas is that someone can act as a sponsor or offer to guarantee a person's return to their home country. We receive many such well-intentioned letters. U.S. immigration law makes no provisions for any such guarantees.

The fundamental rule of applying for a visa is that an applicant must qualify based on his or her own circumstances.

If you wish to submit information to us in support of an applicant, please send it directly to the applicant. The applicant can then share it with us during his/her interview, or can include it with his/her documents.

Q. I've found another website that gives information about U.S. visas, should I follow their instructions and advice?

No, probably not. The U.S. Consulate General, Chennai, Calcutta, New Delhi and Mumbai do not endorse any non-U.S. government websites. We recommend that individuals follow the instructions available at respective consulate websites and other.gov websites.

Following instructions from non-U.S. government websites can lead to expensive and time-consuming problems for applicants.

Q. Who can I bring with me to the interview?

Please do not bring extra people to your visa interview, including your American citizen children. Food items and bottles of any kind are not permitted to be brought into the building. We recommend that you find a baby sitter for your minor U.S. citizen children.

Q. May I bring my relative / friend / etc. to the interview with me?

Due to security concerns and space limitations, the Consulate does not permit interested parties such as friends, relatives or business contacts to accompany nonimmigrant visa applicants to their interviews. However, interpreters are allowed to accompany hearing-impaired applicants

Q. Can I make a group appointment?

Family members (principal applicant and dependents) can schedule appointments in the same time slot via TTS. However, each H1B visa applicant needs a separate appointment (even married couples who each have an H1B).

Q. What personal items can I bring with me to the interview?

The following items are not permitted inside the Consulate: mobile phones, electronic personal digital assistants, cameras, audio or video recording devices, lap top computers, portable music players, travel bags, back packs, brief cases, suit cases, cosmetics (including but not limited to spray perfume/cologne and talcum/baby powder), bottles of any kind, food items, and any sealed envelopes or packages. This list is not finite, other items may be prohibited based on security staff discretion. There is no facility at the Consulate to store prohibited items. If you bring prohibited items with you, you will have to dispose of them before entry.

Q. Can I pay the nonimmigrant visa fees in cash or credit card?

A5. No. You must pay for your nonimmigrant visa fees by Bank Demand Drafts / Pay Orders only, drawn in favor of Respective consulate/Embassy payable at their individual locations. For this visit respective Consulate/Embassy websites.

Q. What is a Form I-134 (Affidavit of Support)?

We ask that U.S. sponsors of nonimmigrant visa applicants complete a Department of Justice Affidavit of Support known as Form I-134, which should be submitted at the time of the applicant's interview with a Consular Officer. If you are completing the form on behalf of a nonimmigrant visa applicant, please ensure that you complete all the questions and leave no blank spaces, sign the form and notarize it in the United States or at a U.S. diplomatic Mission overseas.

Q. Do I have to be fingerprinted?

All visa applicants, except those traveling on official government business or who are under age 14 or over age 79, will be required to submit two electronic fingerprint impressions. At the time of the visa interview, applicants will be asked to electronically scan the index (second) finger of each hand. Applicants who are required to be fingerprinted who have a cut or blister or other temporary skin injury on their index fingers may not be issued a visa until their finger heals before they can be fingerprinted. The scanned fingerprint data collected at time of visa application will be compared with fingerprint scans at the U.S. port of entry to prevent the use of U.S. visas by imposters and by those wanted for more serious offenses. Please remember, however, that all visa applicants, regardless of their age or visa category, will require an interview.

Q. I currently have a valid U.S. Visa, do I need to be electronically fingerprinted at your office before I travel to the United States?

No. You will be electronically fingerprinted at a Port of Entry on arrival in the U.S. If you are applying for a visa for the first time you will be fingerprinted at the Consulate, during your appointment with a Consular Officer.

Q. I need to renew my recently expired nonimmigrant visa. What should I do?

A U.S. non-immigrant visa cannot be renewed. You must apply for a new visa to replace an expired one. You may schedule an appointment for a personal interview.

Q. Why has the drop box facility been discontinued?

The reason for ending the drop-box facility is that in July 2004 U.S. consular sections in India began collecting two electronic fingerprint impressions from all visa applicants, except those traveling on official government business or who are under age 14 or over age 79. However, all visa applicants, regardless of their age or visa category, will require an interview.

Q. I am planning to "stopover" in the U.S. en route to my final destination (e.g. Canada, Latin America, Caribbean) should I apply for a Tourist (B1/B2) or Transit (C1) visa?

If you intend to visit the United States for any length of time, you should obtain a B1/B2 visa which grants you permission to appear at a Port of Entry for the purpose of entering to visit the United States. If your visit to the U.S. is strictly incidental to your travel to a third country, you may apply for a Transit (C1) visa.

Q. I am a green card holder, which I wish to surrender and apply for a non-immigrant US visa. How do I apply?

You need to come to a US Visa Application Center and pay your fees and take an appointment for a non-immigrant visa. At the same time you may also collect the green card surrender form (Form I-407), which is available at the centers. When you arrive at the US Consulate on the date of interview you have to complete this form and submit it along with your passport at the Intake Window.

Q. Can a person on a visitor visa, if he gets admission to a school and gets an I-20, be able to change his status to student?

No. Previously, U.S. law permitted persons entering on tourist, B-2 visas to change status to F-1 visas. That is no longer the case. A non-immigrant wishing to study in the U.S. must

apply from their country of origin or residence if they wish to study in the U.S. on an F-1 visa.

Q. What do I have to do if I have lost or misplaced my Indian passport with a valid U.S. visa?

A U.S. nonimmigrant visa is a valuable document. Please notify the U.S. Consulate immediately if you have misplaced your passport and lost your visa. You would need to obtain a new nonimmigrant visa by applying for one at our Office. At the time of your application please present the Police First Incident Report (FIR) from the Police precinct where the passport was lost in India or overseas as well as a photocopy of the lost Passport and valid U.S. visa, if possible.

Q. I still have a valid U.S. nonimmigrant visa but my Indian passport has expired. Can I transfer this visa to my new passport?

No. If you are holding a valid U.S. nonimmigrant visa in an expired Indian passport, you may carry both your expired and new Indian passport together and travel between India and the United States until the nonimmigrant visa expires. You do not need to obtain a new nonimmigrant visa.

Q. What are the types of student visas?

The Immigration and Nationality Act provides two non-immigrant visa categories for persons wishing to study in the United States. The "F" visa is reserved for non-immigrants wishing to pursue academic studies and/or language training programs, and the "M" visa is reserved for non-immigrants wishing to pursue non-academic or vocational studies.

Q. How early should I apply for my Student (F1 or M1) visa?

Mumbai: The Consulate encourages you to apply early for your student non-immigrant visa to ensure that you get the interview date. You may apply up to 90 days prior to your start date as mentioned in the I-20.

TTS: We encourage you to apply early for your Student nonimmigrant visa to ensure that we can get you on your way in a timely fashion. During the summer season (April to September) you may apply at any time prior to the start date of your classes. During the rest of the year, you may apply up to 90 days prior to your start date.

Q. I have received my Student visa, when should I travel?

Students (F1 or M1) and Exchange Visitors (J1) may travel within 30 days of the commencement of the course of study stated on your I-20/DS-2019, respectively - regardless of how early your visa was issued.

Q. What is the SEVIS system and how does it affect me?

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) program requires schools and exchange programs to verify the enrolment status of all continuing and new foreign students and exchange visitors. However the visa cannot be issued until your SEVIS fee has been paid. Applicants applying with I-20 or DS-2019 forms processed after 1 Sept 2004 are required to provide the SEVIS I-901 fee receipt as proof of payment. You can log on to www.ice.gov/sevis for further details.

Q. Can a person on a visitor visa, if he/she gets admission to a school and gets an I-20, change his status to student in the U.S.?

No. Previously, U.S. law permitted persons entering on tourist, B-2 visas to change status to F-1 visas. That is no longer the case. A non-immigrant wishing to study in the U.S. must apply from their country of origin or residence if they wish to study in the U.S. on an F-1 visa.

Q. What if my university does not require that I take the TOEFL or GRE?

Students whose prospective university does not require that they take the TOEFL or GRE should provide a letter from the university stating the same. However, the Consulate strongly recommends that all student visa applicants provide standardized test scores. Also, if you are studying art or design, it is helpful to bring to the interview a portfolio showing your work.

Q. I have taken a loan from a bank to cover my tuition. Do I still need to show other financial documents?

In that case, please bring official documents, which verify the loan approval, not just the application. You must prove that funds are immediately available to cover the first year's costs, and show evidence that funds will be available for all subsequent years. Also since Indian banks ordinarily give educational loans of relatively modest amounts, the application must still demonstrate additional liquid assets and any financial documentation you provide should be in support of this. This applies to all student visa applicants.

Q. What documents should I show to prove that I could pay for my education in the U.S.?

There are no specific documents that prove a student is able to pay for his/her education. Bank account statements, pay slips, income tax return statements, employment letters, property documents and chartered accountant statements are the most common documents used to show proof of funds. However, these are only suggested documents. A visa is not assured if you have any or all of these documents.

Q. Is it required that I pay the first year tuition expenses in advance and show a receipt from the university?

No, Paying the tuition expenses in advance is a good way to show proof of funds, but it is NOT a requirement to pay in advance

Q. What if I receive an I-20 to a better school?

In that case, you will need to change the name of the university annotated on your visa. To do so, you will have to go through the complete process once again, schedule a fresh appointment with full fees, with new Original Form I-20 (Student Copy).

Q. I have a valid F2/M2 visa and I have got admission in to a college. Can I use the Drop Box facility?

No, From July 2004 onwards all applicant travelling to the US have to go through the interview process irrespective how many times they have travelled to the US.

Q. I am applying for an F1/M1 visa and I would like my spouse to travel with me, can he/she apply for a dependant visa (F2/M2) at the same time that I do or must they wait until my visa has been issued?

It is advisable for dependant spouses (and children) to go for their visas interviews at the same time as the principal applicant.

Q. I am a foreign student currently studying in the U.S. I want to travel outside the U.S., do I need any special documents to re-enter the United States?

Returning students may re-enter the U.S. on their valid F-1 visa as long as they have a valid I-20 with a SEVIS number even if the SEVIS number does not match the number on their visa. The immigration officers at the port of entry will check their system to make sure that the I-20 is valid. The only reason a student should need a new visa is if their old visa has expired.

Q. Does my I-20 need to be sealed in an envelope?

No, your I-20 does not need to be sealed in an envelope. However, you have to make sure that you carry the I-20 when you travel, as you have to show it to the immigration officer at the port of entry in order to be admitted in to the U.S.

Q. Is it required that I pay the first year tuition expenses in advance and show a receipt from the university?

No - paying the tuition expenses in advance is a good way to show proof of funds, but it is NOT a requirement to pay in advance.

Q. What documents should I show to prove that I could pay for my education in the U.S.?

Chennai: Remember: though documents may assist you in your interview, the Consular Officer relies primarily on the interview to determine your eligibility for a visa, and only minimally on supporting documents. As for the documents you do submit with your application, there are no specific documents that prove a student is able to pay for his/her education. Bank account statements, pay slips, income tax return statements, employment letters, property documents and chartered accountant statements are the most common documents used to show proof of funds. However, these are only suggested documents. A visa is not assured if you have any or all of these documents.

New Delhi: There are no specific documents that prove a student is able to pay for his/her education. Bank account statements, chartered accountant statements, employment letters, and property documents are the most common documents used to show proof of funds.

Q. How do I prove that I can afford to attend school in the United States?

U.S. regulations are quite clear: the applicant/sponsor must be able to explain to the satisfaction of the Consular Officer that he/she has sufficient funds to cover the first year, plus a continuing source of funds to cover subsequent years. Part 7 on the I-20 shows the amount of funding you must have available to cover each year's expenses. The total amount includes tuition and fees, living expenses, expenses of dependents (if applicable), and other expenses. You must prove that you have immediate funds available to cover the first year's expenses, and access to funds to cover the remaining years of study. For example, if you are a prospective Master's student for a two-year program, and the total cost includes \$5,000 for tuition and fees, \$5,000 for living expenses, and \$500 for other expenses (books and supplies, for instance), then you must prove that \$10,500 is immediately available to you. Additionally, you must show that another \$10,500 is or will likely be available to cover the second year.

Q. What if I have not yet received my degree certificate? May I still apply?

Yes - you may still apply, but please be sure to include your mark sheets and provisional certificate if available.

Q. I have taken a loan from a bank to cover my tuition. Do I still need to show other financial documents?

You must prove that funds are immediately available to cover the first year's costs, and show evidence that funds will be available for all subsequent years. Any financial documentation you provide should be in support of this. This applies to ALL student visa applicants.

Q. Can a person on a visitor visa, if he gets admission to a school and gets an I-20, change his status to student?

No. Previously, U.S. law permitted persons entering on tourist, B-2 visas to change status to F-1 visas. That is no longer the case. A non-immigrant wishing to study in the U.S. must apply from their country of origin or residence if they wish to study in the U.S. on an F-1 visa

Q. What is the SEVIS system and how does it affect me?

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) program requires schools to verify the enrollment status of all continuing and new foreign students.

For most students and exchange visitors, the SEVIS system should not affect either their ability to qualify for a visa, or the time it takes to process their case.

All I-20 forms for students and DS-2019 forms for exchange visitors now have SEVIS information printed on the forms. These new forms are printed on a single sheet of paper and have a large black bar code down the top right hand side of the form. For more information on SEVIS, click here: [SEVIS Fact Sheet](#) or contact the Foreign Student Advisor at your U.S. school.

Q. I am planning to study sensitive technologies; will I experience delays with my visa application?

Possibly. Students, exchange visitors and foreign scientists who apply for a non-immigrant visa to work with or study sensitive technologies have been subjected to inter-agency security review procedures since 1998. These review procedures require the names of these applicants to be checked through law enforcement, intelligence and other federal agencies before a visa can be issued to an otherwise qualified applicant.

We are working with the involved agencies to achieve quicker processing of the applicants subject to these procedures, without compromising national security. Visas continue to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Please apply early to avoid any possible delay in obtaining a visa.

Q. How long may I stay in the U.S. on my J-1 visa?

When you enter the United States on an exchange visitor visa, you will usually be admitted for the duration of your program. The immigration inspector at the USCIS (formerly INS) at the port of entry makes the final decision on how long anyone may stay in the U.S.

Q. What is "The Two Year Rule?" for J-1 Visa?

"The Two Year Rule" is the common term used for a section of immigration law which requires that many exchange visitors return to their home countries and be physically present there for at least two years after the conclusion of their exchange visit before they can be issued certain types of nonimmigrant work visas, specifically H-1, L-1 and immigrant visas.

It is important to note that only a preliminary finding of whether the 'two year rule' applies to you is made on your DS-2019 when your J-1 visa is issued. The final decision is made only when/if you choose to apply for an H-1, L-1 or Immigrant visa.

Only after two years may these persons apply again for certain types of nonimmigrant visas. Individuals are not permitted to remain in the United States and apply for an adjustment/change of status to a prohibited nonimmigrant status, for example, from a J-1 to H-1 visa. Individuals also cannot apply for permanent resident status, without first returning home for two years, and will need an approved waiver.

Whether you are subject to the 'two year rule' is determined by a number of factors. These include your source of funding and whether your area of study is included in the Department of State's "Skills List". It is not determined by the amount of time you spend in the U.S.

Q. Can the "The Two Year Rule" be waived for J-1 visa?

The Department of State's Visa Office is the final authority on whether an applicant is actually subject to the rule, regardless of whether it was annotated in your passport or not. Only that office can decide to waive the 'two year rule'.

If you are subject to the 'two year rule' requirement, you may be able to obtain a waiver, and thus be eligible to apply for visas normally prohibited for those subject to the 'two year rule'. You can find instructions on how to apply for a waiver here. You can also download a copy of the form needed to apply for such a waiver.

Please note that the Two-Year Rule applies only to the later issuance of H (work), L-1 (intra-company transfer), K-1 (fiancé) or Immigrant visas. Even if subject to the 'two year rule', you may still qualify for the issuance of a tourist visa, or any other nonimmigrant visa except for those noted above.

Q. Your Application Form "DS-156" requires that I indicate a home address in Q15. What should I write?

You should provide your current Indian residential home address.

Q. What address do I mention on form DS-156, if my current home address and my address on the passport is not the same?

You should mention your current home address of India and not the address from your passport on form DS-156. The current home address may differ from your passport address.

Q. Your Application Form DS-156 requires that I indicate my present occupation in Q21. What should I write?

If you are employed you should write your functional designation (e.g. IT Analyst, Director, Medical Doctor) and not the generic "service". If you own or operate a business, please indicate if you are the Proprietor or Partner.

Q. What address should I provide in Q24. in DS-156 and Q8. in DS-157?

Please provide us with the U.S. address where you will be staying during your visit to the U.S. If you are going on vacation (B1/B2 visa), please indicate your Hotel's name, address and telephone number or your U.S. host family's residential address. [If you are a student \(F1 visa\), this response might include your expected dormitory address or if this is not known, your International Advisor/University campus address.](#) If you are employed in the U.S. (H1B or L1) and maintain an apartment in the U.S., please provide that address and telephone number.

Q. How do I answer Q26. in DS-156 "How Long Do You Intend To Stay In The U.S.?"

It is important that you answer this question truthfully. This question asks you how long you intend to be physically present in the U.S. and not how long you want a nonimmigrant visa to be issued for. The U.S. Consular Officer will decide the duration of a nonimmigrant visa after your personal interview is completed.

Q. What does Q36. on DS-156 mean "Has Anyone Ever Filed an Immigrant Visa Petition on Your Behalf"?

There are two types of U.S. Visas - nonimmigrant visas (NIV) and immigrant visas (IV). Nonimmigrant visas are granted to persons traveling for temporary purposes to the U.S. By completing Application Forms DS-156 and DS-157 you are applying for a nonimmigrant visa. Immigrant visas (IV) are granted to individuals intending to reside permanently in the U.S. and become lawful permanent residents and subsequently U.S. citizens. When answering Q36. in DS-156, we are asking you to indicate if anyone in the U.S. has applied for an Immigrant Visa on your behalf.

Q. My application was refused under Section 221(g) because of a missing document, which I am now able to present. How do I answer Q31. in DS-156?

Although the 221(g) refusal is generally overcome by the submission of the document(s) requested, it is nonetheless a refusal and, therefore, you must respond "Yes" to this question and provide all the subsequent details requested.

Q. What should I enter in Q3. of DS-157, which asks for "Full Name (in Native Alphabet)"?

You are required to write your full name in your mother tongue (e.g. Hindi, Bengali, Oriya).

Important things to remember when filling out application forms:

Q. What are important instructions to fill DS forms?

Respond to all the questions. If you have no response for a question, put "none" or "nil" - do not draw a line or write "n.a." or "not applicable" If you fail to answer all the questions, this could create problems with your application, so remember to have an answer for each question.

Respond fully to each question. For example, **No. 27** is "What is the purpose of your trip?" If you are going on a tourist visa to see your son who is working in Detroit, don't just put

"tourist" as an answer, put "going to visit son in Detroit". **If you are a student, don't respond to "purpose of trip" with "to study", be specific - for example "going to study for B.E. degree at Louisiana State"**. Provide details whenever it is useful.

The applicant must sign the application, even if someone else fills it out.

Q. What are various grounds of ineligibility for refusals of visa?

Grounds Of Ineligibility

The U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) specifies three grounds on which a Consular Officer can find an applicant ineligible for a nonimmigrant visa:

Section 214(b)

Section 214(b) of the INA specifies that applicants for nonimmigrant visas must demonstrate their entitlement to nonimmigrant status. By definition, a nonimmigrant must demonstrate a reason to return to India upon the completion of their temporary stay in the U.S. It is the Consular Officer's responsibility to evaluate - based on the applicant's interview and supporting documentation - whether the applicant's social, economic and cultural ties justify entitlement to NIV status. If the Consular Officer is not convinced that the applicant is a bonafide nonimmigrant traveler, he/she must refuse your nonimmigrant visa application on the grounds that you are an intending immigrant consistent with Section 214(b).

Section 221(g)

Section 221(g) of the INA states that applicants who have not provided sufficient information or fulfilled the documentary requirements of the nonimmigrant visa category for which they have applied must be refused, until such time that they are able to properly meet these requirements. Consular Officers will note, in writing, at the time of your refusal under this section of the law, what documents must be presented in order for you to qualify for a nonimmigrant visa in a subsequent interview.

Section 212(a)

Section 212(a) of the INA states that all applicants must be refused under this section of the law if they have committed serious crimes, misrepresented materially relevant information on their application, provided fraudulent or counterfeit information, have been previously deported, are wanted for arrest or who represent a security threat to the U.S.

Q. How do I re apply after a visa has been refused?

214(b) Refusals

If you have been refused a U.S. nonimmigrant visa under Section 214(b), you must demonstrate a **significant change** in your circumstances or present compelling new evidence to an adjudicating Consular Officer at a subsequent interview in order to be granted a visa. You may reapply for a nonimmigrant visa **after three working days have passed since your last application**. There is no limitation on the number of times you may apply for a nonimmigrant visa.

If you have been refused under Section 214(b) you may choose to reapply and appear in person for another personal interview. Please be aware, however, that in the absence of any significant change in your situation or new information, it is unlikely that you will be

issued a visa. Please consider this when deciding whether to travel to Chennai. If you choose to reapply, you may schedule an appointment for a personal interview at www.ttsvisas.com.

Please note that if you have been refused under Section 214(b) and you choose to reapply, you will be required to fill out a new application form. In addition, you will also be required to pay the NIV application fee each time you reapply.

221(g) Refusals:

If your visa was not issued under section 221(g) of the United States Immigration and Nationality Act, it means that your application was incomplete or requires further administrative action.

Please follow the instructions that were given to you at the time of your refusal.

If you have been requested to reapply via our Drop Box facility operated by TT Services/ Drop Box services, you must submit the application at the TTS locations.

If you have been requested by a Consular Officer to make an appointment and appear in person at the Consulate, please visit the TT Services website at www.ttsvisas.com to make the appointment.

If the letter you received requests you to appear in person at the Consulate without an appointment, please do not make an appointment. Please appear at the Consulate before 9:00 am Monday through Wednesday.

If you have been requested to wait until the Consulate contacts you, please do not make an appointment. Your case requires further administrative processing and the Consulate will contact you once this has been completed.

If your visa was not issued under section 221(g), you may be required to fill out a new application form. Please refer to the instructions that were given to you at the time of your refusal. No new application fee will be required for a period of one year following the initial application.

Q. When I was last in the U.S. I changed my status from one classification [e.g. Student (F1) or Temporary Worker (H1B)] to another. Do I need a new nonimmigrant visa?

Yes! If you have changed your status you must also present evidence that you did so lawfully by providing USCIS Form I-797 (Notice of Action) for Change/Adjustment of Status to the Consular Officer at the time of your visa interview.

Q. How Can I use Emergency Quota for taking Interview Appointments?

Emergency Appointments:

In certain circumstances the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and Consulate General in Calcutta will accept non-immigrant visa applications from applicants residing in the South India consular district. Applications from Southern India will only be accepted from applicants who will apply in person, speak English fluently, have not previously been refused a visa for any reason, and can demonstrate need to travel before an appointment is available at the US Consulate General serving their place of residence. Interested applicants must schedule their appointments through the website www.ttsvisas.com.

New Delhi and Calcutta cannot accept e-mail or phone requests for earlier appointments from persons in Mumbai or Chennai.

All U.S. consular sections in India are working to ensure that appointment wait times are kept to a minimum. Persons anticipating traveling to the United States this summer are encouraged to apply early.

The Consulate General in Chennai has set aside a small number of appointment slots for emergency applications involving humanitarian or medical emergencies, student's whose Form I-20 shows that they must report to school within the next two weeks and certain unforeseen business related emergencies. We regret we cannot make emergency appointments for weddings, graduations, to begin temporary employment in the United States or other foreseeable events. If you have a genuine emergency need to travel to the U.S. you may request an emergency visa appointment by sending an e-mail directly to Chennai's Visa Information Unit at ChennaiNIV@state.gov. Please include the following information in your e-mail:

The name and passport number of each traveler(s) exactly as listed in the passport.

The date of the proposed travel.

The date for which a visa interview has been scheduled using the on-line TT Services appointment system (<http://ttsvisas.com>).

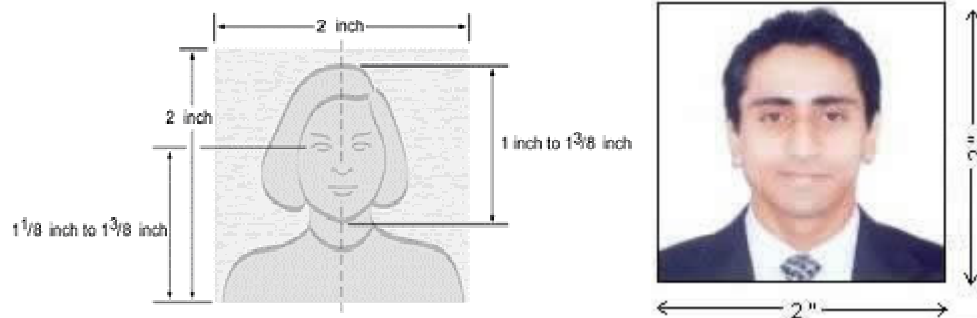
The reason the traveler is unable to wait for his scheduled visa interview.

The reason the traveler was unable to plan the travel further in advance.

The consequences if the traveler is not able to obtain an early visa interview.

Attaching the Photo to the DS-156 & Frequently Asked Questions:

See the model below to know the exact photo size and nature for US Visas.



Staple or glue one photograph to the DS-156 in the designated space. If the photograph is stapled, staples should be placed as far away as possible from the applicant's face.

How many photos are required to be submitted with the visa application form DS-156?

One (1) photo must be submitted with the visa application.

What type of paper are the photographs to be printed on?

The photos should be printed on thin photo-quality paper.

Do the photos have to be in color?

No, the photos may be in color or black and white but must have a white or off-white background only.

How recent must the photos be?

The photos must be no older than 6 months.

How big must the photos be?

The photos must measure exactly 2 inches by 2 inches.

What pose should the photos show?

The photo should show a clear, front view, full face of the applicant. The applicant should be in normal street attire, without hat or dark glasses against a plain white or off-white background. The applicant should have a natural expression, mouth closed, and eyes open and looking directly ahead. Photos in which the face of the person being photographed is not in focus will not be accepted.

How big should the head be in the photo?

The applicant's head, measured from the bottom of the chin to the top of the hair, should be between 1 inch and 1-3/8 inches. The head should be centered in the photo. The head of the person being photographed should not be tilted up, down or to the side. It should cover about 50% of the area of the photo.

Can hats or religious headgear be worn for the photo?

Unless worn daily for religious reasons, all hats or headgear should be removed for the photo. In all cases, no item or attire should cover or otherwise obscure any part of the face.

Can eyeglasses be worn for the photo?

Eyeglasses worn on a daily basis can be worn for the photo. However, there should be no reflections from the eyeglasses that obscure the eyes.

Can sunglasses or tinted glasses be worn?

Dark glasses or nonprescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons. A medical certificate may be required.

Can work uniforms be worn for the photo?

Uniforms should not be worn in photographs except in the case of religious attire that is worn daily. Otherwise, normal street attire should be worn.

Can a parent or guardian appear in the photo of a minor child?

No, the minor child must be the only subject in the photo. Nothing used to support the minor child, whether by mechanical or human means, should be in the camera's frame.

Are photos that are copied from recent driver licenses or other official documents acceptable?

No, only original photographs are acceptable. Copied or digitally scanned photos of photos will not be accepted. In addition, photos must not be retouched to alter the customer's appearance in any way.

Are group photos accepted for a party applying for a visa together?

No, since a separate visa is issued to each qualified applicant, an individual photo is required in all cases. Group photos are not acceptable.

Dear Students,

I hope one and all studying these FAQ's will be benefited in clearing many of their doubts.

Kindly Share these FAQ's with as many as possible.

Remember we have to make our group as big as possible and benefit to all.

All the best.

Regards,
K.Ganapathi Raju.
MS Consultancy - Secunderabad.
