



# Nonimmigrant U.S. Visa Application Process

## Step 1: Know your visa type

There are many types of nonimmigrant visas for traveling to the U.S. The purpose of your travel and other factors will determine which visa is the most appropriate. As a visa applicant, you must establish that you meet all requirements to receive the type of visa for which you apply for, and then a consular officer will determine whether you are qualified for that visa type.

Common nonimmigrant visas include:

- Business visitor (B-1)
- Student/exchange visitor (F, J, M, Q)
- Specialty occupation professional (H-1B)
- Intracompany transferee (L-1)
- Extraordinary ability (O-1)

## Step 2: Complete Form DS-160 - Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application

Form DS-160, the Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application form, is for temporary travel to the U.S., and for K (fiancé(e)) visas. DS-160 is submitted electronically to the Department of State via the internet. Consular Officers use the information entered on the DS-160 to process the visa application and an in-person interview (for most cases) to determine an applicant's eligibility for a nonimmigrant visa.

Note about families (or groups): each visa applicant including children must have their own DS-160. However, you may create a family application if traveling with family (or create a group application if traveling with a group). When you select "Email Confirmation" on your Confirmation Page, you will be directed to a "Thank You" page. On the "Thank You" page you will see an option to create a family or group application. When you select this option, certain information from your application such as destination, will automatically be imported to and displayed on the other applications. Again, if you use this option, you must create an application for each family member (or for each individual within the group).

Documents required to complete your DS-160:

- Passport
- Travel itinerary if you have made travel arrangements
- Dates of your last five visits to the U.S., if you have previously traveled to the U.S. (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 education and work history)

Some applicants also need the following information and documents while completing the DS-160:

- Petition-based temporary workers (H-1B, H-2, H-3, CW1, L, O, P, R, E2C): You will need the USCIS petition approval notice
- Other Temporary Workers: You will be asked for information about your employer, including the employer's address

## Getting Started

1. Access Form DS-160 by going to the [Consular Electronic Application Center](#)
2. Select the location where you plan to apply for Visa
3. Enter the Captcha code that you see
4. Click on "START AN APPLICATION"

The screenshot shows the CEAC website interface. At the top, there is a header with the U.S. Department of State logo and the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE CONSULAR ELECTRONIC APPLICATION CENTER". A language selection dropdown is set to "ENGLISH". Below the header, the page title is "Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)". The main heading is "Apply For a Nonimmigrant Visa" with a "FAQs" button. A tooltip indicates the language is English and that the page has been translated. The "Get Started" section contains a dropdown menu for selecting an application location, a captcha input field, and a "START AN APPLICATION" button. The "Additional Information" section provides instructions on saving the application ID and frequently saving the application. The footer contains a disclaimer and contact information.

U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE  
CONSULAR ELECTRONIC APPLICATION CENTER

Select Tooltip Language ENGLISH

Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)

Apply For a Nonimmigrant Visa [FAQs](#)

Tooltip Language: English [View Tool Tip Help](#)  
Most of this application has been translated. To see the translation point your mouse over any sentence on the page.

Welcome! **Get Started**

The first step in applying for a U.S. nonimmigrant visa is to complete your application. It takes approximately 90 minutes to do this. After you submit your application, you can move on to the next steps such as scheduling your interview.

**Important: Before You Start**

1. [Learn about Types of Visas.](#)
2. **[This website is designed to be accessed using Chrome, Edge, or Firefox only.](#)**
3. [Gather your documents.](#)
4. [Review the instructions and FAQ.](#)

Notes:

Other people can assist you with your visa application. Note that under U.S. law (22 C.F.R. 41.103) you must electronically sign and submit your own application unless you qualify for an exemption. Even if someone else helped you complete the application, you (the applicant) must click the "Sign Application" button, or your application may not be accepted.

**\*\*Please be patient as you use this form. Download times may vary depending on your internet connection speed.\*\***

Select a location where you will be applying for this visa  
- SELECT ONE -

Enter the code as shown:

Select a location and make sure you have the documents and information you will need.

**START AN APPLICATION**

You will be asked for your application ID and answer a security question.

**RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION**

**Additional Information**

- » **Write down the Application ID** displayed on the top right hand corner of the page. If you close your browser window, you will need your ID to access your application again.
- » **Save your application frequently.** The system will time out after 20 minutes of inactivity, and you will lose all unsaved information.
- » Read more about U.S. visas at [travel.state.gov](#).
- » Visit the website of the [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#).

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## Computer Fraud and Abuse Act Notices

For site management, information is collected for statistical purposes. The Department of State Web Site uses software programs to create summary statistics for such purposes as assessing what information is of most and least interest or identifying system performance or problem areas. The following is the type of information collected about your visit to the web site: the name of the Internet domain from which you access State Department web sites (for example, "aol.com" if you are connecting from America Online) and the date and time you access our site.

For site security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, the State Department uses software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information or otherwise cause damage. Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on this service are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986. Information also may be used for authorized law enforcement investigations. Except for the above purposes, no other attempts are made to identify individual users or their usage habits.

Unauthorized attempts to upload information and/or change information on these web sites are strictly prohibited and are subject to prosecution under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and Title 18 U.S.C. Sec.1001 and 1030.

Furthermore, the Department of State assures that it will not

- obtain personal identifying information about you through your use of this system, unless you choose to provide such information
- share any information it receives with any outside parties, except where permitted by Section 222(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or, where applicable, the Privacy Act.

### For More Information, Contact:

Public Communication Division  
PA/PL, Room 2206  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520  
202-647-6575

 I AGREE

## Application Information

### Please record your Application ID in a safe and secure place.

If there are technical issues with the system, or you want to complete your application some other time, you can save your work and later, start where you left off. In order to access your application later, however, you will need: (1) your Application ID, and (2) the answer to the security question that you will choose on this page.

To choose a security question, pick the one you like the best from the dropdown list, type your answer to that question in the box below, and click "Continue." Remember: In order to access your application later, you will need to know the answer **exactly as you wrote it on this page.**

You can also use your Application ID and security question to retrieve your Confirmation Page after you have submitted your application, or to use your previously provided application information to complete a new application at a later date.

Note: Electronically submitting your DS-160 online application is the **FIRST STEP** in the visa application process. The next step is to review the internet page of the [embassy or consulate](#) where you plan to apply for your visa. Most visa applicants will need to schedule a visa interview, though some applicants may qualify for visa renewal. The [embassy or consulate](#) information may include specific local instructions about scheduling interviews, submitting your visa application, and other frequently asked questions.

Please complete your DS-160 in a timely manner, applications which have not been updated for sixty (60) days or submitted will be removed from the systems and users will be required to start a new application.

Security Question ⓘ

WHAT IS THE GIVEN NAME OF YOUR MOTHER'S MOTHER?



## Sections to complete as you fill the Form DS-160

1. Personal
2. Travel
3. Travel Companions
4. Previous U.S. Travel
5. Address and Phone
6. Passport
7. U.S. Contact
8. Family
9. Work/Education/Training
10. Security and Background
11. Temporary Work Visa
12. Review
13. Sign and Submit
14. Confirmation

As you complete your DS-160, you will click the "Next" button at the bottom of each page you complete, which will save the progress you made to the Consular Electronic Application Center website. If you are unable to complete your DS-160 and need to return at a later time to complete it or make changes, you will be able to log back in and choose the "RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION" option.

To retrieve an application, you will need your Application ID (identification) number, a unique number issued to you when you first began your DS-160. Application ID numbers begin with AA followed by 8 alphanumeric characters. You will also need this information later to schedule your visa appointment.

You are limited to 30 days to return to a partially completed application. Should you need to access your application after 30 days, you must save it to your computer hard drive.

Print and keep the DS-160 barcode page. This is required for your U.S. visa interview. You will not need to print the full application.

## Confirmation

Displayed for all applicants.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
CONSULAR ELECTRONIC APPLICATION CENTER

Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)

### Confirmation

This confirms the submission of the Nonimmigrant visa application for:

|   |                           |                    |   |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Name Provided:                          | SNOW, JOHNQQ              | Location Selected: | KBL<br>U.S. Embassy Kabul<br>Great Massoud Road<br>Kabul, Afghanistan |
| Date Of Birth:                          | 01 JAN 1980               |                    |   |
| Place of Birth:                         | KABUL, AFGHANISTAN        |                    |   |
| Gender:                                 | Male                      |                    |   |
| Country/Region of Origin (Nationality): | AFGHANISTAN               |                    |   |
| Passport Number:                        | M11111111111111111111     |                    |   |
| Purpose of Travel:                      | BUSINESS/PERSONAL (B1/B2) |                    |   |
| Completed On:                           | 27 APR 2017               |                    |   |
| Confirmation No:                        | [REDACTED]                |                    |   |

Version 01.02.02

**THIS IS NOT A VISA**

Print Confirmation | Print Application | Email Confirmation

For additional information in completing the form, please refer to ILG's **Form DS-160 Questions and Answers** (attached).

**Step 3: Pay the visa application processing fee, register, and create a profile at <https://cgifederal.secure.force.com> and choose the Schedule Appointment option.**

Visa applicants, including children, are required to pay a non-refundable, non-transferable visa application fee, sometimes referred to as the Machine Readable Visa (MRV) fee, before applying for a nonimmigrant visa. You may check the [Department of State](http://www.state.gov) website for current fees for all visa types.

Also, payment options vary between different U.S. consulates, so you need to check the website of the U.S. Consulate you will be applying at: <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/>.

On the payment confirmation screen, you will be presented with payment options and further details on how to initiate payment. It can take up to 2 business days from time of payment for your receipt to be activated. You will need the Receipt Number to schedule your appointment.

Below are the steps to Login or Register/Create a Profile and Schedule Visa Interview Appointment.

## New Application/Schedule Appointment

- Select whether you are applying for a Nonimmigrant Visa or an Immigrant Visa.

**APPLY FOR A U.S. VISA**

**Terms & Conditions :**

- All fees paid are non-refundable.
- A visa does not guarantee entry into the U.S.
- A visa allows a foreign citizen coming from abroad, to travel to the United States port-of-entry and request permission to enter the U.S.
- Permission to enter can only be given by a Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP) official.
- You may not enter the U.S. with an expired visa. The visa must be valid at the time you enter the U.S.

**Registered Users**


To schedule a visa interview or enter your visa delivery address, you will need to register and create a profile online. If you already have a profile, please do not create a new one. You can always modify your existing profile by logging in using your user ID and password. If you have lost your password, please simply retrieve it by clicking [Forgot Your Password?](#) If you are a first time user, click [New User?](#) to create your profile.


Email

Password

\*I have read and understood the [Privacy Policy](#)

Type in the characters displayed in the box below.





[Forgot Your Password?](#) | [New User?](#)

**APPLY FOR A U.S. VISA**

**Terms & Conditions :**

- All fees paid are non-refundable.
- A visa does not guarantee entry into the U.S.
- A visa allows a foreign citizen coming from abroad, to travel to the United States port-of-entry and request permission to enter the U.S.
- Permission to enter can only be given by a Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP) official.
- You may not enter the U.S. with an expired visa. The visa must be valid at the time you enter the U.S.

**New User Registration**

Select Country For Visa

Email

First Name


Last name


Password

Confirm Password

\*I have read and understood the [Privacy Policy](#)

Type in the characters displayed in the box below.





[Forgot Your Password?](#) | [Login](#)

**APPLY FOR A U.S. VISA** in India

Home Logged in as

- New Application / Schedule Appointment
- Group Scheduling Request
- Provide Feedback
- Update Profile
- Logout

**Attention:** Before you enter the receipt number ensure that the passport bio data and DS-160 information matches the ustraveldocs profile for all applicants scheduled during this session. Discrepancies between the profile, passport information, and DS-160 information may require completion of a new profile and purchase of a new MRV fee receipt. MRV fees are not refundable nor transferrable after they are assigned to a particular applicant.

**A:** Please provide accurate contact numbers (In India) and email ID on your profile so that you receive timely updates.

**B:** Please carry a photograph as per U.S. Visa specification for minors below 14 years of age, while visiting the Visa Application Center.

**C:** Each visa applicant must independently meet the renewal category criteria to qualify for interview waiver if applicable. Family/group member not eligible for renewal category should apply individually.

**D:** The U.S. Embassy/ Consulates in India offer free document pickup/submission services at the OFC where the Embassy/Consulate is located. Applicants collecting/submitting documents from any other locations will need to pay a nominal fee of Rs 650/- per individual at the time of pickup/submission. **Important note for NEFT Payment:** U.S. visa fee amount is non-refundable. Hence, we request you to delete the account details from the payee list once the visa payment is successful to avoid erroneous transfer of fund in the future.

**My Dashboard**  
My Dashboard lets you track the progress of your visa application from start to finish.  
Please select an option.

[Visa Information](#) [Fee Payment](#)

[Family Details](#)  
Members: 0

No appointment is currently scheduled.

[Document Delivery Information](#)

- Select Your Country or State of Residence.
- Choose Language of Interview.
- Select a visa category that applies to you.

**APPLY FOR A U.S. VISA** in India

Home Logged in as

- New Application / Schedule Appointment
- Group Scheduling Request
- Provide Feedback
- Update Profile
- Logout

**Visa Type**

**Step 1:** Select whether you are applying for a Nonimmigrant Visa or an Immigrant Visa.

After you select the purpose of your trip, the following pages will provide information about visa application filing, fee (MRV) payment procedures, appointment availability, and additional steps for approved applicants.

Nonimmigrant Visa

Immigrant Visa

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

- Make sure all personal information is correct before continuing, including:
  - Passport details
  - DS-160 Application ID number
  - Contact information
  - Mailing address
  - Petitioner information
- Click "Add by Name" or "Add Existing Applicant" if you have a group/family member (including a child) who needs to apply for a visa with you.

- Answer questions to determine eligibility for an interview waiver
  - Each visa applicant, whether an individual, a dependent family member, or as part of a group, must independently meet the criteria to qualify for an interview waiver. If any individual, a dependent family member or a group member, is not eligible under the renewal criteria, it is advisable to remove the individual from the family or group before proceeding to schedule the appointment.
- Specify Documentation Delivery
- Payment
- Read Important Note on Visa Fees

#### **Step 4. Schedule your Biometrics and Visa Interview Appointments**

Visit the U.S. Embassy or Consulate website where you will be interviewed for country-specific instructions. Visit the official list of Embassies at <https://www.usembassy.gov/>. For additional information, please visit <https://ustraveldocs.com/>.

The Embassy or Consulate information may include specific local instructions about scheduling interviews, submitting your visa application, and other frequently asked questions. Be sure to review all information on the specific Embassy or Consulate Visa Section website for local procedures and instructions as the procedure may vary from country to country.

After making your payment, you can finalize your biometrics appointment to capture your fingerprints and photo, and your visa interview appointment.

#### **Biometrics**

U.S. Consulates typically collect all biometric information at a separate appointment a few days before the visa interview. The exact procedure varies between different Embassies and Consulates so you will need to check the Embassy/Consulate where you plan to apply.

#### **Step 5: Attend Your Biometrics and Visa Interview**

Bring your Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160) confirmation page, which contains your Application ID number so the embassy can retrieve your application and carry all the relevant documents for your application. Review the embassy or consulate instructions where you will apply for additional information including security restrictions.

You will be interviewed by a U.S. Consular Officer who will ask questions related to your visa application.

#### **Step 6: Check U.S. Visa Status Online**

After completing your visa interview, you can check the status of your application on the U.S. State Department CEAC website at <https://ceac.state.gov/ceacstatracker/status.aspx>

#### **Step 7. Pick up your passport with U.S. visa**

Processing time varies. Check with the embassy or consulate you apply with for specifics on when and how you will receive your passport and visa.

Alternatively, if you chose mail delivery option, your passport containing your new U.S. visa will be delivered to the mailing address on your application.

## Additional Information

### Making changes to your DS-160 by choosing the “RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION” option

- Should you need to make changes, you will need to access your DS-160 by going to the [Consular Electronic Application Center](#) again, entering the location where you will be applying for the visa, entering the Captcha code and clicking “RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION.” Then, enter your application number and answer the security question.
- Note that you will not be able to retrieve and modify information on the DS-160 application once it is submitted electronically. If you wish to correct and/or update the information, you can select "Retrieve an Application" at [Consular Electronic Application Center](#), enter your previous visa application ID, answer the security questions, and then select "Create a New Application". Your personal information will then populate into the new application. In the new application, update the details and proceed.

Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)

Retrieve a DS-160 Application

Your Application ID is:

Retrieve Application Cancel

- Once your application has been retrieved, you may make the necessary changes, review everything, and electronically sign and submit the application. You will be given a new confirmation page with a new bar code and application ID. You need to print it and bring to your interview.
- If you have already scheduled your interview and paid the visa application fee, you need to log into your visa appointment account, click “Update profile” and add the new DS-160 confirmation number on your appointment. Take the updated DS-160 confirmation page and new appointment confirmation page to your visa appointment.
- Bring both confirmation pages, new (corrected) and the original (incorrect) DS-160 to your interview.

### Making changes to your DS-160 After 30 days

- The Consular Electronic Application Center saves your DS-160 for 30-days. Should you need to access your application after 30 days, you must save it to your computer hard drive. To save your application to your hard drive, select the “Save Application to File” button. Then, click the “Save” button on the File Download window. Identify a place on your computer to save the application, browse to that location, and click the “Save” button on the “Save As” window. The system will download your application to the specified location. Once the download is complete, you can click “Close” to return to the live application.
- To make changes, go back to the [Consular Electronic Application Center](#), enter the location where you will be applying for the visa, and click "UPLOAD AN APPLICATION." Next, choose the location of your saved file, and click the Upload data button.

Select a location and make sure you have the documents and information you will need.

START AN APPLICATION

Select a location then select an application that you previously saved on your computer.

UPLOAD AN APPLICATION

You will be asked for your application ID and answer a security question.

RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION

Upload a Previous Application

Click "Browse" and select the previously saved application file you wish to upload. Next, answer the security questions to validate that the correct file has been selected, then click "Upload Data". Finally, click on the "Next" button at the bottom of each page until the last completed page has been reached and continue the application process.

Previously Saved Application File

File Path:

Browse...

Upload Data Cancel



- Answer the security questions to access your form. Make the necessary changes, review everything, then electronically sign and submit the application. You will be given a new confirmation page with a new bar code and application ID. You need to print it and bring to your interview.
- If you have already scheduled your interview and paid the visa application fee, remember to log into your visa appointment account, click “Update profile” and add the new DS-160 confirmation number on your appointment. Take the updated DS-160 confirmation page and new appointment confirmation page to your visa appointment.
- Bring both confirmation pages, new (corrected) and the original (incorrect) DS-160 to your interview.

### **Transferring your application to a different Embassy/Consulate**

- DS-160 applications and payment processing usually differ between U.S. Embassies/Consulates. If the country you are applying at has several U.S. Consulate offices, you may be allowed to attend the visa interview at another location.
- The Embassy or Consulate you ultimately apply at should be able to access your form using the barcode on your DS-160 confirmation page, which you must bring to the visa interview. However, you may not be able to transfer previously submitted form DS-160 to an Embassy/Consulate in a different country. You will be required to submit a new form DS-160 and pay the visa processing fee for the new location.

### **Restrictions to Changing Appointments**

- Applicants are limited in the number of times they can reschedule their appointments and the number varies by country. Please plan accordingly so that you are not required to pay another visa application fee.

### **Restrictions to Logging in to CGI**

- You can log in to your CGI federal account up to 3 times a day. Exceeding the maximum login attempts may be deemed suspicious activity and could lock your account for 72 hours. U.S. travel docs customer service cannot unlock your account. The only way is to wait 72 hours.

### **Interview Waiver Eligibility**

- Previous U.S. visa holders may qualify for an interview waiver (i.e., apply without appearing at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate for an interview).
- Consular resources and restrictions vary widely. Please check the website of the relevant U.S. embassy or consulate you plan to apply at to confirm the guidelines for applying without an interview.
- Qualifying for the interview waiver does not guarantee visa issuance. In some cases, you may still be asked to appear for a visa interview at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate. If you are called for an interview, you must appear at the post at which you submitted your application. As such, it is advisable to submit your application well in advance of your travel to allow for the possibility that a visa interview will be necessary.

### **Expedited Appointment**

- U.S. Embassy Consular section considers expedited nonimmigrant visa appointment requests only in cases of emergency.
- If you have an unforeseen travel need as per one of the criteria listed below, you may qualify for an expedited appointment depending on availability at the Embassy or Consulate. It is important to ensure you meet the criteria because applicants are only allowed to create two expedited appointment requests.
- Below are the criteria for expedite requests:
  - Medical Needs
  - Funeral/Death
  - Urgent Business Travel

- Students or Exchange Visitors
- ESTA refusal
- Before you apply for an expedited appointment, you must ensure that you have documentary evidence to prove the urgency. If it appears during your visa interview that you misrepresented the reasons for urgent travel, such facts will be noted on your case file and may adversely influence the outcome of your visa application.
- Any applicant requesting an expedited appointment is required to first pay the visa fees and schedule a regular visa appointment for the soonest available appointment.
  - Sign into your account. Click “Continue,” select “Request Expedite,” and follow the instructions.
  - In the request, include the date and purpose of travel.
  - Provide documentary evidence.
  - Wait for a response from the Embassy or Consulate, which will arrive via email.