

## **Main Purpose of visit is to Study**

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**Study more than 18 hours per week and/or  
Staying in the USA for more than 90 days.**

### **F – 1 Student Visa**

#### **Step – One**

##### **1.1 Make an appointment for an interview at your nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.**

In some countries it can be a month or two before an appointment is available, so it is a good idea to book an appointment at the same time you are registering at the school and gathering all your documents for your visa.

##### **1.2 Register in one of our full time (18hrs) programs online, and contact you need a I-20 FORM.**

The I-20 is a document that certifies that you have been accepted and have enrolled in a full-time course and that you have proven to us that you have sufficient financial means of support for the duration of your studies. You must obtain the I-20 from us to bring to your visa appointment. This document is not a visa nor does it give you permission to travel.

##### **1.3 Send us a copy of your passport and financial documentation so we may issue you an I-20.**

What is Financial Documentation? It can take the form of:

- a. A Bank Statement / Bank letter from your bank or financial institution.

If you are paying for yourself, you must provide a bank statement showing that you have the amount of the total tuition of your program plus \$2000 per month for living expenses

**AND**

- b. An Affidavit of Support by download form.

If your company, parents or someone else is supporting you and your studies financially, you must have them sign an affidavit form and present THEIR bank statement demonstrating sufficient funds.

#### **Step two - The Approval Process**

##### **Appointment at the U.S. Consulate in your Country**

Once you have determined that you will apply for a visa and you have established when you would like to travel, you must schedule an interview appointment at your nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy in your home country. You can do this on the website or your U.S. Embassy or Consulate. It is recommended to do this as soon as you are ready to book your course at JPLI as usually it will be 3-4 weeks and more before you will get an appointment at the embassy and it can take up to 120 days after the appointment to receive your visa.

While you are waiting for your appointment you can complete your registration at JPLI, gather the paperwork and documentation as explained in the previous section. You are also encouraged to bring additional documentation to your interview at the consulate. All paperwork is described below:

##### ***Which documents will I need to bring to my interview appointment at the consulate or Embassy?***

1. **Valid Passport**

# Main Purpose of visit is to Study

---

You must have a current, machine readable passport.

## 2. Form I-20

You must bring your JPLI issued I-20, signed by you.

## 3. Receipt of Payment

for the SEVIS I-901 fee as well as payment of the application fee.

## 4. Financial Documentation

This is the same bank statement that you used to obtain your I-20 form from JPLI. If someone else like a parent or company is sponsoring you, also bring the Affidavit of Support form and the sponsor's financial documentation. This proves that you have enough money to support yourself during your time in the United States and shows the consul how you will fund your studies while in the U.S. You should bring any additional documentation that you think may help prove your financial stability.

## 5. One 2x2 photograph

## 6. Educational Records

Diplomas, transcripts, test scores (TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS, Cambridge exams) showing your current English skill level. This will help support your claim that you need to improve your English and that you are a serious student. You may also bring letters from teachers or anyone else that may support your student intentions.

**In addition, you must be prepared to prove to the consul that:**

- You are truly a serious student with intentions to study ONLY (not to work or sight-see).
- Your study in the United States is beneficial, if not essential to your future plans in your country.
- You will indeed return to your country after your studies are completed.

\*You should bring any documentation that helps support these statements\*

### Additional Tips for your interview

You must convince the consul that you have "compelling ties" to your country and you do not intend to move to the U.S. permanently.

1. If you own a home or anything of significant value, bring proof.
2. If you are enrolled in a university for the next term, bring proof.
3. If you must return to your job after only a temporary absence, bring proof.
4. Be prepared to answer the question:

"Why do you need to study English in the United States?"

Think about your answer, and bring documents to prove what you are saying. If, for example, you are claiming that it will be important for your future job, bring documents to prove that you have already made plans to qualify for a job in which English will be necessary (courses you've taken in school, etc.).

## Main Purpose of visit is to Study

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5. Don't forget to bring your smile, a good mood, motivation & spirit and think about if you have questions to ask the consul. The staff of a consulate are good, friendly people happy to meet you - there is no reason to be nervous.

The content in this section is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Additional information on these topics is available at the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services websites ([http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1268.html#5](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html#5)) .

### Step 3 - Arrival in the U.S. at the "Port of Entry"

#### Entering the United States on an F-1 Visa

Once you have received your passport with the F-1 Visa attached, you are ready for travel. Be sure to read and make sure that you understand all of your rights and the restrictions related to F-1 status on page 2 of your I-20 document. By entering the United States on your F-1 Visa you are entering into a contract with the U.S. government and you are agreeing to abide by the rules.

While on the airplane landing in the U.S., you will be given two forms:

#### I-94 FORM

This is a white card (when you enter as a tourist it is green) that is your arrival and departure record. This card is very important. Once you have filled it out and signed it, the immigration official will staple it into your passport and will stamp it with the official F-1/DS stamp. It will be your proof that you have entered the country legally as an F-1 student and have a right to stay as long as you keep to the rules in place for F-1 students. You must not remove or lose this form. It will be collected when you leave the U.S.A.

#### Customs form

You will fill this form out as per instructions and you will give it to the customs officers AFTER you have passed through immigration and collected your luggage.

#### At the Airport

Directly as you exit the plane, you will be guided towards customs and Immigration.

- Pay Attention! Some airports have special lines for students.
- Present your passport, I-20, I-94 Card and all other documents, whether they are still in a sealed envelope or not, to the immigration official for inspection.
- The official will staple your I-94 card into your passport and place a stamp on both your I-94 card and your Form I-20. On this stamp the official should write F-1 / DS and may write a number on your Form I-20. This means that you are being admitted as an F-1 Student and the length of your stay is according to the Duration of your Student Status.

\* Be sure that you give the officer your I-20 even if they do not ask for it. They may assume you are entering the US as a tourist and this will create problem later.

At this point you will officially be in F-1 Student Status! Make sure to keep your documents safe and clean, and be sure to follow all of the rules to maintain your F-1 Status. As you leave the airport and prepare to begin your studies you are in "Initial Status." Your "status" or "legal classification" will change as you proceed to the school and to your studies In order to help you better understand your "status" as an F-1 student, please read the different classifications below.

### Step 4 - Maintaining Your F-1 Status

# Main Purpose of visit is to Study

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## Types of "Status"

### Initial Status

- You have received the Form I-20 but have not yet reported to the school.
- At JPLI, you will report on your first day of class by giving us a photocopy of your F-1 Visa, I-94 card and your signed and stamped Form I-20.
- If you do not report to JPLI, your status will be terminated automatically in the government database system known as SEVIS.

### Active Status

- You have reported to the school and presented all important documents.
- Your I-20 should be in Active Status for the majority of your time in the U.S. if you follow the rules listed below in "maintaining your status."

### Completed Status

- Your studies in the U.S. are complete. You have returned home or transferred to another school.

### Cancelled Status

- You decided not to attend the school that issued the I-20 Form to you. When an I-20 is in Cancelled Status, it may not be used to obtain an F-1 visa or for entry into the U.S.

### Transfer Pending

- You have completed your studies at one school but have not yet reported to the school to which you are transferring.
- Students have 60 days from the last class date to transfer before the record goes to completed status.
- Students must report to their new school and begin study by the next available start date after leaving the initial institution.

### Terminated Status — Try to avoid this at all costs!

- You have violated your status as a student and are no longer an F-1 Student and you must leave the U.S. immediately or apply for Reinstatement to F-1 Status.

## Maintaining Your F-1 Status

Your F-1 Visa gives you permission to enter the United States and maintaining your status gives you permission to stay here. You are permitted to stay in the U.S as long as you maintain your status for which you must obey the following rules:

- You should read and understand everything on page 2 of your Form I-20, as this is the agreement you signed with the U.S. government and it explains your responsibilities as an F-1 student.
- You are responsible, as our student, to inform us of all changes, updates, (address, names etc.) while you are here. We must, by law, report any changes or violations of status.

## Main Purpose of visit is to Study

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- You must attend at least 85% of your classes at all times.
- You must remain enrolled in at least 18 hours of class and cannot drop below full time status.
- You cannot hold a job while in the U.S on a student visa.

### Violations of Status

Most violations of status can be avoided by simply speaking to the official student advisor at the school (the person authorized by the government to sign your I-20) DSO before making any decisions about your course of study. It does not matter whether you violated your status on purpose or by accident; a violation means that your visa will be in Terminated Status.

### The most common violations of status are:

#### 1. Failure to enroll

This means that you did not report to the school on the appointed date. This can usually be avoided by speaking to the DSO before your arrival and asking to defer your attendance.

#### 2. Failure to pursue a full course of study

Your attendance in your course is less than 85% (too many absences). This can usually be avoided by keeping track of your attendance and speaking to your DSO before taking time off.

#### 3. Failure to meet deadlines

This means that you did not do something you were supposed to do within the time required. An example of this is not applying for a school transfer within the 60 days allowed. Again, you can avoid this violation by simply speaking to your DSO before making any changes.

#### 4. Working without permission

This is obvious... You are not permitted to work, except under very particular circumstances, on an F-1 Visa. Before you even think about getting a job, speak to your DSO and see if it is permitted.

### Reinstatement to F-1 Status

Reinstatement is an application procedure whereby a student who has lost his/her status (by Termination or Completion) asks to be given a second chance at maintaining status. This is not a simple process. It is often a long process and success is by no means guaranteed.

If your status is currently in Terminated or Completed status and you intend to continue your studies in the U.S., you should speak to a DSO immediately.

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