

Reference Guide for International Students

Requesting the Form I-20, Application for Certificate for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status- For Vocational Students (OMB No. 1653-0038)

We will need to receive the following items in order to process your I-20:

1. A complete legible copy of your passport, including all pages from front to back.
2. Proof of English proficiency. (See below)
3. Proof of Financial Resources. (See below)
4. Copies of any previous visas to the United States.
5. Verification of home address and phone number that you will be returning to upon completion of study.

Demonstrating English Proficiency

The Institute of Culinary Education is required to collect proof of English language proficiency for all non-native speakers who wish to study here. There are three ways to demonstrate English language proficiency:

1. Bachelor's degree: If you hold an undergraduate or graduate degree from a United States college or university, you can submit your official transcript or diploma as proof of English proficiency.
2. English language school / ESL Programs: If you have attended an English language school or ESL program, you may provide documentation from the school that you have successfully completed the coursework that is equivalent to a score of 500 in the TOEFL exam. This documentation will be reviewed by our Director of Education/ PDSO for approval.
3. TOEFL Score: Earn a score of at least 500 (paper version), 173 (computerized version), or 61 (internet-based version) on the TOEFL.

Demonstrating Financial Resources

International students are required to prove that they have funds to pay for tuition plus the cost of living while studying at The Institute of Culinary Education. The following regulations apply:

1. Tuition must be paid in full once you have received notice that your application has been accepted for admission at The Institute of Culinary Education.
2. Proof of funds for your education and housing expenses must be demonstrated by providing a letter of certification in English, on bank letterhead, that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a. Signed by a bank official, and dated within six months of the start date of the program,
 - b. the specific balances have to be stated in US dollars,
 - c. no letters can be accepted that do not specify balances unless it is stated to be a minimum of six figures in US Dollars,
 - d. every person named on the bank account (other than the student) must provide a letter of support stating that the funds in the account can be used to pay your education and living expenses.

Requirements for Sponsor Letter of Support

The sponsor's letter must meet the following criteria;

1. It is written in English
2. It has to be written within six months of the start date.
3. It needs to specify the sponsor's relationship to the student.
4. It needs to list the name of the bank and account numbers that are stated to be intended for support of the student.
5. A copy of a bank statement in US Dollars to verify this bank account.
6. Signature of the Sponsor.
7. All documents must be received in the original form, no faxed copies accepted.

Requirements for a Sponsor Providing Room and Board

If the student is planning to stay with a sponsor while attending school, we must receive a letter from the sponsor stating the following items:

1. It is written in English.
2. It clarifies the sponsor's relationship with the student.
3. It includes the address of the house or apartment.
4. The letter has to be dated and signed in the presence of a Notary Public.
5. The must state the sponsor will provide the housing at no cost to the student.
6. The sponsor must also provide a copy of the lease, or title to the home that the student will be staying in.
7. Proof of income from sponsor via letter from employer, income tax return, US bank Statement, or recent paystub.

Paying the SEVIS Fee

The Student Exchange Visitor Information System is an internet system that maintains information on non-immigrant students, exchange visitors, and their dependents. The fee-supported system enables schools and program sponsors to transmit information to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Department of State throughout a student or exchange visitor's stay in the United States.

Once you have received the I-20, application for Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status- For Vocational Students, the USCIS requires that you pay the SEVIS fee before applying for a student visa.

The easiest way of paying the SEVIS fee is at www.fmjfee.com . You will be given an option to pay by credit/debit card, check, or money order drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in U.S. currency. A receipt will be provided when you pay online. Please be sure to print the receipt as it will be needed for your visa interview. A receipt will also be mailed to you but it may not be received in time for your interview.

Applying for a M-1 Student Visa

In order to be able to come to the United States of America and attend The Institute of Culinary Education, you must contact your nearest United States embassy or consulate and apply for an M-1 student visa.

*** Citizens of Canada generally do not require a student visa but still need to obtain an I-20 and present it with supporting documents at the Port of Entry in the United States.

*** **Do Not Enter the U.S. without a visa** (unless you are a Canadian citizen).

*** Do Not Enter the U.S. with a B-1 or B-2 visa unless it is marked “**prospective student**”. If you use a B visa to enter the U.S. you could be guilty of “fraudulent entry” and refused permission to stay longer than six months or to extend or change your status. While USCIS allows for a prospective student to then process an I-539, we will not be able to process it due to time constraints of programs and schedules.

*** **The Institute of Culinary Education will not process an I-539 Student Request to Change/Extend Visa Status.**

Please review the links listed below before applying for your student visa so you can better understand the process and rules governing the issuance of a U.S. visa.

http://travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_types_students2.html

http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi_denials.html

http://www.ice.gov/sevis/becoming_nonimmigrant_student_52007.htm

First-time student visa applicants are required to appear for an in-person interview. Each embassy and consulate will have their own procedures and policies when processing student visas. Please be sure to check with your specific consulate or embassy before arriving for your interview. In addition, if your primary residence is not in your home country of citizenship, you must apply at the U.S. embassy in your country of residence.

Visit www.usembassy.state.gov for a list of embassy locations.

General information about the visa process can be found by downloading the State Department Publication “Obtaining a U.S. Visa,” at: <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov/pdfs/gettingavisa.02.03.pdf>.

Required Items to Apply for a Student Visa

1. Form I-20 M-N obtained from The Institute of Culinary Education. The form must be signed by a Designated School Official and the prospective applicant.
2. An application Form DS-156, with a Form DS-158. Both forms must be completed and signed. Some applicants will be required to complete and sign Form DS-157. Separate forms will be required for children. Form DS-156, Nonimmigrant Visa Application, can be found at <http://evisaforms.state.gov/> . If you are unable to access the web link, you may be able to obtain DS-156 from the Embassy Consular Section where you will apply
3. A passport that will be valid for a minimum of six months after your intended period of stay in the U.S.
4. One (1) 2x2 photograph, nonimmigrant photograph requirements can be found at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1287.html
5. SEVIS fee receipt that was provided when you processed your payment online. A copy of the receipt will also be mailed to you at the address you supplied when you made the payment.

6. Proof of English language ability. (See Section on Demonstrating English Proficiency)
7. Proof of Financial Resources (See Section on Demonstrating Financial Resources)
8. Verification of Education (Transcripts, Degrees, or Diplomas translated in English)

Requirements to Maintain M-1 Student Status Upon While Staying in the U.S.

1. You must matriculate in a fulltime, five day per week program and maintain attendance. (Delays in your program due to suspension or academic probation are not acceptable reasons for a program extension. It is very important that you follow through with your commitment to complete the program within the time permitted.) *****No extensions will be granted.**
2. Upon arrival, you are required to supply ICE with the local address and phone number where you will be staying during the program.
3. You must inform ICE if you have any changes in address or phone number, so that they can update you in the SEVIS system.
4. You need to have your Initial I-20 activated once you arrive at school.
5. You are required to have the PDSO or DSO sign your I-20 when you want to leave the country and are planning to come back to school.
6. You must depart the U.S. within 30 days after completion of the program.

Requirements Upon Graduation or Last Date of Attendance

1. An international student must leave the country with 30 days of graduation or their last date of attendance. If your I-94 has a later date, this does not mean you can stay longer than 30 days after your last date of matriculation.
2. The student must come to the admissions department to pick up a copy of their "completed status I-20".

Optional Practical Training and Work Visa Opportunities

The Institute of Culinary Education does not meet the minimum eligibility of nine months to qualify for optional practical training.

If a student is interested in pursuing a J-1 Visa, you can contact one of the following organizations that may sponsor advanced culinary training. Please contact the following organizations for the criteria for qualifying for this type of visa. The Institute of Culinary Education does not sponsor students for J-1 visas.

www.aipt.org

www.interexchange.org

www.HRC-International.com

www.edintl.com