

Guide to Non-Immigrant Visas

Temporary Stay in the United States

What is a Non-Immigrant Visa?

Non-immigrant visas allow foreign nationals to temporarily enter the U.S. for a specific purpose such as tourism, education, business, or employment. Once the purpose is completed, the individual must return to their home country.

Common Types of Non-Immigrant Visas

- **B-1/B-2 Visa:** For business visitors (B-1) or tourists and medical patients (B-2).
- **F-1 Visa:** For students enrolled in academic institutions.
- **H-1B Visa:** For professionals in specialty occupations requiring at least a bachelor's degree.
- **L-1 Visa:** For intracompany transferees, allowing multinational companies to transfer managers, executives, or specialized knowledge employees.
- **E-1/E-2 Visa:** For traders and investors from countries with which the U.S. has treaties of commerce and navigation.
- **J-1 Visa:** For participants in exchange visitor programs, including trainees, scholars, and researchers.
- **O-1 Visa:** For individuals with extraordinary ability in science, arts, education, business, or athletics.
- **TN Visa:** For Canadian and Mexican professionals under USMCA (formerly NAFTA).

Application Process

1. Select the appropriate visa category based on your purpose of travel
2. Complete DS-160 Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application
3. Pay visa fee and schedule an interview at a U.S. embassy or consulate
4. Attend visa interview and provide required documents

5. Receive visa stamp and prepare for entry to the U.S.

Work Authorization & Restrictions

Some non-immigrant visas allow employment (e.g., H-1B, L-1), while others strictly prohibit it (e.g., B-1/B-2, F-1 without OPT). Always verify with legal counsel whether your visa permits work authorization.

Maintaining Visa Status

To remain in compliance:

- Do not overstay your visa expiration date
- Follow all conditions of your visa type
- Report any changes in employment, address, or program participation

Key Benefits

- Study, work, or travel temporarily in the U.S.
- Apply for extensions or change of status under certain conditions
- Bring dependents (spouse and unmarried children) under derivative visas