

IX. M-1 VISA/ STATUS - VOCATIONAL STUDENT

M-1 Visa is for international students who wish to continue a course of study that is not principally academic in nature or “vocational study”. Examples of this would be as follows: mechanical studies, technical studies, language program, cooking classes, cosmetology program, or flight school.

M-1 Visa/ Status is available for students intending to engage in vocational studies and other non-academic studies in the United States. The individual must be accepted for a full course of study by a vocational institution approved by the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). You must be sufficiently fluent in English, able to read and understand without having to enroll in an intensive language program to pursue the intended course of study; you must have a sufficient funds to cover your first year of study and access to sufficient funds to cover your subsequent years of study; you must have a permanent residence in your home country which you do not intend to abandon; and you must intend to leave the United States upon the completion of your course of study.

To apply, you must apply to study at USCIS- approved school in the United States, a school approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for accepting international students (foreign students). When you contact a school that you are interested in attending, you should be told immediately if the school accepts foreign national students (international students). When accepted, the school should give you USCIS Form I-20 M-N/ID (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status - for Vocational Students). You should also be prepared to prove that you have the financial resources required for your education and stay in the United States.

After receiving an immigration form I-20, you must make an appointment at their nearest U.S. Consulate to apply for a student visa and pay a SEVIS fee. Your I-20 Form is needed in paying. Print out the receipt after paying. Bring the following during the appointment: Form I-20, passport, SEVIS fee receipt, proof of funding, proof of ties to your home country, and any other forms which your consulate requires.

Speaking of appointments, you must undergo an interview at the Embassy Consular section if you are from age 14 through 79, with few exceptions. Persons age 13 and younger, and age 80 and older, generally do not require an interview, unless requested by the Embassy or Consulate. The waiting time for an interview appointment can vary, so apply for your M-1 Visa early. Visa wait times for interview appointments, and visa processing time information for each U.S. Embassy or Consulate worldwide. You must prove consular officer that you have binding ties to your residence in your country that you have no intention of abandoning, and that you will depart the United States when you have completed your studies. It is impossible to specify the exact form the evidence should take since circumstances vary greatly.

If you are entering the United States with the M-1 Visa/ Status, you are not given a definite time period of stay. Rather, you are permitted to remain in the U.S. for the duration of status. In other words, you may remain with a valid status during enrollment and attendance of your approved

non-academic programs. Spouses and children below 21 years of age are eligible to obtain M-2 derivative status. They may accompany the M-1 Student and remain in the United States.

To find out more about the procedural steps involved and an estimate of fees, call or email us today for your free in-depth consultation!