

Applying for Your Visa and I-20

Welcome to the Intensive English Center at Tennessee State University! We're excited to have you join our community. To ensure a smooth transition, follow this guide to apply for your F1 visa and obtain your I-20.

Step 1: Apply and Get Accepted to the IEC

1. **Submit Your Application:** Complete the online application form on our [website](#).
2. **Provide Necessary Documents:** Submit your transcripts, test scores (if applicable), and other required documents.
3. **Receive Acceptance Letter:** Once accepted, you will receive an acceptance letter via email.

Step 2: Obtain Your I-20 Form

The I-20 form is essential for your F1 visa application. Here's how to get it:

1. **Pay the SEVIS Fee:**
 - Visit the SEVIS [I-901 fee](#) processing website.
 - Complete the form and pay the fee (keep the receipt).
2. **Submit Financial Documentation:**
 - Provide proof of financial support (bank statements, scholarship letters, etc.) to demonstrate you can cover tuition and living expenses.
3. **Receive Your I-20:**
 - Once your financial documents are approved, the IEC will issue your I-20.
 - The I-20 will be sent to you via email.

Step 3: Apply for Your F1 Visa

Now that you have your I-20, you can apply for your F1 visa:

1. **Complete the DS-160 Form:**
 - Fill out the [DS-160](#) form online at the U.S. Department of State website.
 - Print the confirmation page with the barcode.
2. **Schedule a Visa Interview:**
 - Visit your country's U.S. Embassy or Consulate website to schedule an interview.
 - Pay the visa application fee (keep the receipt).
3. **Prepare for Your Visa Interview:**
 - Gather required documents:
 - Passport (valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay)
 - DS-160 confirmation page
 - Visa application fee payment receipt

- Photo (as per U.S. visa specifications)
 - I-20 form
 - SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt
 - Acceptance letter from the IEC
 - Financial documentation
 - Any other documents requested by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate
4. **Attend Your Visa Interview:**
 - Arrive on time and dress professionally.
 - Answer the consular officer's questions honestly and confidently.
 - Provide all requested documents.
 5. **Visa Approval:**
 - If approved, your passport with the F1 visa will be returned to you.
 - If additional processing is needed, follow the instructions provided by the consular officer.

Step 4: Prepare for Your Arrival in the U.S.

With your F1 visa approved, it's time to prepare for your arrival:

1. **Book Your Flight:** Plan to arrive in the U.S. up to 30 days before your program start date.
2. **Housing:** You must find and arrange a housing option *BEFORE* arriving.

Step 5: Arrive in the U.S. and Check In

Upon arrival, follow these steps:

1. **Go Through Immigration:**
 - Present your passport, F1 visa, and I-20 to the immigration officer.
 - Answer any questions and provide additional documentation if requested.
2. **Check-In with the IEC:**
 - Attend the new student orientation.
 - Complete the check-in process with the IEC and DSO.

Important Tips

- **Start Early:** Begin your visa application process as soon as you receive your I-20.
- **Stay Organized:** Keep all your documents in a safe and accessible place.