

## **M1 Visa Guide: Everything You Need to Know About the M1 Visa**

Students interested in vocational studies in the United States should consider pursuing the M1 visa. The M1 visa is for those who would like to take courses in aviation, cooking, mechanics, cosmetology, and other studies. In this guide, we will discuss the important details of the M1 Visa.

If you have any questions, or you need help with getting an M1 visa, feel free to email me at [Info@immigrationlawfirmlltd.com](mailto:Info@immigrationlawfirmlltd.com).

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### **1. Introduction to the M1 Visa**

The M1 visa is a non-immigrant (temporary) visa that allows students to take courses in vocational studies. These courses are typically offered at junior or community colleges.

You must first apply and be accepted to a [Student and Exchange Visitors Program](#) (SEVP) certified [school](#). You must then receive a [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System](#) (SEVIS) [I-20 form](#) from the school to eventually gain admission into the United States.

## 2. What are the benefits of the M1 Visa?

- You can study and live in the United States.
  - M1 visas grant the ability to live and study in the United States.
- Extensions are possible.
  - [Extensions](#) can be granted under some circumstances. The maximum amount of time allowed to complete a program is three years. You can extend that time if the following conditions are met:
    - You are a bona fide student.
    - Educational or medical reasons caused the delay. Academic probation and suspension are not permitted as reasons for an extension.
    - You can maintain the status for the period the extension is granted.
- Immigration benefits for your family
  - You are eligible to bring your [spouse and minor children](#) into the United States under M2 status. They may not work in the United States.
  - Your M2 child may go to any school that is for kindergarten-12th grade.
  - Each M2 dependent needs an issued SEVIS Form I-20 issued by the institution.
- No annual limit on number of M1 visas issued.

- Unlike many visas, there is no maximum number of M1 visas that can be issued.

### **3. What are the M1 Visa Requirements?**

The M1 visa has five key requirements:

1. Acceptance at an approved school, which will issue you Form I-20
2. Your intention to depart the U.S. once you complete your course of study
3. Sufficient funds for your financial needs
4. Sufficient preparation for the course of study
5. Maintaining a full course of study

#### **1. Acceptance at an approved school, which will issue you Form I-20**

- To qualify for an M1 visa, you must be accepted to an SEVP school. Form I-20 must be properly completed with all relevant details included.

#### **2. Your intention to depart the U.S. once you complete your course of study**

- You must present evidence of your ties to your home country to ensure you will not overstay your visa.
- These ties can be shown through leases, property ownership, bank accounts, family ties, and more.

#### **3. Sufficient funds for your financial needs**

- You must have enough funding to pay for your tuition and to support yourself for the duration of the program since you will not be allowed to work.
- Evidence of sufficient funds can be shown through bank statements, investments, dividends, scholarships, grants, and other financial proof of self-sufficiency.

#### 4. Sufficient preparation for the course of study

- You must be qualified to take the courses you wish to complete.
- Qualifications may be demonstrated through standardized test scores, certificates, diplomas, and other evidence of sufficient education.

#### 5. Maintaining a full course of study

- You must maintain a **course load** of at least twelve semester or quarter hours per academic term at a community or junior college. The key exception is when you do not need twelve semester, trimester, or quarter hours to complete the course of study during the term.
- At alternative institutions that offer associate or other degree programs, you must maintain the full course load that is required for their program.
- You can request a lower course load if there is a clear medical or psychological reason for doing so

#### 4. M1 Visa Process

There are several steps toward obtaining an M1 Visa. Here is a summary of the steps along with a more detailed explanation:

**Apply to the school and obtain the I-20 approval form**

**Complete Form DS-160**

## **Document Gathering for Interview**

### **Interview**

### **Presenting self at Port of Entry**

### **Apply to the school and obtain the I-20 approval form**

You must receive a SEVIS I-20 form that has your full name, basic biographical information, information about the school, program of study and expenses in order to apply for the M1 visa. Any dependents must also obtain a SEVIS I-20 form.

### **Apply for the DS-160**

You must complete form [DS-160](#) and typically must also upload a picture of yourself. If your visa application is approved, you may also have to pay a visa issuance fee.

## **Document Gathering for Interview**

You will need the following documents:

- Proof of payment of your visa application fees
- DS-160 confirmation page
- Passport valid for travel for at least six months
- Transcripts, diplomas, degrees, or certificates from schools you previously attended
- Standardized test scores required by your U.S. school

- Documents proving your intent to leave the United States upon completion of the course of study
- [Proof of funding](#) for all educational, living and travel expenses

## Interview

- A consular officer will decide whether you are eligible for the M1 visa. You will have your fingerprints scanned at a biometrics appointment, usually a day or two before the interview. The consular officer will let you know if they need additional information or documents. You may need to pay a visa issuance fee if your visa is approved.

## Presenting self at Port of Entry

- You will go to a Port of Entry (airport, border crossing, etc.) and request permission from a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) official to enter the United States.
- By presenting your passport, visa, and Form I-20, the CBP official will determine if you should be admitted to the United States.
- They will provide an admission stamp or paper [Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record](#).

## 5. M1 Employment

You may only work in temporary employment for [practical training](#) after completing your course of study. The employment must be recommended for practical training purposes and must be related to the course of study. It also must not be training that is available to you in your country of residence.

You must apply for a work authorization document (EAD) by completing [Form I-765](#) along with approval from your designated school official no more than

90 days before the program end date. Employment authorization will be granted for one month for each four months of full-time study completed. Employment authorization will not be granted for more than six months.

## 6. M1 Change of Status

Under the M1 visa, it is possible to [change status](#) to another non-immigrant visa like the [H-1B](#) or the [O1](#) visa.

The M1 visa is a single intent visa, so you cannot enter the U.S. with the intent of adjusting status to an [immigrant visa](#) (Green Card). However, you can apply for an employment-based visa if it was not your intention to adjust status when you came into the U.S. Moreover, you can marry and adjust status as long as it was not your intent to do so when coming to the U.S.

## 7. Conclusion

The M1 visa is a special visa that allows you to enter the United States to take courses in vocational studies. You should now have a much stronger understanding of the various aspects of the M1 visa, including M1 visa benefits, M1 visa requirements, and the M1 visa process.

If you have any questions on any of the information discussed in this guide, feel free to email me directly at [Info@immigrationlawfirmlltd.com](mailto:Info@immigrationlawfirmlltd.com). I'm a U.S. immigration lawyer, I'm very responsive via email, and I would be happy to help you.