

F-1 Visa Information Process, Procedures, and Common Questions



Congratulations on your acceptance to Curtis Institute of Music! Below are the steps you will need to take before you arrive to begin your studies. For any questions please contact Meredith Tarditi, Associate Dean of Student Life and International Student Affairs, meredith.tarditi@curtis.edu.

FIRST:

Curtis has sent you an **I-20 Certificate of Eligibility** form. This important document allows you to apply for an F-1 visa. The F-1 visa is specifically for foreign students who wish to study in the United States. Please read this document and **make sure all the information is correct**, especially the spelling of your name, gender, and birth date. Then, sign your name at the bottom in the “Student Attestation” section. If you are under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign.

NEXT:

All foreign students are tracked by an online databased called SEVIS (the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). Every student must pay a fee in order to use this system. The cost is \$350, and you can pay it online. Please visit www.fmjfee.com to pay. **Be sure to PRINT and keep your receipt of payment!**

THEN:

Now you are ready to apply for your [F-1 student visa](#). You should visit the website of the U.S. [Embassy or Consulate](#) nearest to you for full instructions.

1. Complete the [DS-160 visa application](#). You will need your I-20 and your SEVIS fee payment receipt to do this.
2. Pay the required visa application fee, which is \$160.
3. Schedule your visa interview. You can do this online, on the website of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Always select the earliest available appointment.
4. Bring to your interview all your important documents:
 - a. Passport
 - b. Extra passport photos
 - c. I-20 document
 - d. SEVIS fee receipt
 - e. Acceptance letter from Curtis
 - f. Academic papers, such as a transcript, exam result, diploma, certificate
 - g. Financial documents (see instructions)

FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS:

You must **prove that you have enough money to pay for your entire program of study**. This means that you, your parents, your family, or your sponsor must prove that you can pay for many years of living in the United States – tuition, school fees, rent or housing, meals and food, transportation, health insurance, medical costs, instrument repairs and maintenance, textbooks, clothing, and supplies.

In your visa interview, it must be **absolutely certain** that you will not leave school because you cannot pay, and that you will **never** need to take a job illegally in the United States.

You can show bank statements, salary slips, employment contracts, tax documents, scholarship letters, financial aid letters, or sponsorship papers. They should all be dated within 3 months.

VISA INTERVIEW:

Your visa interview will be **short** – maybe only 5 minutes. You must **be prepared** and have all of your documents ready.

You will need to prove 3 things:

1. You are a true student and have true plans to study in the U.S.
2. You have enough money to pay for your studies and living in the U.S.
3. You intend to return to your home country after you complete your studies.
 - a. To prove this, you can talk about or bring documents to show home ownership, property ownership, employment contracts, or relatives and family in your country.

Some questions that you may be asked:

1. What do you plan to study in the U.S.? Why did you select this school?
2. Who will pay for your studies?
3. What will you do after you finish your studies?

AFTER YOU GET YOUR VISA:

After you get your F-1 visa, now you should book your flight. Please look at the [Curtis Academic Calendar](#) and the [New Student Orientation](#) website for important dates. After you make your flight arrangements, email Dean Tarditi a copy of your flight itinerary.

TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES:

Keep in your carry-on luggage your passport, F-1 visa, I-20 document, and SEVIS fee receipt. You must show these to the Customs and Border Patrol officer in order to enter the country.