



## **SEVP Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who is classified as an International Student?**

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Any prospective student whose country of residence and citizenship is not the United States and is considered a non-immigrant. This does not include those who have a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

### **What is my first step to study at Charis Bible College as an International Student?**

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If you already know that you want to come to Charis Bible College, the first step is to fill out a student application for the Woodland Park Colorado Campus. The only current school SEVP authorized to enroll M1 students in school at the present time is the main Charis Bible College campus in Woodland Park Colorado.

### **Why do I have to provide a Financial Assurance Form and Bank Statement?**

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This is a way for Charis Bible College to verify that you have adequate financial resources to fund the cost of one year's studies and living expenses without working.

### **Why do I have to show \$20,000 (and additional monies for dependents) and what does that amount represent?**

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This is the \$\$ amount a student applicant must show as a minimum to meet all Financial needs required to live and study in the US for up to 11 months of the school year (You may arrive up to 30 days before school starts, and you must leave the country within 30 days after your program ends. The \$20,000 includes the money required for tuition and books and living expenses. The additional \$6000 for spouse and \$5000 for each child is also for living expenses. These amounts are for

a very basic lifestyle. **The required amounts will require sacrifice, discipline, and possible joint housing arrangements with other students and/or families to make it through the year on this amount of money.** (It does not include the cost of purchasing, maintaining, fueling or insuring an automobile; childcare or extra-curricular activities for children; health insurance; home furnishings, cable TV or other luxuries.)

## How do I get an I-20 to apply for my M1 Visa?

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Once you are accepted to Charis Bible College, we will issue and mail you a document called a Form I-20. The Form I-20 is a paper record of your information in our database called SEVIS. You must have an original Form I-20 in order for you to apply for your visa.

Check your Form I-20 against your passport information to make sure that your name and date of birth (DOB) are correctly listed and spelled. If it is not correct, contact the school official who sent you the Form I-20 in order to get a corrected one issued.

## How do I pay the SEVIS I-901 fee?

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Once you have your Form I-20, you are ready for the next step – paying your SEVIS I-901 fee. The SEVIS I-901 fee is a mandated fee that is charged to cover the costs for the continued operation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). It is a mandatory requirement for all F and M students as well as J exchange visitors. Paying your SEVIS I-901 fee is very important. Without this fee, you will not be eligible to apply for a visa. Once payment is made, payment of the I-901 fee will be recorded and tracked in SEVIS, the web-based system for collecting, maintaining and managing information about nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors in the United States.

## Who pays the new fee?

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Those who wish to enter the United States either as a student or an exchange visitor with a Form I-20 or DS-2019 dated on or after October 27, 2008 are required to pay the fee. *Spouses and dependent children, (M-2) of students or exchange visitors (J-2) do not pay this fee.*

## How much is the fee?

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For M-1 students the fee is \$200. There are no fees for spouses and dependent children (M-2) of students or exchange visitors.

## **When do prospective students pay the SEVIS fee?**

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Applicants who require a visa to enter the United States must pay the SEVIS fee before going to the U.S. embassy or consulate for their visa interviews. Applicants who are citizens of Canada, Bermuda, Bahamas and residents of certain other islands wishing to apply for F-1, F-3, M-1, M-3, or J-1 status at a Port of Entry into the United States must pay the SEVIS fee before appearing at the Port of Entry. Non-immigrants currently in the United States who apply for student or exchange visitor status must pay the fee prior to filing their change of status application.

## **How and when is the fee paid?**

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The fee is paid through the Internet at [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com) by using a credit or debit card and completing the online Form I-901 (Fee for Remittance for Certain F, M, and J Nonimmigrants) or through the mail by submitting a completed Form I-901 and a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and payable in U.S. currency. A third party such as a school or sponsor may pay this fee by the above methods.

The fee must be paid in time to ensure that the payment can be deposited and recorded in SEVIS prior to the scheduled visa interview. The interviewing consular officer will confirm that the fee has been paid by accessing SEVIS. To allow for adequate processing time the fee must be paid at least three business days prior to the visa interview date if paying electronically and at least 15 - 20 business days prior to the scheduled visa interview if submitting payment through regular mail.

## **How will the payment be verified?**

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The payment will be recorded in the SEVIS system. It is recommended, however, the Internet-generated receipt be brought to the visa interview. You will also need a copy when you enter the country. Individuals who file electronically will be able to print an electronic receipt immediately at the time of payment.

## **When must continuing students (F-1, F-3, M-1, or M-3 non-immigrants who have begun but not finished a program) pay the SEVIS fee?**

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Continuing students must pay the SEVIS fee for every I-20 issued. Make sure your Form I-20 information matches that on your SEVIS I-901 fee form.

After paying the I-901 fee and getting a receipt, you can apply for a visa at any American Embassy or consulate before you leave for the United States.

## Who is considered visa exempt?

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Certain applicants who are citizens of Canada do not need a visa to enter the United States. You will however have to meet all international student requirements. Student's paperwork from these areas will be reviewed at the border.

## When Do I Need to Apply for My Student Visa?

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**Students are encouraged to apply for their visa early to provide ample time for visa processing. Students may apply for their visa as soon as they are prepared to do so. Students should note that Embassies and Consulates are able to issue your student visa 120 days or less, in advance of the school enrollment date.** If you apply for your visa more than 120 days prior to your start date or enrollment date as provided on the Form I-20, the Embassy or Consulate will hold your application until it is able to issue the visa. Consular officials will use that extra time for application processing.

**Students are advised of the Department of Homeland Security regulation which requires that all initial or beginning students enter the U.S. 30 days or less in advance of the course of study start/report date as shown on the Form I-20.** Please consider this date carefully when making travel plans to the U.S.

Continuing students may apply for a new visa at any time, as long as they have been maintaining student status and their SEVIS records are current. Continuing students may also enter the U.S. 30 days before their classes start.

## What type of visa do I get?

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**An M-1 visa only.** Please note that a student on an M-1 visa is allowed a total of 36 months of studies only. Please note that if any other type of visa is obtained, you will not be permitted to study at Charis Bible College.

## How do I get this visa?

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### **Qualifying for a Student Visa**

The Immigration and National Act is very specific with regard to the requirements which must be met by applicants to qualify for the student visa. The consular officer will determine whether you qualify for the visa.

Additionally, applicants must demonstrate that they properly meet student visa requirements including:

- Have a residence abroad
- no immediate intention of abandoning that residence
- Intend to depart from the United States upon completion of the course of study.
- Possess sufficient funds to pursue the proposed course of study.

As part of the visa application process, an interview at the embassy consular section is required for visa applicants 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 embassy or consulate. The waiting time for an interview appointment for applicants can vary, so early visa application is strongly encouraged. Visa wait times for interview appointments and visa processing time information for each U.S. Embassy or Consulate worldwide is available on our website at [Visa Wait Times](#), and on most embassy websites. Learn how to schedule an appointment for an interview, pay the application processing fee, review embassy specific instructions, and much more by visiting the [Embassy or Consulate website](#) where you will apply.

During the visa application process, usually at the interview, an ink-free, digital fingerprint scan will be quickly taken. Some visa applications require further [administrative processing](#), which takes additional time after the visa applicant's interview by a Consular Officer. Also, because each student's personal and academic situation is different, two students applying for the same visa may be asked different questions and be required to submit different additional documents.

## Required Documentation

Each applicant for a student visa must submit these forms and documentation as explained below:

- Form I-20M-N, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status for Vocational Students.
- You will need to submit a SEVIS generated Form I-20, which was provided to you by your school. You and your school official must sign the I-20 form.

Online Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application, Form DS-160. Visit our [DS-160 webpage](#) to learn more about the DS-160 online process.

A passport valid for travel to the United States and validity date at least six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the United States (unless [country specific agreements](#) provide exemptions). If more than one person is included in the passport, each person desiring a visa must complete an application.

- One (1) 2x2 photograph
- A MRV fee receipt to show payment of the visa application fee
- The SEVIS I-901 fee receipt.

### **All applicants should be prepared to provide:**

- Transcripts and diplomas from previous institutions attended
- Financial evidence that shows you or whoever is sponsoring you has sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period of your intended study. For example, if you or your sponsor is a salaried employee, please bring income tax documents and original bank books and/or statements. If you or your sponsor owns a business, please bring business registration, licenses and tax documents, as well as original bank books and/or statements.

### **Applicants with dependents (spouses and children) must also provide:**

- Proof of the student's relationship to his/her spouse and/or children (e.g., marriage and birth certificates);
- It is preferred that families apply for M-1 and M-2 visas at the same time but if the spouse and children must apply separately at a later time, they should bring a copy of the student visa holder's passport and visa, along with all other required documents.

## **How long does it take to get a visa from the Embassy or US Consulate?**

The amount of time to get a Visa varies with each Embassy or US Consulate. Check with the [Embassy or Consulate website](#) you will be making the Visa appointment with.

## **What if I am denied a visa?**

If you are denied a visa for any reason, may able to reapply but you will incur new expenses related to reapplication. If it is for the same year of study, you may use the current I-20. If you intend to reapply for a visa for a subsequent year of study, you must obtain a new I-20 from the SEVP certified school.

## **Am I able to work as a student?**

An M-1 visa does not permit you to work as a student, nor are you able to start or operate a business in the United States.

## **If I am a student and my spouse is not, is my spouse able to work in the United States?**

No, your spouse is not able to work, nor may your spouse start or operate a business in the United States.

## What are the Required Visa Fees?

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**Nonimmigrant visa application processing fee** - Current fees for Department of State government services <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/fees/fees-visa-services.html> at select Fees. You will need to provide a receipt showing the visa application processing fee has been paid, when you come for your visa interview.

**Visa issuance fee** – Additionally, if the visa is issued, there will be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee, if applicable. If there is a fee for issuance for the visa, it is equal as nearly as possible to the fee charged to United States citizens by the applicant's country of nationality.

### Additional Information

No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of nonrefundable tickets should not be made until a visa has been issued. Unless previously canceled, a visa is valid until its expiration date. Therefore, if the traveler has a valid U.S. visa in an expired passport, do not remove the visa page from the expired passport. You may use it along with a new valid passport for travel and admission to the United States.

## What if I already have an F-1 visa?

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Charis Bible College programs are not currently approved for students with F-1 visas. You may submit a change of status request, Form I-539 and/or apply for an M-1 visa.

## How Do I Change My Status?

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Some nonimmigrant visa holders, while present in the U.S., may file a request which must be approved by USCIS to change to another nonimmigrant category. See [Change My Nonimmigrant Status](#) on the USCIS website.

**Important Note:** Filing a request with USCIS for approval of change of status before your authorized stay expires (while you remain in the U.S.) does not by itself require the visa holder to apply for a new visa. However, if you cannot remain in the U.S. while USCIS processes your change of status request, you will need to apply for a nonimmigrant visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad.

## What if I am not a U.S. citizen but I have a green card?

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As a permanent resident of the United States validated by a green card, you are allowed to study at CBC without being processed according to SEVP standards. You will be processed and treated as a regular non-international student.

## **What can I do to make my appointment at the US Embassy go more favorably?**

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Please see supplemental Charis Bible College documents regarding the visa interview process.

## **Is there any scholarship or financial aid available?**

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There is not a scholarship program in place or financial aid available to international students at this time.

## **Can I pay tuition monthly?**

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Paying tuition monthly is NOT an option to international students. All tuition and fees MUST be paid in full prior to the start of school.

## **Why must the tuition be paid in full?**

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It is a requirement set forth by Charis Bible College since the student is unable to work during their course of studies. This ensures that the student has the ability to finance their education.

## **If I cannot come to Charis Bible College Colorado, what other options do I have?**

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You may complete your first year through Charis Bible College Distance Learning by taking courses either Online or through Correspondence which does not require you to be on campus. More information on both of these programs can be found on our website. Additionally, there are several campuses worldwide that may be in or near your country where first and second year may be completed. Please see the website for more information on <https://www.charisbiblecollege.org/campus-locations/international-locations>

## **Does tuition and fees include housing or food?**

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No, it does not.



## **Do you have housing available?**

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Charis Bible College does not currently offer housing on campus. Housing must be obtained off campus by the individual student. Housing is plentiful in Colorado Springs, and is not difficult to obtain. Housing in Woodland Park is limited and may be more of a challenge to obtain.

## **How well must I be able to speak English?**

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You should be able to comprehend English well enough to understand and be proficient in the material presented. You will be expected to complete tests in each course. It is also recommended that children who will be attending school here and children that will be enrolled in preschool or day care be able to communicate in English also. This will make their transition much easier.

## **Is there any assistance if I have language difficulties in school work or tests?**

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While you may be able to get help from other students, there is no formal help available for language difficulties.

## **How early before school starts am I allowed to come into the country and when must I depart?**

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You are allowed to enter the country up to 30 days in advance of the official start date.

When you enter the United States on a student visa, you will usually be admitted for the duration of your student status. That means you may stay as long as you are a full-time student, even if the M-1 visa in your passport expires while you are in the United States. You must file an extension to be able to stay through the summer to begin your 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the fall.

For a student who has completed the course of studies shown on the I-20 and any authorized practical training, the student is allowed an additional 30 days to depart the U.S. The 30 days to prepare for departure is permitted as long as the student maintained a full course of study and maintained good status.

If you come into the country from Mexico or Canada by car, you will receive a paper I-94. Coming into the country by plane you will have your I-94 dates stamped in your passport, and will need to go online to print a copy of your electronic I-94 to turn in to the registrar's office at enrollment.

## **What if my current visa expires during school?**

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If your visa expires while in the U.S., you will still be in legal student status. However, if you depart the United States with an expired visa, you will need to obtain a new one, applying at an Embassy abroad before being able to return to the U.S. and resume your studies.

## **What resources can I utilize to assist in Relocation?**

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Charis Bible College has an international student fact sheet to help you with your planning. Charis also has an International Student Care Committee that is available to assist approved students with their transition. You may submit a request for help specific to your needs via the form that will be emailed to you once you have received your Visa. A Care Committee representative will then contact you regarding your request for help.

## **What will I receive upon completion of the first two years of study?**

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You will receive a diploma from Charis Bible College upon satisfactory completion of your first two years of study.

## **Am I allowed to stay a third year for the Internship Program?**

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An M student may complete up to three years for the total program which means you may acquire a Visa to study for a third year.

## **Can my spouse and children come?**

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Yes, they are welcome to come but must follow the guidelines already outlined.

## **Where can I go to access information on local schools and childcare for my children? Is school free for children or do you pay?**

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Please refer to the Charis Bible College Information Sheet for International Students. Public schools are free while private schools and preschools/daycare are subject to tuition.