



INSTRUCTIONS TO INVITE PARENTS OR RELATIVES

Q: What can I do to invite my parents / relatives / friends to visit me in the United States?

A: Nothing specific is required to come from you or from West Chester University. Your visitors should use the B-2 tourist visa status while in the U.S. People from most countries must apply for a B1/B2 visitor visa stamp <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visitor.html> in order to enter the U.S. in B-2 tourist status; however, people from some countries are exempted from this requirement (see page 2 for more information on the Visa Waiver Program).

NOTE: Only the spouse and dependent children (under the age of 21) of F-1 and J-1 visa holders are eligible for F-2 or J-2 dependent visa status. For more information, click [here](#).

Q: What do my parents / relatives / friends have to do to get the B1/B2 visa stamp?

A: Your visitors should go to the website of the nearest U.S. Embassy/Consulate to schedule an appointment. They will fill out the visa application form (available [here](#)) and be prepared to provide documents that prove the following important points:

- Each visitor intends to return to their home country, i.e. they have sufficient economic and social ties to motivate them to return home.

Examples:

Proof of continuing employment
Proof of property ownership (house, land, etc.)
Proof that close family members remain in the home country

- Each visitor has a short-term specific plan/reason for visiting the U.S.
- Each visitor has sufficient financial resources to cover the expenses of their visit to the U.S. and their return to the home country. While no specific figure is required to show proof, our recommendation is to show at least \$1,000 USD available for each month of the intended visit in addition to airfare and other travel costs. (Bank statements are generally sufficient.)

Q: What can I do to help my parents / relatives / friends with their B1/B2 visa application?

A: If you wish to provide additional documentation, we suggest the following documents:

- An invitation letter from you detailing the dates of the intended visit and a summary of the activities to take place during the visit. We have attached an invitation letter template to this instruction sheet for your convenience. You can either choose to fill in the blanks on the template (it can be filled in online) or create your own letter using the template as a guide. You should fill out a separate invitation letter for each person you are inviting.

- If you will provide financial support for the visitors (this includes room and board during the visit), you can fill out a Form I-134 Affidavit of Support in order to demonstrate that you have sufficient resources to support your visitors. You can download the Form I-134 [here](#). Hint for completing question #11 “...I intend / do not intend to make specific contributions...” Check the box next to intend and explain your support. (Example: “I will provide room and board for the duration of the visit” or “I will provide \$500 per month for the duration of the visit.”) NOTE: If your visitors will pay for their expenses themselves, you are not required to complete Form I-134.
- A photocopy of your I-94 card and I-20 or DS-2019 as proof that you are legally in the U.S.
- If your visitors intend to attend your commencement ceremony:

Information about the date, time, and location of the commence ceremony available on the WCU website.

Q: How long can people in the B-2 tourist visa status stay in the United States?

A: The U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer that allows your visitors to enter the U.S. has the authority to decide how long your visitors may stay. Any B-2 visitor who is found otherwise admissible and is issued a Form I-94, will be admitted for a minimum period of six months, regardless of whether less time is requested, provided, that any required passport is valid as specified in section 212(a)(26) of the Act.

We recommend that your visitors carry an invitation letter from you in order to clarify their intentions in the U.S. (i.e. business visitor or tourist).

NOTE: The final decision for length of entry is at the discretion of the Port of Entry officer.

NOTE: Visa Waiver Program visitors are handled differently – see below.

Health Insurance for Visitors

It is dangerous to both physical and financial health to be without health insurance in the United States. All visitors should obtain suitable travel and health insurance for the duration of the stay. Health insurance policies should provide at least \$50,000 in major medical coverage and offer a low deductible (below \$200 is best). Insurance policies can be purchased here in the U.S. or in your home country.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), citizens of some countries are eligible to enter the U.S. as visitors (B-1 for business or B-2 for tourism) for up to 90 days without obtaining a B1/B2 visa stamp in their passport. For a current list of VWP-eligible countries and further details on required documentation, please [visit](#). People who enter the U.S. under the VWP are given 90 days to stay in the U.S. The green I-94 card will be issued at the Port of Entry (land border crossing) and will either say WB (Waived Business) or WT (Waived Tourist). Those entering by air or sea will receive a stamp in their passport. The 90-day stay cannot be extended and the holder cannot apply to change their status to any other status inside the U.S. People who intend to enter the U.S. under the VWP must [register](#) their intended travel through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) . The ESTA registration must be done a minimum of 3 days prior to the intended entry to the U.S. ESTA registration applications or renewals require a fee payment.

LETTER OF INVITATION (TEMPLATE)

[student or scholar's name]
[address]
[phone number]

[date]
U.S. [Consulate or Embassy]
[city, country location of U.S. Consulate or Embassy]

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is [student or scholar's name]. I am a [your position: graduate or undergraduate student, researcher, professor, etc.] at the West Chester University of Pennsylvania in [F-1 or J-1...] status. [If you are a student on post-completion OPT or Academic Training you should say this here.]

I am writing this letter to confirm that I have invited my [relationship to student/scholar], [name of person(s) being invited], citizen[s] of [country], to visit me for a period of [number of weeks or months]. I would like to visit with my [relationship to student/scholar] in Pennsylvania. [state purpose of visit here].

[name of person(s) being invited] will be presenting this letter to you, along with evidence to establish their close ties to [country], and to assure you that they will return prior to the expiration of their stay in the United States. During their time in the US, I certify that I will be fully responsible for the cost of room, board and travel within the US [state this only if it is true].

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[student or scholar's name]