New Online Visa Form DS-160

Improving the Non-Immigrant Visa Application Process

AGENDA
• How the Form Works
• Tips & Checklists
• Common Visa Misconceptions

U.S. Embassy Bridgetown
Background: U.S. Visa Application

• For many years, our NIV application forms (DS-156, DS-157, DS-158) were filled out on paper with a pen or a typewriter

• In 2006, we launched **EVAF** – the **Electronic Visa Application Form**
  – forms filled out online and printed, but data not submitted to State Dept electronically

• In 2010, we shift to electronic submission of data:
  – DS-160 Online Visa Application Form at the Consular Electronic Application Center (CEAC)
## Key Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>E V A F</strong></td>
<td><strong>C E A C</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Visa Application Form</td>
<td>Consular Electronic Application Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard copy (paper)</td>
<td>Soft copy (electronic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fill out 3 forms: DS-156, DS-157, DS-158</td>
<td>Fill out 1 form: * DS-160 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print entire application: 3 to 8 pages</td>
<td>Print confirmation page only: 1 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign on paper</td>
<td>Electronic signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static Form (same for all, unchanging)</td>
<td>Dynamic Form (form changes based on key factors)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
U. S. Department of State Streamlines the Visa Process

Online Non-Immigrant Visa (NIV) Form: DS-160

• Speed the NIV application process
• Eventually increase number of NIV applications that U.S. Consular staff can evaluate daily
• Transform the process into a more “green”, environmentally-friendly operation

Note: You are not applying for a visa online. You are submitting your application form online -- you still must be interviewed by a U.S. Consular Officer.
DS-160 Launch

2008: DS-160 piloted at US Embassies / Consulates in Mexico & Canada

2010/FEB/19: All visa applicants served by Bridgetown will be able to use DS-160

2010/MAR/22: DS-160 obligatory at U.S. Embassy Bridgetown

2010/APR/30: DS-160 obligatory worldwide
Overview of Process
https://ceac.state.gov

1) Enter information into the online application form (75 min)
2) Verify that the application data is correct
3) Upload a digital photo of the applicant
4) Approve with eSignature by entering your passport number & the code displayed on the screen
5) Print the confirmation page (color or black-and-white)
6) Make an appointment
7) Bring the following to interview
   1) Confirmation page
   2) Current passport and all old passports
   3) Supporting documents (invitation letter, itinerary or travel plan, C.V./resume, etc)
   4) Payment for application fee
   5) 1 extra photo (in case the uploaded photo is unacceptable)
How will it work? (1 of 5)

Main instructions are in English. For another language, select "French" to show pop-up "Tooltip" help in French when the user "hovers" mouse pointer over the text.
How will it work? (2 of 5)

Answer all* questions in English

This is the only DS-160 question that stores non-English characters.

Coupé Cloué
How will it work? (3 of 5)

- Save regularly to your computer hard drive
- Warning message after 15 minutes of no typing in the form
- If the form remains inactive for 20 minutes, **the form resets and all data is lost/erased**. If you haven’t saved the form, you will need to re-start all over again from the beginning
- Saving the file on hard-drive is crucial in case corrections are needed
How will it work?

Select the Embassy (or Consulate) where the appointment will be scheduled:

Bridgetown

If you choose the wrong location, Embassy Bridgetown will not be able to interview you.
Print the confirmation page (color or black/white) and bring to the Consular Section for visa interview.

Bar code must be printed clearly

Need bar code to make appointment
To Save Work

1. Press “Save”
To Save Work

2. Press here to save on your computer.
To Save Work

3. Select place you want to save your application.
Tip 1: Accuracy matters

Important to complete the form correctly.

**Verify:**
Surname, Given Names, Date of Birth (DOB), gender/sex, passport number.

Questions like this are difficult to answer correctly if not answered by applicant himself/herself.
Tip 2: Focus on Visa Type

For B-1, B-2, B-1/B-2, every applicant is a Principal Applicant.

If you chose wrong visa type, form may ask the wrong questions (dynamic form).
**Tip 3: Be Thorough and Specific**

Applicants will not be interviewed if education and employment data is incomplete.

Only use “do not know” or “does not apply” if true.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: Were you previously employed?</th>
<th>A: Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: Have you attended any educational institutions other than elementary schools?</td>
<td>A: Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide the following information on all educational institutions you have attended, not including elementary schools.

- **Name of Institution**
- **Street Address (Line 1)**
- **Street Address (Line 2) *Optional**

In addition to explaining your work duties, you may use the **duties textbox** to explain salary calculations.

If retired, explain previous employment and current salary/earnings.
Tip 4: List Previous Travel

Be sure to list **all** other countries you visited in the period specified (list every country -- not just the USA)

Providing information about previous U.S. visas (and previous refusals) can speed up the application process.

Hiding a previous refusal can result in being refused again.

Visa Number is **red** (8 digits)
Tip 5: Be Honest and Accurate

• Be honest when answering questions; otherwise you may be refused a visa and be permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa.
Other Tips

- To find your country in the list of countries, press the first letter to jump to the countries that start with that letter.
- To find USA in list of countries, type ‘U’ to jump to countries that start with ‘U’ (6 times)
- Errors will be indicated with a read arrow. These must be corrected before proceeding.

Please correct all areas in error as indicated below. Once you have finished, click ‘Save’ or ‘Next’ to continue completing your online application form.

Expiration Date cannot be earlier than today.
DS-160 Steps (review)

1. Enter data
2. Upload photo
3. Verify all data
4. E-signature
5. Print confirmation

Photo Quality Standards Result

Photo passed quality standards

Your photo has successfully been uploaded and passed all quality checks. Your photo submission has been accepted.

You can continue your application at the Visa website.

Selected Photo:

E-Signature
I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Enter your passport number:
1234567890

Enter the code below as shown:
5P8CT

Enter passport number.
Enter the code.
Click the speaker button if you would like to hear the code.
Click the Sign Application button.

Back: REVIEW  Save  Next: Confirmation
By clicking “Sign and Submit Application” you are electronically signing the application. You are required to electronically sign your application yourself, unless otherwise exempt by regulation, even if the application has been prepared by someone other than yourself. Your electronic signature certifies that you have read and understood the questions in this application and that your answers are true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. The submission of an application containing any false or misleading statements may result in the permanent refusal of a visa or the denial of entry into the United States.
Checklist to Avoid Common Mistakes
1 of 2

☑ State if the application was filled out by a different person other than the applicant
☑ List all other names and spellings
☑ Be specific about employment
  (Do not say: employee, businessman, teacher)
  (Do say: chief of finance bureau, V.P. of marketing, history teacher)
☑ If monthly salary is variable, provide average
☑ Always specify travel plan
☑ Complete “Persons Traveling with You” field
☑ Only place to enter native language is applicant’s “full name in native alphabet”
☑ Any non-English characters will appear like this: ćććć
☑ Nationality should match the passport with which one is applying.
Checklist to Avoid Common Mistakes
2 of 2

☑ List previous refusals.
☑ List all countries visited in the last five years, if prompted.
☑ List parents, even if deceased.
☑ List spouse, even if divorced or widowed.
☑ For education: list middle school, high school, and all universities attended, not just latest.
☑ For university education: specify level and major (examples: Bachelors degree in English, Masters degree in Business, PhD in Molecular Biology)
☑ New photo for every new application (photo from last 6 months)
☑ Save the .dat file and send a copy to yourself as an email attachment
Process

- **New procedure:** Applicants must bring the following to visa interview:
  - Confirmation page, supporting documents, and 1 photo

**REMINDERS:**

- *Reminder: bring all old passports*

- *Reminder: it is often helpful to bring proof of ties*

- *Reminder: Do not book travel until visa has been issued.*
MYTH 1: “It’s difficult to get a visa to the United States.”

FACTS:

• The U.S. welcomes legitimate travelers and works to facilitate business, exchange, and educational travel.

• In 2009, U.S. Embassy Bridgetown adjudicated approximately 40,000 NIV applications.

• Approximately 85% applicants in Bridgetown are issued visas.
MYTH 2: “There is a “right” answer to the visa officer’s questions.”

FACTS:

• There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. We expect truthful and accurate answers.
• 214(b) presumes immigrant intent
• In order to overcome 214(b), applicants must have a legitimate purpose of travel and be able to show strong economic or social ties to their resident nation.
• Visa officers assess the overall credibility of an applicant and whether or not the trip makes sense.
• Being part of a group is not enough to qualify for a visa. Every applicant must qualify as an individual.
MYTH 3: “Applicants can wait until just before intended travel date to apply for a visa.”

FACTS:

- Applicant should try to request a visa appointment at least 45 days in advance of the planned travel.

- Even after the visa appointment, if special processing or other information is required, the issuance of the visa may be delayed.
MYTH 4: “There is no consequence for submitting false documents or false information.”

FACTS:

• Using false documents – including a fabricated invitation letter, business license, employment letter, etc – can mean permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa

• Making false statements to a Visa Officer can mean permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa
Useful Websites

• DS-160 online NIV application form
  https://ceac.state.gov/genniv

• U.S. Embassy Bridgetown’s website
  http://barbados.usembassy.gov/visas.html

• U.S. Dept. of State website
  http://travel.state.gov

Questions?