

Applying for a New or Renewed Visa

[Applying for a New or Renewed Visa](#) [1]

A visa in your passport issued by a U.S. consulate governs when and how often you can enter the U.S. but it does not determine how long you can remain in the United States. Therefore, **you may stay in the U.S. beyond the expiration date of a visa** as long as your immigration status and your visa document (Form I-20, Form DS-2019, or Form I-797) remains valid. However, if your visa has expired and you are traveling outside the U.S., it will be necessary to apply for a new visa stamp, through the same process as your initial visa application, in order to re-enter the U.S.

It is not possible to renew a visa in the United States. Visas are issued only by a U.S. consul in a U.S. embassy or consulate outside the United States. The only exception to this is the limited pilot program that the Department of State is running for the renewal of **certain H-1B visas**. [You can find more information about this limited program on this page](#) [2]. The Department of State indicated that they plan to expand this program in the future and we will update our website as more information becomes available.

Expired Visas

If your U.S. visa has expired and you travel outside the U.S., you must obtain a new visa before you return. Applying for a new visa usually requires several weeks so you must plan your travel accordingly. Certain visa applicants may be subject to further screening or [Administrative Processing](#) [3] which can add 4-12 additional weeks to complete the visa application review and issuance. If you have questions about administrative processing or if you are experiencing a lengthy delay please [contact OISS](#) [4].

Applying for a Visa in a Third Country

Most international visitors will be able to apply for a new U.S. visa in a country that is not their home country. However there are exceptions and you must carefully review the guidelines on the website of the U.S. Embassy to which you will submit your application before making your travel arrangements. This is particularly important if you have been subject to administrative processing during previous visa applications.

If you plan to visit Canada or Mexico to apply for a U.S. visa, it is particularly important that you check the website of the U.S. consulate to which you will submit your application. You will find instructions about how to make the visa appointment. If you are from one of the countries now requiring additional name check/security screening or in a high technology or technologically sensitive field, you will want to think carefully about applying for a U.S. visa in a third country. Once a U.S. visa application is submitted you cannot abandon that application or use the [automatic revalidation](#) [5] process to return to the U.S. You must wait for the decision.

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