

# Applying for the M-1 Visa

## DISCLAIMERS FOR ALL APPLICANTS

*International Applicant Checklist Disclaimers:* The following checklist is solely intended to help international applicants apply for an M-1 status as vocational students in the Full-time Training in Anaheim. FTTA is not an academic institution; therefore, you cannot apply for an F-1 (student visa) or H-1B (work visa) with an I-20 issued by FTTA. If you have a spouse or dependents, please check with FTTA for more details.

### NON LEGAL ADVICE DISCLAIMER

This checklist should not be taken as legal advice. FTTA does not have authority or resources to formally represent you. We recommend hiring a personal immigration attorney. If you observe any inaccuracy in the information provided in this packet, please inform us at [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

*\*Disclaimer:* Fees, prices and addresses are subject to change. Please be sure to check the USCIS website for the most current information related to fees, prices and addresses. FTTA cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies related to fees, prices and addresses.

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# Welcome to FTTA

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We are encouraged by your consideration to attend the Full-time Training in Anaheim (FTTA). In 2010, the Lord opened the way for international applicants to attend FTTA through the M-1 student visa program. We would like to provide the following guide to help you in the visa process.

## ***Legal Consultation***

While you are in the Training, the FTTA Office and its representatives will provide you with as much assistance as possible related to your application and reporting requirements as a student trainee. However, the visa requirements are ultimately your responsibility. Unfortunately, we cannot be responsible for the overall strength of your application and are unable to guarantee a positive outcome to your visa application (or change of status request, if you are already in the U.S.).

Due to limited resources, you will need to bear the bulk of the responsibility in determining and maintaining your visa status while in FTTA. Many decisions associated with your visa status can be difficult, including your post-training decisions. While some consultation with an attorney may be provided, please be aware that there may be separate fees for cases that require additional assistance. You are also welcome to seek out a personal attorney that is able to formally represent your case. We encourage you to remain in fellowship both with the FTTA Office as well as the elders in your locality concerning this matter or any matters related to this.

## ***Reporting Requirements***

In order to comply with federal requirements, you must notify FTTA of any changes regarding your student status while you are in the Training. Some scenarios include:

- ◆ Any instance where you will be traveling abroad whether planned or unplanned, including travel during the interim period when FTTA is not in session.
- ◆ Any instance where you may leave the Training or will not be returning to the Training, even if this occurs in the middle of a term.
- ◆ Any instance of changes related to your citizenship, financial support or changes in your finances.
- ◆ Any address changes while attending FTTA.

If any of these situations apply to you, please notify FTTA as soon as possible since this may affect your visa standing. Please do so even if you believe that the Training is already aware of your circumstances. Remember, these are requirements mandated by the U.S.

federal government and are a condition of receiving and maintaining your M-1 visa and visa status.

## ***Your first year in FTTA***

The steps outlined in sections I and II of this packet only apply for the first year of your M-1 visa. Any information you submit related to these steps (particularly the financial documents) is only applicable for one year (or two terms) of the Training. You will be asked by FTTA to re-submit part or all of the documents you are submitting now during the renewal process detailed below.

## ***Your second year in FTTA - Filing an Extension of Stay (EOS)***

According to U.S. federal statute, all M-1 visas issued by recognized vocational institutions such as FTTA must be renewed on an annual basis regardless of the institution that issued it. Therefore, all trainees are required to renew their M-1 visa after one year. The renewal process is referred to as an “Extension of Stay” (EOS) and is outlined in section III of this packet. Although you will not need the information regarding the EOS at the start of your first year, we ask you to review this procedure now and re-read it during your first year to prepare accordingly. For the renewal process, USCIS will require you to submit updated materials (including proof of finances) for any time you are in the Training beyond the first year. Upon eligibility the FTTA Office will provide you with further information regarding filing your EOS.

## ***Extension of Stay (EOS) - Finances and Fees\****

There are fees required when filing for the EOS that are separate from those required when you first applied for your visa. We will provide more information concerning your EOS once you are enrolled in our program.

In order to obtain an M-1 student visa, you must first receive an I-20 form (Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant Vocational Student Status) from FTTA. An I-20 should not be mistaken for a visa, as the U.S. Embassy is the entity to issue your M-1 visa.

Prior to issuing your I-20, FTTA has the discretion to review your documentation and determine whether you have satisfied the requirements in order to receive this. In the following pages, there is a list of steps you will need to take in order to be granted your I-20.

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\*:Prices subject to change. Please refer to USCIS website.

# International Applicants That Are Not a Canadian Citizen

## Getting Started

If you are not a Canadian citizen, you will need to secure an M-1 visa through the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country or closest to you. Below are the steps that you will need to take in order to complete all the necessary items with the Embassy interview in mind.

If you are currently in the U.S. on an F-1 visa, it is recommended that you would depart the U.S. and return to your home country to apply for an M-1 visa at your local embassy. If you need more fellowship regarding your personal situation, please contact the FTTA Office as soon as possible.

If you have dependents or will require anyone to attend with you as an M-2, please contact the FTTA Office for additional instructions beyond those provided below.

### Take the TOEFL.

FTTA is fully conducted in English. In order to attend FTTA, you must prove your language ability through a TOEFL score. Minimum scores for FTTA are as follows: 80 total with 20 in Listening and 20 in Speaking.

Use code number 6301 to indicate FTTA as your score recipient. If English is the national language of your home country, you may not need to take the TOEFL. Please contact FTTA only if the national language of your country is English. If you do not contact FTTA, you will be required to have a TOEFL score. Exam dates and score reporting may take several weeks. Please plan accordingly since we cannot issue your I-20 unless all of the documents, including your TOEFL score, have been received.

### Apply to FTTA.

Follow the steps outlined on our website, [www.ftta.org](http://www.ftta.org). You must complete the TB requirements and your application to FTTA must be both reviewed and approved before an I-20 can be released to you. Since acceptance into FTTA is not automatically granted, you will need to be accepted before your I-20 can be released to you. Your FTTA application and visa documents are processed separately. All correspondence related to your FTTA application should be forwarded or sent to: [office@ftta.org](mailto:office@ftta.org). All correspondence or questions related to your visa should be sent to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

### Submit visa documents to FTTA.

In addition to the FTTA application, you will need to send the following documents to the FTTA Office. These documents can be sent in immediately after you have completed your FTTA application. Do not wait for your

FTTA acceptance to begin sending these documents. Documents can also be sent individually. Forms are available on the FTTA website and can be faxed to us at: (714) 991-8537 or can be scanned and emailed to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org). Please submit:

#### ◆ A completed I-20 Information Form

Please be sure to complete every section. Incomplete information forms will delay the issuance of the I-20.

#### ◆ A copy of your official TOEFL score report

If you have not received your final TOEFL score, please continue to submit all the other visa documents. Do not wait for the final TOEFL score to be released in order to send the other visa documents.

#### ◆ A copy of your transcript or diploma of your most recent and highest degree

If you are still in school at the time of your FTTA application and do not expect to have a copy of your degree issued in time, simply send a copy of your transcript. Unofficial copies are sufficient. Otherwise, please submit a copy of your degree(s).

#### ◆ A completed and signed copy of the “Statement of Financial Responsibility” form

Please review the “Statement of Financial Responsibility” (SFR) form for further directions in completing this form. It is available on the FTTA website. Depending on your sources of finances, you may not need to return all the pages of the SFR. However, all applicants are required to submit pages 1 and 2 at a minimum. You will also need to include copies of recent monthly bank statement(s) from either your sponsor or yourself, if you are self-supported. Please see further instructions on the SFR.

#### ◆ Pay required FTTA processing fee (\$325.00)

To pay this, please call the FTTA Office at: (714) 991-4688. This fee is non-refundable and separate from the SEVIS I-901 fee.

Once you have submitted all these documents and your FTTA application is approved, FTTA will issue your I-20. Since FTTA will need to mail your original I-20 to you, please provide the correct address on the “I-20 Information form”. Your original I-20 will likely be sent by express mail. FTTA will attempt to email you a PDF copy of your I-20, but this copy should not be used during your visa interview as it will be lacking an original signature. Please see the sections below for more information on your visa interview. Only use the signed original that is sent to you by express mail. As soon as you receive that copy or the original, please be sure to check that your name has been spelled correctly and sign the original on page 1 before using your I-20 in any way.

In this way, there will be sufficient time to re-send a correct copy if it is needed.

### Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.

After receiving your I-20, you must pay the SEVIS (I-901) fee. You should pay this before making an appointment with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will be applying for an M-1 visa. In order to schedule your visa appointment, you will need the confirmation number from the I-901 proof of payment. You will also need your SEVIS number from your I-20. This can be obtained from the PDF copy even if you have not yet received the original. (It is listed at the top of page 1 of your I-20, under “SEVIS–Student’s Copy”. Please note, it is not the OMB No.). You will also need to keep a copy of your proof of payment since you will need to present a copy to the Embassy and you will be asked for a copy of this throughout your time in the Training. Again, please re-check that your personal information on the I-20 is correct. After you have paid the SEVIS fee, you cannot be issued a new I-20 without having to pay the SEVIS fee again.

You can make this payment online at: [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com). You will receive an electronic confirmation of this payment at the end of the online transaction. This is the only way to submit an I-901 payment and receive a payment confirmation. This electronic system prevents most common errors. If you need to make the payment in any other way, please check the USCIS website at: [www.ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901).

You must keep the proof of payment since you will need it throughout the visa process. Acceptable forms of proof of payment are:

- A printed receipt from your online transaction at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).
- A receipt from the Western Union QuickPay option.

### Apply for your M-1 visa at your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Begin by reviewing the Department of State website available at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study.html>.

Also, read through the online visa instructions of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate of your home country at: <https://www.usembassy.gov/>. Instructions for each country will be different. For student visas specifically, you may also want to visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html#overview>.

### Complete the application for an M-1 visa.

The visa application (form DS-160 Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application) can be completed online at: [ceac.state.gov/genniv/](http://ceac.state.gov/genniv/). Depending on your country, a visa fee may need to be paid to the Embassy. This fee is different from the FTTA processing fee and from the SEVIS I-901 fee. This fee is associated with your visa application (DS-160) and will be paid directly to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. For the specific fee amount, please review your country’s website at: <https://www.usembassy.gov/>.

### Schedule an appointment for an interview with your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Most local U.S. Embassies and Consulates now allow you to make your appointment online but you will need a copy of your I-20, including your SEVIS number. As mentioned, when possible, FTTA will provide a PDF copy of your I-20 to you by email in order to help you schedule an appointment as quickly as possible. If you know you have been accepted by FTTA and have been issued an I-20 but have not yet received an electronic copy of your I-20, please feel free to email your request for a copy to [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

To schedule your appointment, log on to your country’s website (<https://www.usembassy.gov/>) to review the best method for making appointments.

### Complete the visa interview.

In order to finalize your application for an M-1 visa, you must have an interview at your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate. It is best to prepare as much information as possible for that interview since it will determine whether you are approved or not. At the visa interview, some of the documents you may need are:

1. A signed **passport**, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the United States.
2. If an electronic application (DS-160) was completed, bring a copy of the **confirmation electronic confirmation**. This includes the form with the barcode. If you are submitting a paper version of the visa application, be sure to take the **application** with you (Form DS-156, Nonimmigrant Visa Application) as well as a copy of your photo.

### *Important:*

Please notify FTTA immediately after you have been assigned to an appointment time at your local embassy. Your visa interview date and time can be forwarded to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

3. Transcripts and **diplomas** from previous educational institutions.
4. Your **TOEFL** score report.
5. **Financial evidence of sufficient funds** to cover tuition and living expenses for your first year of study. Acceptable forms of evidence are:
  - Copies of recent **monthly bank statement(s)** originally sent to FTTA for I-20 issuance.
  - A completed and signed copy of the **“Statement of Financial Responsibility”** form (available at [www.ftta.org](http://www.ftta.org)) with a copy of all the required supporting documents.
  - Any land titles, business licenses, or anything that establishes your ties with your country of citizenship.

Please be sure to follow the instructions given to you by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Be prepared to leave your original passport with the Embassy since they will need it in order to affix a copy of your visa if your visa request is approved. If your visa request is put on hold or denied, please be sure to notify the FTTA Office concerning the outcome as soon as possible by sending us an email at [office@ftta.org](mailto:office@ftta.org).

For specific information regarding your country and details on submitting the application above, including the documents you will need to bring with you, please visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html#documentation>.

### Entering the U.S.

#### Important:

For your interview, it is the consular officer who will determine whether you qualify for the M-1 visa. In general, they are looking to verify that the applicant (you) meets the student visa requirements including having a residence abroad (your home country) with no intention of abandoning that residence, the possession of sufficient funds to both pursue and complete the course of study, and finally, that you have an intention to depart the U.S. upon completion of the course of study. It would be best if you had documentation at your visa interview to prove each of these points.

#### Note:

To give yourself ample time for the processing of the visa, pay the SEVIS fee and schedule an appointment as soon as you have received either your original I-20 or the PDF copy emailed to you.

A favorable visa interview allows you to apply for entry into the U.S. through a U.S. Port of Entry (POE) no more than 30 days prior to the program start date indicated on your I-20. If you attempt to enter the U.S. earlier than the 30 days, you may be denied entry. In order to enter into the U.S., you will need to have many of the same documents used during your visa interview. Be prepared to have these original documents on hand and ready to show a U.S. Customs agent upon your entry into the U.S.:

- ◆ The signed original Form I-20 from FTTA, including your signature on page 1.
- ◆ Evidence that the SEVIS I-901 fee has been paid.
- ◆ A signed passport, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the United States.
- ◆ An approved visa usually affixed by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate after your visa interview.
- ◆ Financial evidence of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses for your first year of study. (*Please note: you will need to provide proof for your second year of finances during the filing of your Extension of Stay. Please see Section IV of this packet for more information.*)

**I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record):** Effective March 2013, CBP (U.S. Customs and Border Protection) began automated electronic issuance of the Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) as proof of your admittance into the U.S. As a result of the automated process, paper copies of the I-94 will no longer be given out to entering international students. However you will still need to obtain a copy of your Form I-94. To retrieve a copy of an electronic arrival/departure record, please go to: [www.cbp.gov/I94](http://www.cbp.gov/I94).

Please note that CBP will record your departure information when you leave the U.S. using manifest information provided from your airline carrier. However, if you will not be departing by plane but instead will be departing by vehicle, bus or another means of ground transportation, please contact the



FTTA Office to determine what steps you should take. More information concerning land departures from the U.S. will also be given to you once you are in the Training.

**Upon Arrival to FTTA.**

You should receive separate communication from FTTA concerning the details of when you should plan to arrive. This information typically comes in the FTTA

*Important:*

After you have received the visa, please be sure to check that they have correctly issued your visa as an “M-1” and not an “F-1”. This is a common error that could cause you difficulty in entering the country. It would be wise to check for this when you pick up your approved visa in order to avoid having to make an additional appointment or trip to the Embassy.

acceptance letter that is sent to you when you are notified that you have been accepted to FTTA. In addition to the arrival information you will receive, you will also be required to attend a mandatory orientation meeting. After arriving, the FTTA Office will provide more information to you concerning this meeting.

**Other Considerations.**

If you have gone through this entire process but cannot arrive by the first day of the Training, your visa standing as recognized by the U.S. government may be affected. Please contact the FTTA Office immediately.

# International Applicants from Canada (Canadian Citizens) and other certain English-speaking countries\*:

## Getting Started

If you live in Canada but have permanent residency or your passport is from a country other than Canada, please follow the steps in Section I of this packet. You will need to visit a local U.S. Embassy or Consulate in Canada. If you have any questions, please email us at [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

Canadians and others from visa-exempt countries are not required to obtain a visa for travel in order to enter the U.S. However, you are required to maintain a student visa status, such as an M-1, in order to remain in the U.S. Note that entering the U.S. requires a visa however, remaining in the U.S. requires a visa status. As a trainee, please note that you will be required to maintain an M-1 student visa status in order to remain in the U.S. as a student.

If you have dependents or will require anyone to attend with you as an M-2, please contact the FTTA Office for additional instructions beyond those provided below. Below are the steps you must complete in order to enter and remain in the U.S. on an M-1 visa:

### Apply to FTTA.

Follow the steps outlined on our website, [www.ftta.org](http://www.ftta.org). You must complete the TB requirements and your application to FTTA must be both reviewed and approved before an I-20 can be released to you. Since acceptance to FTTA is not automatically granted, you will need to be accepted before your I-20 can be released to you. Your FTTA application and visa documents are processed separately. All correspondence related to your FTTA application should be forwarded or sent to: [office@ftta.org](mailto:office@ftta.org). All correspondence or questions related to your visa should be sent to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

### Submit visa documents to FTTA.

In addition to the FTTA application, you will need to send the following documents to the FTTA Office. These documents can be sent in immediately after you have completed your FTTA application. Do not wait for your FTTA acceptance to begin sending these documents. Documents can also be sent individually. Forms are available on the FTTA website and can be faxed to us at: (714) 991-8537 or can be scanned and emailed to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org). Please submit:

#### ◆ A completed I-20 Information form

Please be sure to complete every section. Incomplete information forms will delay the issuance of the I-20.

#### ◆ A copy of your transcript or diploma of your most recent and highest degree

If you are still in school at the time of your FTTA application and do not expect to have a copy of your degree issued in time, please simply send a copy of your transcript. Unofficial copies are sufficient. Otherwise, please submit a copy of your degree(s).

#### ◆ A completed and signed copy of the “Statement of Financial Responsibility” form

Please review the “Statement of Financial Responsibility” (SFR) form for further directions in completing this form. It is available on the FTTA website. Depending on your sources of finances, you may not need to return all the pages of the Statement of Financial Responsibility. However, all applicants are required to submit pages 1 and 2 at a minimum. You will also need to include copies of recent monthly bank statement(s) from either your sponsor or yourself, if you are self-supported. Please see further instructions on the SFR.

#### ◆ Pay required FTTA processing fee (\$325.00)

To pay this, please call the FTTA Office at: (714) 991-4688. This fee is non-refundable and separate from the SEVIS I-901 fee.

#### ◆ A copy of your official TOEFL score report

Please note, as a Canadian citizen, there is no need to submit anything related to the language requirement.

Once you have submitted all these documents and your FTTA application is approved, FTTA will issue your I-20. Since FTTA will need to mail your original I-20 to you, please provide the correct address on the I-20 Information form. Your original I-20 will likely be sent by express mail. When possible, FTTA will attempt to email you a PDF copy of your I-20, but this copy should not be used to enter the U.S. as it will be lacking an original signature. Only use the signed original that is sent to you by express mail. As soon as you receive that copy or the original, please be sure to check that your name has been spelled correctly and sign the original on page 1 before using your I-20 in any way. In this way, there will be sufficient time to re-send a correct copy if it is needed.

#### Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.

After receiving your I-20, you must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee. You will not be able to enter the U.S. if this fee is not paid. You will also need your SEVIS number from your

\*This includes Canada, Bermuda and other visa-exempt countries. Contact FTTA for a full list if you feel this may affect you.

I-20 in order to make the payment. This can be obtained from the PDF copy if you have not yet received the original. (It is listed at the top of page 1 of your I-20, under “SEVIS–Student’s Copy”. Please note, it is not the OMB No.). You will also need to keep a copy of your proof of payment since you will need it to enter the U.S. and you will be asked for a copy of this throughout your time in the Training. Again, please re-check that your personal information on the I-20 is correct. After you have paid the SEVIS fee, you cannot be issued a new I-20 without having to pay the SEVIS fee again. Please do not attempt to enter the United States until you have made this payment.

You can make this payment online at: [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com). You will receive an electronic confirmation of this payment at the end of the online transaction. This is the only way to submit an I-901 payment and receive a payment confirmation. This electronic system prevents most common errors. If you need to make the payment in any other way, please check the USCIS website at: [www.ice.gov/sevis/i901](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901).

You must keep the proof of payment since you will need it throughout the visa process. Acceptable forms of proof of payment are:

- A printed receipt from your online transaction at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).
- A receipt from the Western Union QuickPay option.

**Enter the U.S.**

Enter the U.S. by going to a Port of Entry (POE) no earlier than 30 days before the start of the Training. If you attempt to enter the U.S. earlier than 30 days, you may be turned away. Canada, Bermuda, and certain other countries are deemed visa-exempt and are not required to have a visa when traveling within the western hemisphere, including the United States. You also do not need to conduct an interview through a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Instead, expect to be pulled into secondary inspection at the Port of Entry where a U.S. Customs agent will review the documents that would have typically been reviewed at a U.S. Embassy or by a U.S. Consulate. Be sure to bring the following documents with you to the Port of Entry:

1. The original, signed **Form I-20** from FTTA. Please be sure to sign page 1 under “Student Attestation”.
2. Proof that the **SEVIS I-901 fee** has been paid (This is the proof of payment mentioned in step 3).
3. A signed **passport**, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the United States.

4. A copy of your transcript or **diploma** from previous educational institutions.

5. Financial evidence of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses for your first year of study. Acceptable forms of evidence are:

- Copies of recent **monthly bank statement(s)** originally sent to FTTA for I-20 issuance.
- A completed and signed copy of the “**Statement of Financial Responsibility**” form (available at [www.ftta.org](http://www.ftta.org)) with a copy of all the required supporting documents.
- Any land titles, business licenses, or anything that establishes your ties with your country of citizenship.

**I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record):** Effective March 2013, CBP (U.S. Customs and Border Protection) began automated electronic issuance of the Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) as proof of your admittance into the U.S. As a result of the automated process, paper copies of the I-94 will no longer be given out to entering international students though you may still have a previous paper copy depending on the date of your last entry into the U.S. Regardless, however, you will need your copy of the I-94 in order to enter the U.S. To retrieve a copy of an electronic arrival/departure record, please go to: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>.

Please note that CBP will record your departure information, when you leave the U.S., using manifest information provided from your airline carrier. However, if you will not be departing by plane but instead will be departing by land, please contact the FTTA Office to determine what steps you should take.

*Important:*

If you will be departing back to Canada by land, you are responsible for notifying CBP. This is particularly true for those who are graduating and are departing the U.S. and no longer need the M-1 visa. FTTA will work to provide you with further information related to land departures once you are at FTTA. Otherwise, please visit the CBP website for additional information:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/apply-document>

More information concerning land departures from the U.S. will also be given to you once you are in the Training as this largely affects Canadian trainees.

### **Arrive at FTTA.**

You should receive separate communication from FTTA concerning the details of when you should plan to arrive. This information typically comes in the FTTA acceptance letter that is sent to you when you are notified that you have been accepted to FTTA. In addition to the arrival information you will receive, you will also be required to attend a mandatory orientation meeting related to your visa status. After arriving, the FTTA Office will provide more information to you concerning this meeting.

### **Other considerations.**

If you have gone through this entire process but cannot arrive by the first day of the Training, your visa standing with the U.S. government may be affected. Please contact the FTTA Office immediately.

Regardless of how you obtained your M-1 visa prior to beginning the Training, all trainees, after one year, will be required to renew their visa by requesting an “Extension of Stay” (EOS) through the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS). The FTTA Office will notify you when you become eligible to apply for your EOS.

As indicated to you previously in this packet, the documents you originally submitted prior to beginning FTTA are only effective for one year. To renew your visa, follow the steps in Section IV of this packet in order to complete and submit new documents.

# Current Trainees Requiring an Extension of Stay:

## Getting Started

If you have dependents or will require anyone to attend with you as an M-2, please contact the FTTA Office for additional instructions beyond those provided below. Below are the steps you must complete in order to enter and remain in the U.S. on an M-1 visa:

### Obtain a new I-20.

Obtain a new I-20 from the FTTA Office 60 days before the end of the term (using the date on your I-94 card) and no later than 15 days before the end of the term. The FTTA Office will notify you regarding the specific dates you will become eligible for this I-20. In order to have a new I-20 issued to you, you will need to submit the following documents to the FTTA Office:

- ◆ **A completed I-20 Information Form**
- ◆ **A completed and signed copy of the “Statement of Financial Responsibility” (SFR) form**  
Complete and submit a new SFR (available at [www.ftta.org](http://www.ftta.org)) with a copy of all the required supporting documents attached, including recent monthly bank statement(s) from your sponsor or yourself, if you are self-supported. Further instructions are on the SFR form. They are also the same documents completed prior to beginning the Training. You now need to complete this form again, in order to prove finances for your second year of the Training.

- ◆ **Pay required FTTA processing fee (\$325)**

To pay this, please call the FTTA Office at: (714) 991-4688. This fee is non-refundable.

### Important:

There is no travel provision during the time you are applying for an Extension of Stay. If your M-1 visa status is about to expire and you plan to or have already submitted an I-539 application requesting an Extension of Stay, please do not travel outside of the U.S. This applies to all trainees, regardless of your country of origin. If you begin the I-539 application but leave the United States at any point prior to its approval, this is considered “Abandonment of Petition” and your application will be denied. If this occurs, your student record will be terminated and you will have 7 days to exit the country or will not be allowed to re-enter if you are outside the U.S. This will occur regardless of your eligibility to secure and maintain a visa.

### Request an “Extension of Stay” using I-539 Application (Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status).

FTTA recommends that you file a paper version of the I-539 application in order to formally request an “Extension of Stay” (EOS). Both the paper application and instructions on completing the I-539 application can be found on the USCIS website at: [www.uscis.gov/i-539](http://www.uscis.gov/i-539). Please review and complete the paper application. Once completed, please scan and email a copy to: [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org). FTTA will be in further contact with you concerning the filing of this application.

### Compile and submit supporting documents with I-539 application.

The paper I-539 application should be filed jointly with supporting evidence or documents. At a minimum, FTTA recommends that you assemble the following documents to submit with your I-539 application. Please note that you only need to submit copies of the following documents. Please do not submit any original documentation unless otherwise indicated below.

- Copy of biographic page of a signed **passport**, valid for at least 6 months after the date of entry into the U.S.
- Copy of biographic page of an expired signed passport, if initial visa was stamped in that passport.
- Copy of a **U.S. driver’s license** (only applicable if you have one from within the U.S.). Both the front and the back of the license should be copied.
- Copy of current and previous **visas** (usually affixed to your passport) with stamp of admission. Please submit copies of visas even if they are expired.
- Copy of previous **Employment Authorization Card** or other work status, if applicable (ex: for F-1/OPT students or H-1B workers).
- Copy of **I-94 Form** (Arrival/Departure Record). As much as possible, use online I-94 Form (see below). If you have a paper version, both the front and back of the card should be copied. Original, signed I-20 issued by FTTA. Please be sure to sign page 1 under “Student Attestation”.
- Copy of all **previous I-20s** given to you by previous schools or employers including the I-20 issued to you by FTTA for your first year. I-20s should be in ordered according to date issued.

- Copy of the affidavits from the **Statement of Financial Responsibility** (Pages 1-2 and one of the following pages: 3, 4, and/or 5).

- Copies of recent **monthly bank statement(s)** showing sufficient funds for the \$20,000 requirement.

- Copy of **letter of support** (only needed if your locality is financially sponsoring you).

- Copy of proof of payment for the **SEVIS I-901 fee** (paid before the start of your first term, when you first applied to attend FTTA).

Once all documents are assembled in the order listed above, please also scan and email all documents along with the paper I-539 application. Documents should be emailed to [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org).

**I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record):** Effective March 2013, CBP (U.S. Customs and Border Protection) began automated electronic issuance of the Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) as proof of your admittance into the U.S. As a result of the automated process, paper copies of the I-94 will no longer be given out to entering international students though you may still have a previous paper copy depending on the date of your last entry into the U.S. Regardless, however, you will need to submit copies of your I-94 as part of your I-539 application. To retrieve a copy of an electronic arrival/departure record, please go to: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>. If you still have a white card version of the I-94, please submit copies of both the front and the back.

Please note that CBP will record your departure information, when you leave the U.S., using manifest information provided from your airline carrier. However, if you will not be departing by plane but instead will be departing by land, please contact the FTTA Office to determine what steps you should take.

More information concerning land departures from the U.S. will also be given to you once you are in the Training. This is particularly important for those trainees in their last term, who may be departing the U.S. altogether. Please contact the FTTA Office for any questions related to this, as this may affect your future ability to travel and enter the U.S.

### **File I-539 Form (“Extension of Stay”).**

Once your paper application and supporting evidence documents have been provided to FTTA and you have been in communication with FTTA staff, please mail the entire application to USCIS.

We recommend that you file your I-539 application and use the Training Center address. Please use the following address:

In care of: FTTA  
2431 W. La Palma Avenue  
Anaheim CA 92801

This will ensure that you receive all of your notices from USCIS in a timely way.

**Pay filing fee for I-539 application.** In addition to the supporting evidence, the I-539 application should also include payment of the application filing fee. Please note that this amount is subject to change. Please confirm the correct filing fee on the USCIS website at: [www.uscis.gov/i-539](http://www.uscis.gov/i-539). Make checks or money orders payable to the “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” without use of any abbreviations. Checks or money orders must be drawn out of a bank or other financial institution located in the U.S. Payments for paper filing fee cannot be made in person to a USCIS office, online, or mailed separately from the application. **Be sure to include the payment with the I-539 form. If your paper application is received without payment, it will be rejected and you will need to begin the process again.**

Mail paper applications to: USCIS, P.O. Box 660166, Dallas, TX 75266. If an application is time-sensitive, you may wish to submit your application using an express mail service such as FedEx or UPS. If sent by express mail, please use the physical address for USCIS: USCIS, Attn: I-539, 2501 S. State Highway 121 Business, Suite 400, Lewisville, TX 75067. Regardless of your mailing method, we recommend that you request either a tracking number or confirmation of mailing. Please contact either the U.S. Postal Service or your express courier to determine how to receive this. This is proof of the mailing of your application.

Please be sure to keep a copy of your entire I-539 application. You will be asked by FTTA to submit a copy and refer to the copy if the USCIS asks for clarification on a particular matter. It would be useful to know exactly what was submitted under those circumstances. Once you have mailed your complete I-539 application and supporting evidence, please confirm with FTTA that this has been sent. To confirm, email us at [visas@ftta.org](mailto:visas@ftta.org). Please include the date of your mailing.

### **Approved or denied I-539 Applications.**

Once received, USCIS will review your I-539 application and will notify you of the outcome by mail to the address

you provided on the I-539 application form. If approved, you will receive an I-797A approval notice that will include a new I-94 (Arrival/Departure record). An approved M-1 visa status grants you the proper standing or status to remain in the U.S., even if the visa in your passport previously granted to you has or will expired. Your standing or status allows you to remain in the U.S. for the period of stay indicated on the I-797A and I-94 card.

**Receiving notices from USCIS on the outcome:** The primary notices that you will receive related to your I-539 application are the I-797C Notice of Action for biometrics, I-797E Notice of Action-Request for Evidence (RFE), and the I-797A-Approval Notice if you are approved or a Notice of Decision if you are denied. If you receive an approval or denial notice, please be sure to notify the FTTA Office as soon as possible.

#### Other Considerations.

As you will be extending your status on an existing student visa and your SEVIS number remains the same, there is no need to pay an additional SEVIS fee. The filing fee for the I-539, paid at the time of submitting the application either during the e-file or attached with the

paper application, is the only fee required to extend your M-1 visa.

Use an address in your application that will be easy to access, such as the Training Center address. The address for the FTTA Training Center is: In Care of FTTA, 2431 W. La Palma Avenue, Anaheim CA 92801. All correspondence, including any requests for follow-up information, will be sent to the address indicated in your application.

It is possible that you may be asked to interview in person and you will likely be notified by mail of your interview sent to the address given in your I-539 application. The location of your interview will be determined by the address on your I-539 application. During your interview, be prepared to present your original passport, original I-94, and proof of financial support (your personal bank statement or I-134).

### If your visa has expired and you need to travel (This does not apply to Canadians):

Please note that an approved I-539 application is not a visa and cannot be used in place of a visa normally affixed to your passport. An approved I-539 allows you to extend your M-1 visa status for another year and provides the proper status during your time in the U.S. An approved I-539 application on its own will not allow you to enter the U.S. You will need the visa affixed in your passport in order to enter into the U.S.

In order to secure a new visa for your passport you will need to set up an appointment with a U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your home country. Use the approval notice (I-797 A) from your I-539 extension of stay application in order to obtain an updated visa for your passport. You will need to do this before you return back to the U.S. Please see Section I of this document for further details on how to arrange and prepare for that appointment. This applies to approved I-539 applications only. If you do not have the I-797A, or are still waiting to receive an approval notice and have not received final notice, please remember that you do not have any travel provision.

As a trainee, if you expect that you will travel outside of the U.S. as an M-1 student while in the Training or during the interim (including any gospel trips) and the visa in your passport has expired, you should also secure a new visa through your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate on your return trip home or in the country where you are traveling. Please be in contact with the FTTA Office if this is your situation.







Full-time Training in Anaheim  
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