



Weill Cornell Medical College

Department of Human Resources

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B-1/B-2 Visitor Visa Classification

The B-1/B-2 visa classifications may be used by scholars who plan to pay short visits to one (or several campuses) in the United States. It is not intended for use by a scholar accepting any type of formal academic appointment for a term or longer. B visitors can receive academic appointments at the Medical College but cannot receive any salary or compensation for services. Reimbursement for expenses is allowed. Honoraria are also allowed, as long as the visit to the Medical College is not longer than 9 days, and the visitor has not accepted honoraria from more than five institutions or organizations within a six-month period.

Visitors from 36 Visa Waiver Program countries (see “**Visa Waiver Program Participating Countries**”) can enter the United States without securing a visitor visa from the U.S. Embassy/Consulate. These visitors may request WB (waiver business) or WT (waiver tourist) status upon entry into the U.S. Both the WB and WT visits are limited to 90 days with no extensions or change of status possible. If the visit will be longer than 90 days, the visitor should obtain the B-1/B-2 visitor visa stamp, or consider another visa classification. WB and WT visitors are also eligible for reimbursement of expenses, and/or honoraria payments as long as the visit to Medical College is not longer than 9 days, and the visitor has not accepted honoraria from more than five institutions or organizations within a six-month period.

****Effective January 20, 2010, all eligible visitors who wish to travel under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) must apply for online authorization through the Department of Homeland Security’s Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/>.** ESTA is an automated system used to determine the eligibility of visitors to travel to the United States under the VWP. It collects the same information as the paper I-94W form that VWP travelers fill out en route to the United States. ESTA applications may be submitted at any time prior to travel. Visitors should submit an ESTA application as soon as they begin making travel plans. VWP travelers who have not obtained approval through ESTA should expect to be denied boarding on any air carrier bound for the United States.

Visa Processing Procedure:

STEP 1: A visiting scholar requesting a B visitor visa must present a letter of invitation from the host department to the U.S. Consul. The letter must state the purpose of the visit and also state that no salary will be made by the Medical College (reimbursements and payment of an honorarium are acceptable). It is at the U.S. Consul's discretion to grant or deny any visa.

STEP 2: The same letter must be presented to an admitting official at the point of entry into the U.S. and a request made for entrance in B-1 classification. The admitting official will note "B-1" on the scholar's entry permit (Form I-94), although if not clear of the business purpose of the visit, B-2 is issued by default. At present, either classification is sufficient for purposes of reimbursement or honoraria payments, as described above. This notation on the I-94 form is of great importance. Canadians who wish to be admitted in B status must also present their letter of invitation when entering the United States and receive a properly annotated I-94 entry document.

***Visitors entering under the Visa Waiver Program should present their letter of invitation and ESTA travel authorization when entering the United States. They will be issued an entry document (I-94W card) with the notation WB (for business) or WT (for pleasure/tourism). WT is the default, should they fail to convince the admitting officer of their business purpose.

STEP 3: If the visitors will receive reimbursement or an honoraria payment of any kind from the Medical College, they must fill out the Independent Contractor Questionnaire and Checklist, or the Foreign Visitors Honoraria Questionnaire. They should also complete the International Tax Questionnaire. These forms are available at the WCMC Compliance Department (Tel: 212-680-7015). Completed questionnaires must be sent to the WCMC Compliance Department with copies of the visitor's immigration documents.

Visa Waiver Program Participating Countries

Andorra
Austria
Australia
Belgium
Brunei
Czech Republic
Chile
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Monaco
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Portugal
Republic of Korea
San Marino
Singapore
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Taiwan
United Kingdom*

*For citizens with the unrestricted right of permanent abode in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may add countries to the program or remove them from the program at any time.