Applying for Your Student Visa: Chile

What is a visa?
A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

Do I need a visa to go to Chile?
A student visa is required for students who wish to study in Chile. Students are not allowed to work under a Student Visa for Chile. The student must enter Chile within 90 days of their visa being granted.

What do I need to apply for a visa?
Attention: Visa requirements change constantly! Verify this information with the consulate that has jurisdiction over the state of your permanent residence, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.
You will need the following to apply for your visa, and all documents must be in original form:

- **A valid passport:**
  - Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for information on how to apply for a passport.
  - Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application and your host university may require a copy of the photo page to process your acceptance letter.

- **Application forms** (1 and 2) TYPED IN ALL CAPS, not handwritten. Forms can be found at the top of the webpage at: [http://www.chile-usa.org/visasgral.htm](http://www.chile-usa.org/visasgral.htm).

- **Four recent color passport photographs** professionally done, 2x2 inches.

- **Health Certificate** recently issued and signed by a doctor stating that the applicant is in good health and has no communicable disease (must be recent, within 90 days of applying for the visa and there is no specific form).

- **HIV/HTLV test** recently issued by a Health Department, laboratory, or private doctor.

- **FBI background check.** Information regarding background checks can be found at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1201.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1201.html). Make sure to follow the FBI Identification Record Request link and allow for up to 12 weeks to process the background check before applying for your student visa.

- **Acceptance letter/certificate of enrollment** from the host university in Chile.

- **Letter or certificate of financial support** of your stay in Chile, such as a bank statement from the applicant, evidence of scholarships, and/or notarized letter from the applicant’s parents.

- **Processing fee of US$160** paid by credit or debit card (Visa or MasterCard), or money order (personal checks are not accepted).

  - Apply as soon as possible: The procedure for processing an application for a Chilean visa may take several weeks. Applicants should apply for a visa NO LESS THAN 20 working days in advance.

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person
The Chilean consulate requires that applicants appear in person for the stamping of the visa in their passports and also that applicants bring all original documents with them, so you will have to travel to the Consulate.
responsible for the state you have residence in. To submit your application in person, bring all original documents to the Consulate of Chile Monday through Friday 8:30am – 1:00pm. It will take at least 48 hours to process your visa, so plan to return to the consulate two days later. Please apply for a visa only at the General Consulate that has jurisdiction over the state you have residence in and plan accordingly. Contact information can be found at: http://chile-usa.org/consular.htm.

- You also have the option to scan all of your original documents, including a copy of your passport picture page in PDF format and the passport photo in JPG format and send them to the Consulate by email (cgschile@sbcglobal.net or acampos@chileanconsulatesfo.org) before appearing in person at the Consulate. Please state a date of preference for an appointment in your email. You will be contacted by email in order to confirm your appointment.

- Another option is to send legible copies of your documents, including a copy of the passport photo page via regular mail or express mail at: Consulate of Chile
  1736 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
  Washington, D.C. 20036

Do not mail your passport, money order or return envelope - Visas are never returned by mail. The Chilean consulate will contact you to set up an appointment for you to appear in person at the Consulate to complete your visa.

On the day of your appointment, take the above originals of your documents, payment in the form of credit card (Visa or MasterCard) or money order.

Avoid waiting until the last minute to apply for your visa, as omitting one document or failing to complete a form completely may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.

B. Via mail

You may receive permission to apply via mail from the Chilean consulate (you must first contact the consulate for permission). If you receive permission to apply via mail, be aware of the following:

- Send all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to the consulate. Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.
- If there is a fee for your visa, send a money order or certified check—consulates will not accept personal checks.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- Enclose a postage paid FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope addressed to yourself (return envelope). The consulate will only return your visa and documents if you provide a return envelope.
- Apply early.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

General tips for applying for a visa:

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquires every day so contacting them can be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day. You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

Chilean Consulates in the US:

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For a listing of consular districts (which consulate serves applicants from your state of residence), see http://www.chile-usa.org/consular.htm.
To print out a visa application form, see http://chile-usa.org/visasgral.htm.