

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?

You will need the following to apply for your visa:

- **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.
- **Application forms** (1 and 2) filled out with your personal data. Forms can be found at: <http://chileanconsulatesfo.org/>.
- **Four recent passport photographs** professionally done, 2x2" (color or black and white).
- **Health Certificate** issued 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 test** issued by a Health Department, Laboratory, or private doctor (also must be recent).
- **Police letter of good conduct** (FBI Background Check) with criminal record included from your local police department and it must be dated no more than one month previous to applying for your visa. To learn how to do this visit: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1201.html.
- **An acceptance letter/certificate of enrollment from the host university** in Chile.
- **An acceptance letter/certificate of enrollment issued by your home institution.**
- **Proof of financial security or means of support in Chile** (i.e. Bank statement or Affidavit from the applicant and/or applicants parents or guardians with a notarized letter stating that you/your parents will be responsible for your expenses during your permanency in Chile. Also, evidence of scholarship or student loan should be included)
- **Processing fee of US\$ 131** cash or money order (personal checks are not accepted).
- ▶ **Attention:** This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the consulate, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.
- ▶ Apply as soon as possible: The procedure for processing an application for a Chilean visa may take several weeks.
- ▶ Once the visa is granted, the student has 90 days to enter Chile.

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person

The Chilean consulate requires that you apply in person for your visa. It will take 48 hours to process your visa, so plan to return to the consulate two days later.

- Take the above documents to the Chilean consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence (List of state jurisdictions can be found at <http://www.chile-usa.org/consular.htm>)

- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation and location and to make an appointment. You may need to email **copies** of all documents to the consulate in order to make an appointment, and they will email you with an appointment time.
- 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:

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://www.consuladochilesfo.com>

Chilean Consulate, San Francisco

AREA SERVED: California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, Washington, Nevada

ADDRESS: 870 Market St., Suite 1058, CA 94102

PHONE: (415) 982-7665/7662 ext. 4

WEBSITE: <http://www.consuladochilesfo.com>