

## Applying for Your Student Visa: Czech Republic

### 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 the Czech Republic?

A visa is required for students going to the Czech Republic through an officially registered organization or program such as ISEP or UM's Partner University Exchange program, so you (and your dependents, if applicable) will need to obtain a visa for your period of study in the Czech Republic.

### What do I need to apply for a visa?

You need the following documents to apply for a visa (also called a "residence permit"):

- **A valid passport.** The consulate for the Czech Republic requires that you send them your original passport, not a copy. *You should make a copy of your passport for your own records.*
  - ◆ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for how to apply for a passport.
  - ◆ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
- **Completed visa application.** Write in blue or black ink, or type; provide the original document, not a copy.
  - ◆ To obtain this document, contact the consulate in the US that has jurisdiction over your state of residence. The consulates are listed below.
- **Two passport size photos.**
- **A document confirming your purpose of stay.** This would be a letter from the Czech university that you will be attending; this letter can be the original or a copy, but *must be in the Czech language.*
  - ◆ Include your **acceptance letter from UM** and your **acceptance letter from your host institution**; if the acceptance letter from your host institution has not arrived within two months prior to your departure, please notify UM's Office of International Programs.
- **Written proof of your housing arrangement in the Czech Republic.** If you plan to live on-campus at your host university, they will provide you with a letter that will serve as proof of your accommodation. Otherwise you need to provide a copy of your lease if you are renting an apartment/house, or a written letter from a homeowner, stating their willingness to accommodate you (i.e., a home-stay).
- **Photocopy of your birth certificate.** This does not have to be notarized.
- **Proof that you have sufficient funds** to cover your stay in the Czech Republic (the minimum is USD 900 plus USD 120 per month that you plan on staying). This would be a notarized copy of the front side of a credit or debit card (Visa, MasterCard, etc.) in your name that is valid for your stay in your host country. You can cover up the numbers when you copy it. Or you can submit a notarized bank statement in your name, or letter or bank statement from another source of funding (i.e., a parent, or a sponsor) explaining their wish to fund your stay; this letter must be the original document and translated into Czech.
- **Application for Czech Criminal History Record**; this document can be downloaded from the embassy/consulate websites, and must be completed and your signature must be notarized by a Notary Public; Also, if you have lived in another country, for 6 months or longer, in the last three years, you must let the consulate know.

- **Medical/Travel Insurance.** Coverage must be valid for your entire stay in the Czech Republic.
- **An application fee of US\$149** in the form of a money order or cash.
- **A prepaid, self-addressed, Certified or Express Mail envelope** must also be included with your application. You should keep the tracking number of this envelope because it will be used to send you back your documents. The consulate does not accept any responsibility for lost items if a self-addressed envelope is not enclosed with your application.
- ▶ **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.
- ▶ You will also find answers to many of your visa-related questions at:  
<http://www.mzv.cz/wwwo/?amb=87>, the Czech embassy in Washington, D.C.  
 From there you can access the website of the consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.

## How do I obtain a visa/residence permit?

### A. In person

- Take the above documents to the Czech consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence. (The Czech consulate also processes visa applications by mail, see below).
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation and location.
- 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

If you chose to apply for your visa via mail rather than in person, you should:

- Send all documents, including your passport, via 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 for yourself.**
- Submit \$149 application fee in the form of a money order to the Consulate General of the Czech Republic (no cash unless you apply in person!) --consulates will not accept personal checks.
- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*.
- Apply early: according the Consulate's website, the process usually takes a 90 days and cannot be started until all paperwork is submitted.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- 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 may 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!

## Czech Consulates

Send you application to the Consulate General that covers your state of residence. Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Washington, DC.

## Embassy of the Czech Republic: Washington, DC

**States served:** Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland,

Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

**Address:** 3900 Spring of Freedom St. NW, Washington, DC 20008

**Phone:** (202) 274-9100

**Fax:** (202) 966-8540

**e-mail:** [washington@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:washington@embassy.mzv.cz)

**Consulate General: Los Angeles**

**States served:** Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, Hawaii.

**Address:** 10990 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90024

**Phone:** (310) 473-0889

**Fax:** (310) 473-9813

**E-mail:** [losangeles@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:losangeles@embassy.mzv.cz)

**Consulate General: Chicago**

**States served:** Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wisconsin,

**Address:** 205 N Michigan Ave, Chicago, Illinois 60601

**Phone:** (312) 861-1037

**Fax:** (312) 861-1944

**E-mail:** [chicago@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:chicago@embassy.mzv.cz)

**Consulate General: New York**

**States served:** Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

**Address:** 1109 Madison Ave, New York, New York 10028

**Phone:** (646) 981-4040

**Fax:** (212) 717-5064

**E-mail:** [newyork@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:newyork@embassy.mzv.cz)