

Applying for Your Student Visa: Taiwan

What is a visa?

A visa is an official authorization allowing you to enter a country to 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 Taiwan?

A visitor's visa is required for persons who wish to study in Taiwan for a period of 60 days or longer, so you will need to obtain a visitor visa if your program exceeds this time period. Students who will study for six months or less should apply for the visitor visa and can continue to extend this visa for up to six months. If you plan to study in Taiwan for longer than six months, you should first apply for a visitor visa, and after being in Taiwan for 4 months, you can apply for a resident visa that will last until you finish your studies.

What do I need to apply for a visa?

Applying for a visitor visa:

You will need the documents listed below to apply for your visitor's visa. Remember to keep photocopies of all documents for your own records!

- **A valid passport;** send the original document, plus one copy of the photo page. The passport must be valid for at least 6 months after the date you plan to leave Taiwan, and must have at least one blank visa page.
 - ◆ 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 form:** One completed and signed visa application form, plus one copy
- **Photo:** two recent, 2x2 inch color photos, with a light background
- **Copy of round-trip air tickets,** or a proposed travel itinerary
- **Payments for processing fees,** US\$131 for the application process for US passport holders
- **Letter of acceptance** from your host university
- **Proof of sufficient funds,** which can include a bank statement showing you have access to at least US \$2,000 for your time abroad.
- ▶ **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.

For Students who plan to stay in Taiwan for longer than 6 months:

You will need to apply for a resident visa after you have been in Taiwan for 4 months or longer. This process takes about 10 days and is completed in Taiwan. Bring the documents you used to apply for your visitor visa in order to do this.

- ▶ You will find answers to many of your visa-related questions at:
<http://www.roc-taiwan.org/public/Attachment/94106171071.pdf>

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person

- Take the above documents to the ROC Taiwan Embassy/Consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence. For Montana residents, the Embassy in Seattle has jurisdiction over the state.

- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation and location.
- The ROC Taiwan Embassy suggests that it takes 1 working day to process a visa application when you apply in person. You may pick up your visa after 3:30 pm on the next working day after you have submitted the application. You may pay US\$25 for same day collection on single entry Visitor visas, US\$50 for same day collection on multiple entry Visitor visas.
- If the visa application form is not filled out completely, correctly and legibly, your visa application may be delayed or rejected.

B. By mail

- You may submit your documents by mail to the Consulate/Embassy with jurisdiction over your state of residence. The Seattle Consulate expects that you should receive your visa by mail in 3-5 working days, however some visas take longer to process and you should apply well in advance of your proposed date of travel for this reason.
- 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 embassy. **Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.**
- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*. The consulate will only return your visa and documents if you provide a return envelope. The self-addressed envelope may also be a USPS (US Postal Service) Express Mail Flat Rate Mailing Envelope with \$17.50 postage stamp (metered stamps will not be accepted).

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!

Contact:

Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle

One Union Square, Suite 2020, 600 University Street

Seattle, Washington 98101

Tel. (206) 441-4586 / Fax: (206) 441-1322

Jurisdiction: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming