

PART 306-6-Official Visas

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306-6.1 What is a visa?

A visa is a stamp affixed in a passport which allows you to enter and exit a foreign country.

306-6.2 What is the processing-time for visas?

The processing-time for visas is dictated by the various embassies. A 10 to 15 business day processing-time is required to obtain visas for most countries, with the exception of:

- 15 to 20 business days to obtain visas for China, Spain, or Vietnam;
- 6 weeks to obtain visas for Russia or India; and
- 2 months to obtain visas for Cuba.

306-6.3 How do I obtain a visa(s) in my official passport?

You will submit your official passport and any applicable visa documentation to your FTC for processing along with the rest of your foreign travel package. Visa requirements vary for each country. Some countries may require a visa application, and some may require visa photos or letters of invitation. Most countries require that the passport be valid at least 6 months or longer beyond the dates of travel before a visa can be issued.

306-6.4 Is there a listing I should use when verifying visa requirements for official travel?

You will use the “Official Visa Requirements” listing when verifying visa requirements for official travel, which can be found at the following site:

<http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/finance/FT.visareq%2002%2016%202011.pdf>

Do not use the “Foreign Entry Requirements” listing published by the DOS since it contains visa requirements for personal and private industry travel and differs from the visa requirements for official travel.

306-6.5 How do I read the “Official Visa Requirements” listing?

You should note the following when reading the “Official Visa Requirements:”

- 1) **“No visa required”** indicates the employee travels on their official passport only; and
- 2) **“Visa required”** indicates a visa is required, but applications and pictures are not required. When a visa is required, the NTO will submit applicable paperwork with the official passport to the appropriate embassy for a visa. Please note, pictures must be recent 2”x2” color photos (not photocopied) unless otherwise specified; and

Original signatures are required on each visa application.