

PC AGE Career Institute
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Frequently Asked Questions

What is an M-1 Visa? An M-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa that is used by those who wish to study in the United States temporarily for vocational or business reasons.

Can my spouse and/or children come to the United States with me? Yes, provided you can satisfactorily demonstrate that you have the financial means to support them.

What is the difference between an M-1 and F-1 visa? Both of these are classifications of student visas. The primary difference is that you cannot transfer an M-1 visa to an F-1 visa. At the completion of your studies you must exit the United States.

Who is eligible for an M-1 visa? In order to be issued an I-20 from PC AGE you must first comply with the eligibility requirements listed here:

- You must be accepted into PC AGE for enrollment in a full-time course of study.
- You must complete the International Student Financial Statement.
- Pay the mandatory and separate SEVIS fee electronically.
- Schedule an appointment with the nearest US Consulate (if outside the US) or with the USCIS having jurisdiction over your place of residence (if presently in the US). *No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore final travel plans or the purchase of non-refundable tickets should not be made until a visa has been issued.*

When can I enter the United States?

You can enter the US no more than 30 days before the start of your intended program. If you wish to enter the US more than 30 days before the start of your classes you must apply for a visitor's visa.

Can I exit the US and reenter?

With your valid I-20 and valid I-94 in your possession you can enter and exit the US freely. For extended stays you must consult with your International Student Advisor.

Can I work while on an M-1 visa?

Unless you have written permission from USCIS you **cannot** work. This policy also covers anyone accompanying you on an M-2 visa. At the end of your studies you may request permission from the Department of Homeland Security for Optional Practical Training (OPT) for a period of 30 days. OPT is generally equal to one month for every 4 months of full-time studies.



Is health insurance necessary?

It is recommended that international students studying in the United States purchase health insurance for themselves and all dependents accompanying them. PC AGE does not offer health insurance but can assist you in locating an affordable plan for your duration in the United States.

Can I transfer schools?

While not prohibited it is possible to change schools while in the US on an M-1 visa. Foreign students must be mindful that the final determination on transfers of schools is made by USCIS and if they deny your request you may be deemed out of status and asked to leave the US. You have the option to change schools but not visa classification only during the first 6 months of your studies. You do not have the option to change the course of studies in the US.

How can I apply to PC AGE from within the United States?

You must submit the following documents:

- 1) A copy of the U.S. visa page.
- 2) A copy of your I-94 (departure record).
- 3) Copies of all previous I-20 forms (transfer students only) issued by other schools.
- 4) Transfer Form (transfer students only) indicating your SEVIS release date.
- 5) Official transcripts (transfer students only) for all U.S. colleges and universities attended.

What is SEVIS?

Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is the Internet system that maintains information on non-immigrant students, exchange visitors, and their dependents. The fee-supported system enables schools and program sponsors to transmit information to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Department of State (DOS) throughout a student or exchange visitor's stay in the United States. This information includes status changes such as admission at Port of Entry, change of address, change in program of study, and other details.

Once you have received your Form I-20, the USCIS requires that you pay the SEVIS fee before applying for a student visa. If you are already in the U.S. and are applying to change your status, you must pay this fee prior to submitting your change of status application.

The easiest way to pay the SEVIS fee is at <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/>. You will be given the option to pay by credit/debit card, check, or money order drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in U.S. currency. A receipt will be provided when you pay online. Be sure to **print it**—you will need it for your visa interview. A receipt will also be mailed to you, but you may not receive it before your visa appointment.

Can an M-1 visa be extended?

Yes, an M-1 student can apply for an extension of stay for a period of no longer than one year. If the extension is granted, the student can apply for another extension for no longer than one year. The total period of time the M-1 student may be in the U.S. is three years.

