

Understanding VISAs – page title

The type of visa you must obtain is defined by U.S. immigration law and relates to the purpose of your travel. Following are visa options for those coming to the U.S. for further veterinary experience or employment.

Important: Please consult the U.S. visa website <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas.html> or an immigration attorney for further information.

Visa Types

1. B-1 / B-2

- a. Visa for visitors
- b. Good for 6 months
- c. Can visit, observe, and consult

2. F-1

- a. Student Visa to attend university
- b. Can obtain for PAVE Certification during clinical year
- c. Enroll for clinical year and begin F-1 App Process with I-20 through school then apply for F-1 VISA at nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate
- d. After graduation and licensure, foreign students are eligible to work for up to 36 months in Optional Practical Training (OPT)
Note: During this period, employers can apply for an H-1B VISA multiple times to improve chances of selection

3. J-1

- a. To come to U.S. for an Internship or Externship to receive training
- b. Cannot practice; role is as veterinary assistant or technician
- c. Requires sponsors in the U.S. and is processed at closest consulate
- d. 12-18 months for interns and trainees
- e. Third-party visa services can help assist or identify programs
 - i. Ex. Cultural Vistas, CAEP, Center for International Career Development
 - ii. May incur extra costs for services provided
- f. Costs: \$400 in filing fees + insurance and other fees

4. H-1B

- a. Most common type of employment-based non-immigrant visa
- b. Requires Bachelor's Degree or Foreign Equivalent
- c. Eligible for two 3-year segments for a total of 6 years
- d. Eligible to apply for Permanent Residency (Green Card) while in the U.S.
- e. Visa is tied to specific employer/sponsor who must provide financial and business information
- f. All visa fees must be paid by Employer
- g. Selected by Lottery - must enter by March 31 (\$215 fee per application)
 - i. 25% of applicants are selected
 - ii. If selected must submit H-1B application with USCIS by June 30

- iii. If in U.S., status changes automatically
- iv. If outside the U.S., must go through processing at the consulate
- h. Costs: \$3,380 in filing fees; premium processing is \$2,805

5. H-2 (A&B)

- a. A - Agriculture, B - Non-Agriculture
- b. Very detailed rules
- c. Costs: fees variable depending on employer statistics

6. H-3

- a. For trainees who seek to enter U.S. and gain experience in their field of practice
- b. Not intended for productive employment but for job-related training not available in country of origin
- c. Costs: \$1,615 in filing fees

7. Permanent Residency - Green Card status

- a. Remain in the U.S. indefinitely
- b. Process takes 3 years to complete
- c. Individuals with advanced degree go through Labor Certification with the Dept. of Labor showing there are no eligible U.S. workers for the position
- d. If exceptionally qualified may be eligible for National Interest Waiver to forego Labor Certification process

8. Country Specific Non-Immigrant Visas

- a. TN Visa - Canadian and Mexican citizens
 - i. Can be renewed indefinitely
 - ii. Licensure not required to obtain
- b. H1-B1 Visa - Singaporean and Chilean citizens
 - i. Similar to H-1B, no lottery required
- c. E-3 Visa - Australian citizens
 - i. Can be renewed indefinitely