

Inviting Family and Friends to Visit You in the United States

Because the purpose of a tourist visa does not directly involve UMASS Boston visa sponsorship, the letter you need does not come from ISSS. You need to provide your family and friends a Letter of Invitation written *by you*. With your invitation letter you should also supply the Applicant with an Enrollment Verification Letter from the UMass Boston's Registrar's Office and/or a copy of your transcripts.

Family, relatives, and friends that plan to visit you in the U.S. will most likely need to apply for a tourist visa (B1/B2 visa). There are no specific visa documents, e.g. Form I-20 or DS-2019, with which to apply for a B1/B2 visa. However, there are some guidelines on what a consular official expects of applicants.

Applicants should be prepared to explain the following points and provide related documents:

1. The visit to the United States will be temporary.

Your invitation letter should list the purpose of the visit, i.e. to attend your Commencement, visit family, etc. Please note that the invitation is *from you* and it is not from the International Students & Scholars Office. U.S. Consular Officials will only acknowledge invitation letters from the actual non-immigrant who is inviting a family member or friend to visit them in the U.S.

2. There are adequate funds to cover the cost of transportation and cost of living in the United States.

The Applicant may need to provide evidence of sufficient funds to support themselves while in the United States in the form of a bank statement. Alternatively, you may provide your current bank statement as evidence of adequate financial support to cover their temporary stay in the United States.

3. The visitors have residences outside the United States to which they intend to return.

The Applicant will need to prove the intent to return home. This may need to be documented by evidence of a job, immediate family members who will be left behind, property, business ownership or other strong ties to their home country. Applicants should be prepared to answer questions about their intent to return.

Applying for The visa

For many individuals a B1/B2 visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate outside the United States is needed to enter the United States. Guidance on the non-immigrant visa application process is available on the web site of the U.S. Department of State. Please note that Canadian citizens and citizens of Visa Waiver countries do not need to obtain visas for this purpose. Visa Waiver applicants, do however, need pre-clearance authorization called ESTA prior to traveling. They must present evidence of ESTA approval at the port of entry to the United States. (It is important to print out the approval when applying for ESTA as it may need to be presented at the Port of Entry.)

SEE SAMPLE LETTER ON REVERSE

Sample Invitation Letter for Inviting Relatives and Friends

(Date)

Consular Officer
United States (Consulate or Embassy)
(City), (Country)

Dear Consul,

My name is (your name), and I am a (F1 or J1) (student or scholar) at The University of Massachusetts Boston in Boston, Massachusetts, pursuing a (bachelor's, master's or doctoral) degree in (field of study).

A transcript, enrollment verification letter and a copy of my (I-20 or DS-2019) are attached as proof of my enrollment at The University of Massachusetts Boston.

I wish to invite the following individual(s) to (example: my graduate ceremony at The University Massachusetts Boston, to visit me for summer vacation, etc.):

- First Name, LAST NAME (as it appears in passport)
- Date of Birth, Relationship to you

My guest(s) will be visiting me from (month day, year) until (month day, year) and will stay at (my residence or other location) during the duration of their visit. The costs of their visit will be covered by (financial information). Please see the attached financial documentation for more details.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the attached visa application.

Sincerely,

(Your name)