



## NVC'S ROLE IN YOUR IMMIGRANT VISA JOURNEY

### WHAT IS THE NATIONAL VISA CENTER?

The National Visa Center (NVC) is part of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs. NVC serves a clerical function in processing immigrant visa applications.

NVC's job is to prepare immigrant visa applications for consular officers to review and adjudicate. After receiving an approved immigrant petition from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, NVC works with you on your visa application package. NVC's role is to ensure that the minimum paperwork required by the consular officer is received and properly filled out. That way, when your visa application is sent overseas to a U.S. embassy, it is ready to be considered during your interview.

### HOW DOES NVC WORK WITH EMBASSIES?

Consular officers who interview immigrant visa applicants are required by law to review specific documents. A large part of NVC's work is making sure applicants have gathered these documents and filled out the required forms **before** their visa interview. Why is that important? Because if a consular officer doesn't see these documents during the interview, the officer won't be able to make a decision on your application – meaning a delay in your reunion with family in the U.S.

NVC's work includes:

- Collecting two immigrant visa processing fees;
- Reviewing forms and documents submitted to NVC in support of the visa application;
- Scheduling visa interviews at embassies and consulates overseas once applicants have submitted the requested documents;

- Providing applicants with interview instructions; and
- Sending completed case files to the interviewing consular officers so they are ready for the interview.

### WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF NVC'S WORK?

NVC helps prepare applicants for a successful interview the first time they appear. This helps decrease the likelihood that a consular officer will have to ask you to reschedule the interview and return with missing paperwork. NVC's work also helps standardize the immigrant visa process worldwide.

### WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ON WHAT I HAVE TO DO WHILE MY CASE IS AT NVC?

Please visit our website at [nvc.state.gov](http://nvc.state.gov) (English) or [nvc.state.gov/espanol](http://nvc.state.gov/espanol) (Spanish) for information about submitting your immigrant visa application package to NVC. There are six steps you have to complete before NVC can review your case and schedule your interview appointment:

1. Choose an agent (the person to whom NVC will send instructions and feedback).
2. Pay your processing fees online.
3. Complete the online Form DS-260 Immigrant Visa Application.
4. Have your petitioner complete a Form I-864 Affidavit of Support and collect supporting financial documents.
5. Collect your supporting civil documents, such as birth, marriage and police certificates.
6. Submit all of these forms and documents to NVC.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY FORMS AND DOCUMENTS TO NVC?

After NVC receives all of the requested paperwork, it will administratively review them. NVC's work is clerical in nature and is meant to ensure you have the documents consular officers need to see.

We review all documents simultaneously to avoid sending a "false checklist" that would ask an applicant to send a document that has already been mailed. That's why it's important to send all documents to NVC in one package. This review takes place only after we have received fees, the DS-260, **and** both civil and financial documents.

If something is missing, NVC will send a letter to your agent asking for the missing information. Once you have submitted everything that is requested, NVC sends a letter saying you are "documentarily qualified." That means you are in line for the next available interview appointment.

## WHEN WILL I GET AN INTERVIEW?

There will likely be several weeks between becoming "documentarily qualified" and receiving a visa interview appointment. NVC schedules interviews on a monthly basis. We receive each embassy's list of available appointment dates and times, and we fill them in the order that cases became documentarily qualified, as long as there is an available visa number. (There is a maximum number of visas the U.S. can approve each year in some visa categories, so there may be a delay between completing your application and being eligible for an interview if you are in one of these categories.)

Since we work only one month at a time, we cannot predict when a case will be scheduled. We suggest waiting at least 90 days from notice that your case is documentarily qualified before calling.

When you receive an appointment letter from NVC, it will provide the date and time of your visa interview at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas. It will also direct you to our website at [nvc.state.gov/interview](http://nvc.state.gov/interview) (English) or [nvc.state.gov/interview/espanol](http://nvc.state.gov/interview/espanol) (Spanish) for important interview instructions. Prior to your visa interview, you will need to:

- Schedule and complete a medical examination with an embassy-approved doctor.
- Register with a courier service (not always required).

## HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH WITH NVC?

You can call NVC's Customer Assistance Center at 1-603-334-0700. Customer service representatives are available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to midnight (Eastern Time).

You can also contact us online using our public inquiry form at [nvc.state.gov/ask](http://nvc.state.gov/ask). You'll receive a response via e-mail. Whenever you contact us, please be ready to provide your case number, the name of the petitioner, and the name and date of birth of the visa applicant.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS?

- *Do not send original civil documents to NVC.* Submit photocopies of items such as birth or marriage certificates, passports, or naturalization certificates. Bring the originals to the visa interview.
- Submit all pages of the Affidavit of Support form, even if they are blank.
- Submit all documents to NVC in one package using the NVC-provided document cover sheet that contains a barcode. Sending multiple packages delays NVC's ability to review your documents.
- Bring original documents to your visa interview.

*Updated November 2016*