



THE STRAIGHT FACTS ON U.S. VISAS IN CHINA

Myth: The U.S. embassy and consulates in China refuse the majority of visa applications submitted by Chinese citizens.

Fact: Our consular sections in China issue visas to the vast majority of Chinese nationals who apply for visas to the United States. Ninety-one percent of B (business/tourist) visa applications from Chinese citizens were approved last year. China-wide, the four consulates (Guangzhou, Chengdu, Shenyang, and Shanghai) and the U.S. embassy in Beijing issued more than 1.65 million nonimmigrant visas in FY 2014, an increase of 20.5 percent over FY 2013.

Myths: Ten-year visa validity...

- **Is temporary and will go away soon, so it is best to apply now.**
- **Is more expensive than the old visas.**
- **Allows Chinese travelers to stay longer in the United States.**
- **Is harder to qualify for than the old visas.**

Fact: The ten-year visa is here to stay. There is no need to hurry to get one. Even after the validity increase, we still have the same fees, the same qualification standards, the same duration of stay in the United States, and the same Interview Waiver Program.

Myth: The U.S. government does not care about business travelers and does not understand how important these travelers are to the U.S. economy.

Fact: The U.S. government welcomes Chinese travelers and continues to improve the process of applying for a visa. We endeavor to protect the U.S. border while facilitating the travel of legitimate visitors. Increased travel strengthens our people-to-people ties and enhances both our economies.

U.S. embassies and consulates have established procedures to expedite interview appointments for business travelers. U.S. officials work closely with business groups in more than 100 countries, including China, to streamline the visa process for business travelers. The Department's

Business Visa Center can explain visa application procedures to U.S. companies, organizations, and convention and sporting event organizers who invite employees, current and prospective business clients, partners, or athletic teams to the United States. U.S. businesses and organizations may contact businessvisa@state.gov, or call 202-485-7675 for more information.

Myth: The U.S. visa process discourages Chinese citizens from visiting the United States.

Fact: From FY 2006 to FY 2014, the number of nonimmigrant visas issued to Chinese nationals increased more than 462 percent. With Chinese citizens traveling to the United States at an unprecedented rate, our consular sections are successfully meeting this elevated demand, as the average wait times for interview appointments are around a week.



Myth: The United States has a limit on the number of Chinese students studying in the United States.

Fact: There are no limits on the number of students from China or any other country. We do not discriminate against potential foreign students based on their nationality. We welcome *all* qualified students. There are more students from China in the United States than from any other country in the world. Worldwide, the number of student visas issued to Chinese nationals increased by nearly 10.7 percent, from approximately 274,350 in FY 2013 to nearly 303,700 in FY 2014. Our consular sections in China issued almost 298,000 student and exchange visitor visas to Chinese applicants in FY2014, almost an 11 percent increase over the previous fiscal year.

Mission China prioritizes student visa appointments during the peak season and has recently launched a first-of-its-kind free Virtual Advisor Mobile App to assist Chinese students in applying for U.S. schools and student visas.

Myth: An applicant needs to know someone in the embassy or consulate to get a visa.

Fact: An applicant's qualifications – as presented in the visa application and at the visa interview – and U.S. law are the only bases on which we make visa decisions. U.S. law prohibits embassy and consulate officials from providing unofficial assistance to visa applicants.

Knowing someone in the embassy or consulate will not help you get a visa.

Myth: Understanding the visa application process is extremely difficult.

Fact: We strive to clearly explain the visa application process for visa applicants in China. We created a Chinese-language website to better share information (<http://chinese.usembassy-china.org.cn/visas.html>). Applicants can also find phone numbers to our Visa Information Call Centers in China at http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/contact_us.html. The U.S. government works to ensure the visa process is as open and transparent as possible. Some who claim to be “visa facilitators” profit by making the process appear more complicated than it really is.

Myth: The U.S. embassy or consulate will only give visas to rich people.

Fact: Consular officers are trained to look at all of the facts presented during a visa interview, not just an individual's financial status, when determining eligibility. While conducting visa interviews, consular officers look at each application individually and consider the applicant's circumstances, travel plans, financial resources, and ties outside of the United States that will ensure the applicant's departure after a temporary visit.

Myth: The applicant was refused because the consular officer did not properly look at the applicant's documents and the interview was too short.

Fact: Document review and interview length are less important than the information shared by applicants with consular officers. Officers rely more on the application form and their interviews with applicants than on the documents. Officers aim to conduct efficient interviews, directly focusing on the pertinent issues. Generally, longer interviews are conducted only when necessary. Quicker interviews also allow consular sections to receive more interviewees in a timely manner.

Myth: The wait time for an appointment is always a few months long.

Fact: Presently, most of our consular sections in China have a wait time for an appointment of less than two weeks. We provide an efficient application process that both protects United States security and facilitates legitimate travel. We are using creative and innovative methods to meet growing demand and expanding our capacity to keep wait times low. Every U.S. embassy and consulate worldwide provides mechanisms to expedite appointments for applicants for emergency medical, humanitarian, business, and student travel.

