



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES  
**TIRANA • ALBANIA**

## DIVERSITY VISAS

[Required Documents for Diversity Visa Applicants]

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### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Once you've been contacted by the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) with an interview date, you must gather the documents listed below, [register your appointment](#), and send your documents approximately two weeks prior to your interview date to the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tirana via express courier.

**Notice:** You should make every effort to ensure that the documents arrive to our office at least two to three weeks ahead of your interview date (including **original high school diploma**, and college diploma, *if applicable*). If you have not yet received the Affidavit of Support and taxes from the U.S. sponsor, you may bring them together with the medical examination envelope on the date of your appointment. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in not having your interview on the scheduled day. In such a case, you will *only* be able to schedule a new interview date *after* having submitted all of the required documentation (*provided that a visa number is available.*)

Availability of Diversity Visas (DV) is subject to numerical limitations. Selected applicants who wish to receive visas must be prepared to act promptly on their cases by submitting ALL required documents on date of their scheduled visa interview. If a DV applicant is not issued a visa in the month in which he or she is scheduled for the interview, visa availability is not guaranteed. Applicants who request rescheduling of their DV appointments to a later month seriously risk losing their chance for a visa. Also, applicants who arrive at their interviews without all required documents and forms, and who submit the missing items in a later month, may find that a visa number is no longer be available. DV visa numbers for some regions and countries could be exhausted *before* the DV-2016 program year ends on September 30, 2016. Applicants who request rescheduling of their DV appointments to a later month risk losing their chance for a visa. Also, applicants who arrive to their interviews **without all the required documents and forms**, and who submit all the missing documents in a later month, may find that a visa number is no longer available.

### Required Documents for each visa applicant:

**This instruction package:**

Check with an (X) the respective box for each document that you will submit.

**HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA:**

Only for the principal applicant (the DV selectee):

- High School Diploma and a legible photocopy of it; and
- College Diploma and photocopy (if applicable)

Applicants who graduated from a high school in Albania must have their high school diploma authenticated first by the Regional Education Directorate, then by the Ministry of Education and Science and lastly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania. Do not translate it into English.

Applicants who graduated from a high school abroad must authenticate their high

school diploma as required by the respective country of issuance, translate it into English and notarize it.

Applicants who graduated from a high school in Greece or who were born in Greece must carefully read section '[Documents issued by Greek Authorities](#)' regarding the specific procedures on apostille and translation of documents.

For information on which high school education qualifies for the DV program, please read the DV brochure in "[More Information](#)" section of our website "[Diversity Visas](#)."

**TRANSLATION:**  
You are not required to translate documents issued by the Albanian authorities, except for court decisions. Certified English translations must accompany all documents that are not in Albanian or in English. Translations must be certified by a competent translator and sworn before a Notary Public.

**BIRTH CERTIFICATE** (*for each visa applicant*):  
One original birth certificate for each applicant. It should read Certificate of Birth, not Personal Certificate (e.g., the certificate translated in six languages for use abroad reads "Certificate of Birth – Certifikatë Lindjeje). Birth certificates must be issued by the government of the country where the applicant was born. Albanian birth certificates for applicants **not** born in Albania will not be accepted. The birth certificate must bear all the names used. If you were born in Greece, please read section '[Documents issued by Greek Authorities](#)' regarding specific procedures on apostille and translation.

**MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE** (*for each visa applicant*):  
One original Marriage Certificate for each visa applicant (if applicable). For female applicants, it must also show your maiden name.

**DIVORCE DECREE OR DEATH CERTIFICATE:**  
If previously married, please include proof of termination of that marriage whether by death or divorce (e.g., death certificate of previous spouse, translated final decree of divorce, etc.)

**JUDICIAL STATUS CERTIFICATE BY THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE:**  
Each applicant, aged 16 years or older, must apply for the judicial status certificate (in Albanian - Dëshmi Penaliteti) at the Albanian Post Office. Answer "U.S. Embassy" to the question "Institution requesting the certificate" of the application form for the judicial status certificate. Apply in current and in any former names, including **maiden names**.  
The Ministry of Justice certificates for U.S. visa applicants for are transmitted to the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tirana directly by the Ministry of Justice. U.S. Embassy Tirana will only accept certificates that are received by us directly from the Ministry of Justice. Applicants may not present their own certificates to U.S. Embassy Tirana. In order to certify that you've applied for the Ministry of Justice certificate, please submit a copy of the receipt of payment for the criminal record, which you received from the Albanian Post Office. Note: Applicants are often refused for not submitting the certificate in **all names/surnames used**.

NOTE: Persons convicted of a crime must obtain court records from district courts, even if the visa applicant has been pardoned or granted amnesty, or the criminal conviction has been expunged. These documents must be translated into English and notarized.

**POLICE RECORDS FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY:**  
A translated and notarized Police Record from a foreign country for applicants aged 16 or older, if the applicant is currently residing in that country for more than six months, or if the applicant has previously lived in that country for more than one year, in current and in any former names, including maiden names. For further information, please read the Police Certificates title of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs web page "[Documents the Applicant Must Submit to the NVC](#)."

**Greek Police certificates:** Read section '[Documents Issued by Greek Authorities](#)' for detailed information.

Please note that applicants are often refused under INA 221(g), because they fail to submit the certificate(s) in all the names/last names they've used.

**REGISTER YOUR IMMIGRANT VISA APPOINTMENT AND DHL BRANCH:**

Each visa applicant, regardless of age, must create an account at <https://ais.usvisa-info.com/en-al/iv>, select "Register", and then select "I have received a Consular interview appointment date from the National Visa Center (NVC), Kentucky Consular Center (KCC), or the Consular Section and I have been instructed to register my appointment on this site". Continue selecting from the drop-down menu "I need to register an Immigrant Visa appointment". Fill out the data, and your case number\*, and then choose the DHL branch where you would like your passport returned upon completion of your case, and/or any submitted documents if requested by the Consular Officer. Select "Continue" and then "Complete Registration". Print out the "Instructions" page and send it along with all other documents to the Consular Section. No visa can be issued without a DHL registration.

\*If during your registration you receive a message: "The Immigrant Visa case number provided is not ready to schedule an appointment", please allow a few more days until your case number is loaded in the website. This usually happens because you received the appointment letter before your electronic file is sent to the Consular Section. You must try to register again in the next days, but make sure to be registered before your interview date.

**PHOTOS:**

Regardless of age, all U.S. Immigrant Visa applicants must present two color photographs, approximately 5 X 5 cm in size, taken in front of a plain white or off-white background. The photo must be taken in full-face view directly facing the camera, with the head centered in the frame. Photos must not be digitally enhanced or altered to change your appearance in any way. For more details please visit the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs web page "[Photograph Requirements](#)." If the requirements are not met, the photo will not be accepted. The photo should be taken within the last six months.

**MILITARY RECORDS:**

All **male** applicants aged 18 and over, regardless of whether they have served or not in the military service, including all female applicants with prior military service must apply Albanian Post office for the military record.

**OTHER CIVIL DOCUMENTS:**

1. Decisions issued by the responsible state authority regarding any name changes, age amendments, adoption and similar subjects must also be submitted at the time of interview.
2. Birth certificate from a foreign country (if not born in Albania), with apostille, translated and notarized. For individuals born in Greece, see '[Documents Issued by Greek Authorities](#)' for detailed information.

**PHOTOCOPY OF PASSPORT:**

Each applicant, regardless of age, must provide a photocopy of their valid passport. It must be valid for at least one year beyond the issuance date of the visa. You must present your passport on the day of your interview. Passport must bear your most recent name (*for example recently married applicants*).

**DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY GREEK AUTHORITIES:**

- Greek school diplomas, birth certificates and court decisions:** you must obtain the apostille, and then have it translated into English by the Translation Services of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Please visit [the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) website for more information and contact information.
- Greek Police certificates:** Non-Greek applicants visiting or residing in Greece and foreign-born Greek applicants should apply in person to the Bureau of Penal

Records for Foreigners (Ipiresia Pinikou Mitroou allodapon), Mesogion 96, 101 79 Athens, Greece, tel. 210776-7300, 210776-7185, 210776-7186, & 210776-7043. The certificate must be apostilled in Greece, and be translated into English by the Translation Services of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Please visit [the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) website for more information and contact information. Do not contact the Greek Embassy in Tirana regarding the police certificates.

**EVIDENCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT BY A U.S. SPONSOR:**

- An original, signed [Form I-134](#) - Affidavit of Support (not a photocopy, or an emailed copy). Note: Item no. 11 of the form must be filled in as: "*I intend to make specific contributions...*",
- If the sponsor is married, his or her spouse must also present a separate signed Form I-134, accompanied by a photocopy of his or her U.S. passport, naturalization certificate, or legal permanent resident card,
- A photocopy of sponsor's U.S. passport, naturalization certificate, or legal permanent resident card,
- A recently issued job letter, that includes information on length of employment and salary,
- Tax returns for the last year (Form 1040), or an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) [tax return transcript](#) (even if the sponsor filed taxes electronically). To request IRS-generated transcripts or copies of a tax return, please visit the [IRS](#) website. This document must be less than 12 months old when presented on the day of the interview.
- Most recent tax year W-2s for all the jobs held,
- Sponsor's income must meet the requirements of **125 percent of the Poverty Guidelines**, established yearly by the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#) otherwise you will be required to find another sponsor.

**MEDICAL EXAMINATION:** Each visa applicant, regardless of age, is required to undergo medical examination by the authorized panel physicians of the U.S. Embassy. Before your medical appointment you must print out the [medical examination form](#), read it carefully, complete it, and submit it to one of the panel physicians on the date of your medical appointment along with your appointment letter. The applicant is also responsible for the cost of the examination. Copy your case number and provide it to the panel physician.

**Do not bring the chest X-ray CD to the Embassy.** Please read section "After you have Received the Passport and the Visa Packet" below regarding X-rays.

You can download the Medical Examination form by visiting the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs web page "[Interview Preparation - Medical Examination](#)." Search for TIA -Tirana and download the medical examination form.

**Note: The validity of your visa will be limited to the validity of your medical report.** Medical reports classified as "Class B (TB)" are valid for 3 months from the date on which the doctor signed the report. All other medical reports classified as "No apparent disease or defect" are valid for 6 months after the date on which the doctor signed the report. If your case is subject to further administrative processing, or if the processing of your file is delayed due to missing documents, the medical report may expire before your visa is issued. In that case, you will be required to renew the examination and submit an updated medical report to the Consular Section before you receive your visa. In that case, you will be required to renew the examination and submit an updated medical report to the Consular Section before you receive your visa.

**EVIDENCE OF RELATIONSHIP** (*for recently married couples only*):

Evidence of relationship to petitioner, such as photographs, correspondence, or phone calls, which should clearly show the visa applicants; or other evidence of relationship over time. Do NOT send USBs or DVDs as it will be destroyed.

**DOCUMENT EXPIRATION:**

All documents must have been issued within one year from the interview date. Otherwise, your case will be refused until we receive all the renewed documents. Medical examination usually expires six months after you signed the medical form (three months for certain cases with TB findings, etc).

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## Processing Of Immigrant Visas

Your interview date will be scheduled by the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC). You will be notified of your interview date by entering your unique confirmation number at the Entrant Status Check available at [www.dvlottery.state.gov/ESC](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov/ESC). Only after your DV entry has been selected and you respond to the notification instructions made available to you via Entry Status Check, may the processing on your DV case begin. You may receive follow-up e-mail communication from the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) informing you to review Entry Status Check for new information about your application. Avoid becoming a victim of fraudulent e-mails requesting payments. KCC will not ask you to send money to them, to this Embassy or to any other U.S. Embassy by mail or by other services such as Western Union. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://go.usa.gov/BAmx>.

### Before The Interview

**THE VISA APPLICANT SHOULD READ** [The Information on the Legal Rights Available to Immigrant Victims of Domestic Violence in the United States and Facts about Immigrating on a Marriage-Based Visa](#).

**SECURITY INFORMATION:** The following items are not permitted in the Consular Section: firearms and weapons of any kind, cell phones, iPods, photo or video cameras, electronics such as radios, portable CD players or other equipment, including computers. Please do not bring any type of electronic equipment. Please do not bring large or bulky bags to the Consular Section, as there is no storage space for them. There is no parking available at the Embassy for visa applicants. We recommend that you don't bring any unnecessary items with you in your bag on the day of the interview as this may delay your security prescreening.

### Interview

**APPLICATION FEE:** You are required to pay the application fee at the time of your interview at the cashier of the Consular Section. The payment can be made in **cash only** at the Consular Cashier, either in U.S. Dollars or in Albanian Lekë.

Effective April 13, 2012, the fee for the Diversity Visa is \$330.00 per person (or, the equivalent in Lekë). Since the fees are subject to change, please visit the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs web page "[Fees for Visa Services](#)" for the most up-to-date information on visa fees.

You can view the status of your visa case at: <https://ceac.state.gov/CEAC/>. To monitor the status of your case, all you need is your case number and the location of your visa interview.

### After the Interview

After your personal interview with the Consular Officer, provided that your file is documentarily complete and you are found qualified for the visa, your visa will be issued and sent together with the visa packet via DHL courier service to the DHL branch you chose when registering for DHL courier service. DHL will notify you by e-mail when you may go to their office to pick up your passport. Important: Please **do not open the brown envelope containing the visa** packet.

*Note:* If you haven't received your visa within 15 business days from the date when your passport has been delivered to us for visa issuance, you need to contact our office at [TiranaUSConsulate@state.gov](mailto:TiranaUSConsulate@state.gov)

Some visa applications may require: a) additional documents, or b) further [administrative processing](#).

- a) When additional documents are requested, the Consular Officer will provide you with a refusal letter which lists all the missing documents. Only the marked off items from the list apply in your case. Please note that the Consular Officer may use the Albanian language to explain the documents required by the applicant, and English language to explain the documents required by the sponsor. Therefore, you may have to send a copy of the refusal letter by fax or email to the sponsor. It is strongly recommended that you send all the requested documents at once; otherwise, the processing of your case may take more time.
- b) A further administrative processing takes additional time after the visa applicant's interview by a Consular Officer. Applicants are advised of this requirement when they apply. Most administrative processing is resolved within 60 days of the visa interview. When administrative processing is required, the timing will vary based on individual circumstances of each case. Before making inquiries about the status of administrative processing, applicants or their representatives will need to wait for at least 60 days from the date of the

visa interview or from the date of submission of supplemental documents, whichever the latest.

### **In Rare Cases, When You Could not Receive Notification from KCC**

Starting with DV-2016 DV Program, in addition to the forementioned documents, [Form DS-260](#), Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration, is a required form for each visa applicant and it must be fully completed. You may not leave any questions blank or unanswered on the application forms. Questions that do not apply to the applicant's particular situation should be answered as "Does Not Apply". This form can be downloaded through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs web page "[Visa Application Forms](#)."

### **Most Important**

No assurance can be given in advance that a visa will be issued. A consular officer can make a decision only after reviewing the formal application with all the documents, and after conducting a personal interview with the applicant.

Visa applicants should not make any travel arrangements for departure, dispose of personal property or make other life changes until you have received the passport with visa. This office will make every effort to expedite the visa processing. However you must be aware that there may be complications with the processing of your visa case as applicants may be required to return to this office or to furnish additional information.

September 30 of each fiscal year is the last date a visa can be issued for DV applicants. Because of the limited number of DV visas that may be issued under the program, visas may cease to be available even before this date. This is especially true the closer the visa application date is to September 30.

### **Visa Approval - When You Receive Your Visa**

**Passport with Visa** – Your immigrant visa will be placed on a page in your passport. Please review the printed information right away to make sure there are no errors. If there are any spelling errors, contact the Consular Section promptly via e-mail at [TiranaUSConsulate@state.gov](mailto:TiranaUSConsulate@state.gov) with detailed information regarding the error.

**Sealed Immigrant Packet** - You will also receive a sealed packet containing documents that you must present to U.S. Customs and Border Protection at a port-of-entry (often an airport) upon your arrival in the United States. You must not open the sealed packet; it must be hand-carried. **CD of X-rays** – Must be hand-carried with you, not packed in your luggage.

**USCIS Immigrant Fee** - Effective February 1, 2013, all individuals who are issued immigrant visas overseas **must pay a \$165.00 USCIS Immigrant Fee *prior to traveling to the United States***. Only child(ren) is/are entering the United States under the Hague Process, returning residents, and those issued K visas are exempt from the fee. You will receive instructions on how to pay the fee once the visa is issued. If you have additional questions, [the USCIS website](#) has more details on the new fee, including contact information for USCIS. **Important Notice:** USCIS will not issue a Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551 or Green Card) until you have paid the fee.

**When You Should Travel** - You must arrive and apply for admission in the United States no later than the visa expiration date printed on your visa; failure to do so will result in the loss of your immigrant status. An immigrant visa is usually valid for up to six months from the date of issuance unless your medical examination expires sooner, which may make your visa valid for less than six months. Do not travel outside of USA until you receive your Permanent Resident Card. Your visa cannot be extended beyond its expiration date, and all visa fees paid are nonrefundable. If, for any reason, you could not use your visa, you must return it to the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tirana. Another visa may be issued if you are able to prove that you did not travel to the U.S. for reasons beyond your control.

**Entering the United States:** When traveling to the United States, the primary (or principal) applicant must enter **before or at the same time** as family members with visas. Any derivative member of the principal applicant can not travel to the U.S. for the first time before principal applicant. He or she must be accompanied by the principal applicant, or may travel at a later time from the principal applicant, but before visa expiration. Children, who turn 21 years old after visa issuance, must travel to the United States before they turn 21 years old; otherwise they will lose their immigrant status. With your immigrant visa (before it expires), and sealed packet, you will travel to a U.S. port-of-entry (often an airport) and request permission to enter the United States.

**Form I-551**, Permanent Resident Card, also known as a Green Card, will be mailed to the address in the United States that is written in your application forms. This is a very important document, which will serve as proof that you have permission for permanent residency and gives you the

opportunity to stay and enter the USA without a visa. See paragraph "[For New Immigrants: Welcome to the United States](#)" below for more information.

**Vaccination Records** - Children are required to have certain vaccinations before they can enroll in school in the United States. Therefore, it is recommended that your child have complete vaccination records before immigrating (the vaccination copy panel physician provided you). Learn about vaccination requirements by state on the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website under [State Vaccination Requirements](#).

**For New Immigrants: Welcome to the United States**

For a guide concerning new immigrants to the United States, please visit the USCIS web page "[Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants](#)" and [Welcome To USA website](#).

After being issued the Permanent Resident Card, you should not stay outside of U.S. for more than one year, otherwise you will be considered to have lost your status of Legal Permanent Resident. For more information on the rights and responsibilities of Legal Permanent Residents, please visit the USCIS website, [Maintaining Permanent Residence](#) and USCIS pamphlets "[I am a Permanent Resident. How Do I... Know What My Responsibilities Are?](#)" (PDF 1.19 KB), and "[How Do I Get a Reentry Permit](#)" (PDF 1.18 KB).

Should you have any questions regarding your Permanent Resident Card, or if you did not receive your card within a certain time, please contact the [USCIS office](#) in the state where you are residing.



**W A R N I N G**

**VISA FRAUD IS A SERIOUS OFFENSE. ATTEMPTS TO MISREPRESENT A MATERIAL FACT OR MISLEAD A CONSULAR OFFICER MAY JEOPARDIZE CURRENT AND FUTURE VISA APPLICATIONS.**

**CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify that I have read the above instructions and that I have all the listed documents applicable to my case and that I have submitted it via DHL along with this instruction's checklist.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant, or Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Applicant, or Parent)