

## L-1 BLANKET VISA APPLICATION Initiation Checklist & Appointment Booking Procedures

L-1 blanket classification allows managers, executives, and specialized knowledge professionals who have worked for a company related to a U.S. employer (parent, subsidiary or an affiliate included in the company's Blanket petition approval) outside the United States for at least one year in the past 3 years to enter the United States to work for the U.S. employer in a similar managerial, executive or specialized knowledge capacity. L-1 status is granted initially for up to 3 years, and may be extended for a total of 7 years for managers and executives (L-1A), or a total of 5 years for specialized knowledge professionals (L-1B). Spouses and children under the age of 21 may accompany L-1 visa holders with L-2 dependent visas. Spouses may also apply for work authorization once in the United States.

The following guidelines provide general information on the process of applying for an L-1 blanket visa.<sup>1</sup> We recommend reading through the guidelines in their entirety before beginning the application process. The guidelines also apply to your spouse and children who will accompany you to the United States in L-2 dependent status.

Please note that the different embassies and consulates around the world have different visa application procedures, and these procedures change frequently. We therefore recommend that you consult the specific U.S. consulate or embassy's website for the most up-to-date information on its procedures before booking an appointment. A directory of all U.S. embassies and consulates may be found online at: <http://usembassy.gov>. Once you find the appropriate consulate's or embassy's homepage, you should navigate to the "Nonimmigrant Visa" page which should provide the necessary information.

We generally recommend that you apply for your visa in your home country. In some situations, it may be possible to apply in a different country where you will be working or have a planned business trip. For example, if you are already working in the United States, appointments may also be booked in Canada. Note, however, that applying in Canada typically requires several weeks of advance planning and more flexibility as to available appointment dates.

Please also note that if you will be applying for your visa in a country other than your country of nationality or residence ("third country national" or "TCN" visa applications), you may be required to apply for a visa to enter that country. You will also be required to present evidence of your legal stay or entry in that country when applying for the L-1 blanket visa. U.S. consular posts also have discretion not to adjudicate TCN applications or may impose special requirements or longer wait times on such applications. Please check with our office for policies at specific embassies or consular posts.

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<sup>1</sup> This memo is intended for clients of Goeschl Law Corporation and is for informational purposes only. While we hope that this information is helpful as general background information, we cannot warrant its applicability, accuracy, or completeness, given the many intricacies of specific factual circumstances and scenarios and the frequent changes to immigration policy and procedures. Please also note that this memo does not cover procedures for any other visa classifications.

### PREPARING THE L-1 BLANKET VISA APPLICATION

You will be asked by a representative from our firm, or the company's Immigration Coordinator or Human Resources representative, to provide information and documentation necessary to prepare the L-1 visa application on your behalf. This information and documentation will depend on the specifics of your case, but in most cases, will include:

- **Copy of Passport Biographic Page.** Please also provide copies of the passport biographic pages for each family member who will be accompanying you;
- **Resume or C.V.** This should be up-to-date and detail all of your work experience with the company, as well as your educational background and other work experience. Please clearly indicate the full name of the employer entities in your resume or C.V.;
- **Copies of Post-Secondary Degrees and Transcripts** (if applicable);
- **Organizational Chart(s).** These should show your current position and reporting lines, including subordinates;
- **Employment History with the Company(ies) Related to the U.S. Employer.** Please provide salary information and exact dates (in mm/dd/yyyy format) for each position you have held at the company/companies within the past three years (e.g. "Software Engineer, 12/01/2013 – 03/31/2017"). If exact dates are not available, please provide the best estimate.
- **Prior Periods of Stay in the United States.** Please provide dates of all prior periods of U.S. stay in a work authorized capacity, as well as the type of visa (e.g. H-1B, L-1, E-3, J-1); and
- **Residence Address in Your Home Country and City/State/Province of Birth.**

Once we confirm we have received all the necessary materials from you, we will arrange a phone call at that time to go over the visa application process.

### COMPLETING THE FORM DS-160 VISA APPLICATION

Each visa applicant (including each accompanying family member) must complete a Form DS-160 *before* booking a visa appointment. Completing a Form DS-160 is done online at the U.S. Department of State ("DOS") website at <https://ceac.state.gov/genniv/>. You will upload a digital photo as part of the electronic-filing ("e-filing") process. Photo specifications are standard, face-forward passport photos.<sup>2</sup> (Note: If you are applying at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Mexico, you are not required to upload a digital photograph.) You will need to make at least one attempt to upload a photo to generate the barcode required for appointment booking. Note that characters such as ñ, é, ü, ç are not recognized by the system.

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<sup>2</sup> See the Department of State's website for complete specifications at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html#nonimmigrant>

Answers to some of the questions are noted on the next page.

**Are you the principal applicant?**

The answer is **"Yes."** For your family members, the answer is **"No."**

**U.S. Address**

If you do not already have a residence in the United States, please indicate "in care of" the employer name and address where you will work.

**Purpose of Trip to the United States**

Select **"INTRA-COMPANY TRANSFEREE (L)."** There will be an additional drop-down menu to specify whether you are applying as the principal alien (L-1) or a dependent (L-2) spouse or child.

**Intended Length of Stay in the United States**

The answer is **"3 years."**

**Do you have an application receipt/petition number?**

The answer is **"Yes."**

**Petitioner Name**

**TO BE PROVIDED**

**Petitioner Number**

**TO BE PROVIDED**

For more information on completing the Form DS-160 Visa Application, please contact our office or visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/forms/ds-160-online-nonimmigrant-visa-application/ds-160-faqs.html>.

Upon e-filing, a Barcode Number will be generated. Please save and print your DS-160 confirmation page (you will bring this to your visa appointment). We also advise that you save a copy of the Form DS-160 application in its entirety for your records.

**BOOKING A VISA APPOINTMENT**

Once you have e-filed your DS-160 visa application, you may book your visa appointment with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will apply for a visa. There are nearly 300 U.S. embassies and consular posts around the world and most of them have different visa appointment booking procedures. You will therefore need to refer to the specific post's website for its latest instructions. Please also feel free to contact our office if you have questions. In most cases, you will have to call an "appointment call center" and pay an appointment booking fee using a credit card to book the appointment. Please note that not all U.S. embassies and consulates handle visa applications. The embassy or consulate's website will indicate whether it does so or not.

**Important Note:** You will need to take the original signed L-1 blanket certificate of eligibility (I-129S), L-1 blanket approval notice, and other supporting documentation to your visa interview. **For this reason, please do not book your appointment until you have submitted all of the requested information to prepare these application materials to your company's Immigration Coordinator, and you have been notified by the Coordinator or our office that you may go ahead and book an appointment. Please also notify the Coordinator and our office the date of your visa appointment as soon as you have booked it.**

When booking your visa appointment, you will generally need a major credit card and the following information ready:

[Type of Visa Application](#)

The answer is **"L-1 blanket visa."** For your family members, the answer is **"L-2 blanket visa."**

[Petition Number](#)

**TO BE PROVIDED**

[Petition Validity Dates](#)

**TO BE PROVIDED**

[Passport Details](#)

You must also provide details for any accompanying family members.

[Form DS-160 Barcode Number \(for all applicants\)](#)

If you edit your DS-160 after booking your visa appointment, a new Barcode Number may be generated. If so, you will need to call back the appointment service and have them update your records with your new barcode. Alternatively, you may bring the DS-160 Confirmation Sheet showing the barcode number used when booking your appointment on the day of your interview, and show it to the Embassy guard. At the time of your actual interview, you will need to submit your latest DS-160 Confirmation Sheet.

[National Identification Number \(if applicable\)](#)

The time required to wait for a visa appointment ranges from a few days to several weeks, depending on the time of year and the specific embassy or consular post. The DOS publishes wait time estimates for posts on its website at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/wait-times.html>. Please note that these estimates are sometimes very inaccurate and should not be relied on for planning purposes. For some consulates and embassies, appointments must be scheduled several weeks prior to your desired interview date. You should therefore book an appointment as far in advance as possible.

**PAYMENT OF VISA FEES**

As with appointment booking procedures, U.S. embassies and consulates have different procedures for paying the \$190 USD MRV (Machine Readable Visa) fee. Please consult the specific post's website for the latest payment procedures. In most cases, the appointment call center will advise you of these procedures.

**Important Note:** Citizens of some countries will be required to pay an additional "reciprocity fee" on the date of the interview. You will be informed of this additional fee when booking an appointment.

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The L-1 blanket visa application package consists of two separate applications: (1) the I-129S "Certificate of Eligibility" application and accompanying letter of support which are signed by the U.S. employer's designated official; and (2) the DS-160 visa application which must be submitted online by you and each of your family members prior to the visa appointment. Goeschl Law Corporation will send to you the original signed I-129S Certificate of Eligibility, accompanying letter of support, the company's blanket L-1 approval notice (I-797), and a list of personal documents that you should bring to your appointment. This documentation will normally be sent sometime after you have booked your appointment and before your appointment date. The list of personal documentation required will differ depending on where you apply for a visa and the other specifics of your case. In general, the list will include:

- **Valid Passport.** Each applicant must bring a passport containing at least two blank pages and any expired passports with previous U.S. visa(s).

**Important Note:** The passport must have at least six months of validity.

- **Original or Certified Copy of Post-Secondary Degrees and Transcripts** (if applicable). Although not strictly required by most consulates and embassies, we recommend that you bring your *original* post-secondary degrees and transcripts, in case the consular officer wishes to see them.
- **Original or Certified Copy of Marriage and Children's Birth Certificates, if your dependents will be applying for visas with you.** Although not strictly required by most consulates and embassies, we recommend that you bring your *original* certificates, in case the consular officer wishes to see them. You must also provide a certified translation in English, if applicable.
- **Third Country National (TCN) Documents.** If you are applying as a TCN, you must bring evidence of your visa status in the country where you will be applying for your visa at the time of the interview.

### THE VISA INTERVIEW

You will be sent detailed visa appointment instructions specific to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you will be applying, along with the L-1 blanket visa application package that you must take with you to the appointment. You and your family members should arrive 30 minutes prior to the appointment, and bring all of the required documentation listed in the instructions included with the package we send you. Note that at some posts, children under the age of 14 are not required to go in person to the interview.

Visa interviews usually only last a few minutes, but you may be required to wait several hours before you meet with the consular official conducting the interview. You will likely be asked about your work experience with the company outside the United States and your job duties in the United States. Please ensure that your answers to these questions are consistent with the information provided in the certificate

of eligibility (I-129S) and company letter of support. If the information on the certificate or in the letter is incorrect, please notify Goeschl Law Corporation prior to the visa appointment. The consular officer will not likely ask you to show ties to your home country, or confirm that you will return to your home country after working in the United States, as this is not required for L-1 classification.

At the conclusion of the interview, the consular officer will either notify you that the visa application has been approved, denied, or that additional "administrative processing" is necessary (see below). If approved, you should receive your passport back with the issued visa and an endorsed copy of the certificate of eligibility within a few days. If "administrative processing" is required, or in the unlikely event that the consular official requests additional materials or denies the visa application, please notify the appropriate contact person at your company, or an attorney at our office right away.

#### **APPLICATION PROCESSING TIME AND "ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING"**

In most cases, your passport with the approved L-1 visa will be returned to you within 2-5 days of your appointment. In some cases, however, applications may take significantly longer depending on the applicant's background. As noted above, some applications are referred for "administrative processing" which can take several weeks or even months. Such processing is more likely for persons who are nationals of certain countries, have a certain kind of professional or political background, and/or have been previously arrested. **Please notify Goeschl Law Corporation if you or one of your family members have ever been arrested or have had previous immigration violations as soon as possible prior to making your visa appointment.** We will advise you if we believe that administrative process delays are likely in your case. However, the decision to refer an application for such processing is entirely within the discretion of the consular officer reviewing your application, so any application may be subject to such processing. Visa applications are also occasionally delayed by weather conditions and other unforeseeable circumstances. For these reasons, we recommend that you do not make non-refundable or non-changeable travel plans to the United States until your passport with the issued visa has been returned to you by the U.S. Consulate or Embassy.

Please contact our office if you need additional assistance with your L-1 blanket visa application.