



**ACE PILOT TRAINING, INC.**  
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## **M-1 VOCATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK & SUMMARY OF VISA REGULATIONS**

### **Contact Information of Your Designated School Official:**

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**Contact Information:** 610-264-1105

### **Welcome:**

Congratulations! You are almost ready to begin your course of study at Ace Pilot Training. Before you arrive in the United States, however, you will need to obtain an M-1 student visa. This visa is appropriate for students who will be engaged in non-academic or vocational study or training at a U.S. institution. Please use this handbook as a guide on how to apply for your M-1 visa, what to expect when you first arrive in the United States, as well as the regulations that govern your stay once you arrive in the United States on your M-1 visa.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is the system that will maintain your student information both before and during your stay in the United States. This database, administered by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), keeps track of all students and exchange visitors in the United States. You will need to

notify our office immediately when any of your current information changes so that we may update the SEVIS system accordingly.

Based on the information you provide in our initial student questionnaire, we complete the first step required for entering your student information into the SEVIS system which will result in the generation of your SEVIS Form I-20, which I will sign and send to you.

The first thing that you will need to do upon receiving the enclosed SEVIS Form I-20 is to print your name, sign, and write the current date in the appropriate location at the bottom of page one. Signing your Form I-20 makes the form valid for use, and if you neglect to sign it, you could run into problems upon entry into the U.S. If you have any dependents, you will also need to sign their Form I-20's at the bottom of page one to indicate that you are their sponsor.

### **Applying For Your Visa:**

As soon as you receive your SEVIS Form I-20 from our office, you should initiate the process of applying for the M-1 student visa as soon as possible. Visa processing times can vary depending on the course of study and nationality of the student and can change unexpectedly. In addition, interview appointments at most consulates or embassies may be difficult to schedule during the summer months so it is not advisable to wait until the last possible minute to apply. Included below is a list of documents that you will be required to bring with you to your visa interview. Please note that this list is NOT exhaustive and the required documents vary depending on the country you are applying from. In order to access the most current and accurate information regarding required documents and visa processing times, you must visit the website for the Embassy or Consulate at which you will have your visa interview. Visit [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov) to learn the specific application process for your country of residence.

All M-1 visa applicants must provide the following documents at their interview:

1. The SEVIS Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status for Vocational Students, signed by the Designated School Official and the student;
2. A completed and signed Application for Nonimmigrant Visa Applicant, Form DS-160. This form as well as more detailed instructions on how to complete can be found on the Department

of State website at the following link: <http://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/forms/> ;  
<http://ceac.state.gov/genniv>

3. Passport with a validity at least 6 months beyond applicant's intended entry into the United States;
4. One (1) 2inch X2inch photograph; and
5. A MRV fee receipt to show payment of the visa application fee (which is currently \$140 USD), a visa issuance fee if applicable, and a separate SEVIS I-901 fee receipt for the sum of \$200 USD. To obtain the SEVIS receipt, you must go to [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com) and follow the instructions for obtaining your I901 form, then pay the fee and print out the receipt.

All M-1 visa applicants should be prepared to provide the following documents (upon request):

1. Diplomas and transcripts for all previously attended schools; and
2. Documents evidencing your or your parents' ability to fund your academic stay in the U.S.

In addition, all M-1 visa applicants with dependents must provide the following documents:

1. Proof of relationship with dependent, including marriage or birth certificate; and
2. If the dependent applies for the M-2 visa separately, they must be able to provide the above proof of relationship along with a copy of the M-1 student's passport, visa and Form I-20.

Again, visa application requirements vary according to the country and can change at any time. Please use the above as a guide for recommended documents only. The best way to obtain up to date information regarding applying for your M-1 student visa is to visit your local U.S. Embassy or Consulate website and follow their current recommendations regarding the procedure and required documents for applying for the M-1 visa.

### **Obtaining TSA Clearance to Train:**

After you are approved for your M-1 Visa, you will need to obtain TSA Clearances for each rating you wish to obtain of the following: Private Pilot Certificate, Multiengine Rating (at any level), or Instrument Rating. In order to obtain your clearance, you must go to <https://www.flightschoolcandidates.gov/> and click "Create New Student Account". You should probably use the 'Application Guide' to help you. This document is very helpful in explaining the process in detail; however; if you need further explanations you can also visit [http://www.aopa.org/tsa\\_rule/alienft.html](http://www.aopa.org/tsa_rule/alienft.html) for more assistance. In order to get started, you will need to create

a login account on TSA's AFSP (Alien Flight Student Program) website. You will have to fill out the required information and then wait for us to receive the application and approve it. After that, you will need to pay the non-refundable processing fee of \$130. At the end of the process, TSA will email you instructions on being fingerprinted. At this point, stop the application process until you arrive in the United States. When you arrive in the United States we will have you fingerprinted to complete the process. Once TSA approves you, you are ready to begin your training!

Here is some information you may be asked in the process:

Category of training: Category 3

If there are any fields that you do not understand, and they are NOT required, do not fill it out.

### **What You Can Expect Upon Your Arrival in the United States:**

Once you receive your M-1 student visa, you may be admitted to the United States up to 30 days in advance but not later than the start date of the program of study indicated on the SEVIS Form I-20. You may be refused entry to the United States if you attempt to arrive earlier than that.

As you prepare for your trip to the United States, please be aware that you should NOT pack in your checked baggage any of the relevant documents that you will need to present at the port of entry when you arrive in the United States. These documents include a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of your entry; and your signed SEVIS Form I-20. It is also recommended by the U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency that you be able to provide, if requested, the following supplementary documents: evidence of financial resources; evidence of student status, such as tuition receipts (if applicable); a receipt for the SEVIS fee; and the name and 24-hour contact information of your Designated School Official.

During your flight to the United States or upon your arrival in the United States, you will be provided with a CF-6059 Customs Declaration Form and an I-94 Arrival Departure Record Form. The Form I-94 governs your stay in the United States and should be kept in your passport as an official record of your arrival.

You must be prepared to present to the Customs & Border Patrol Officer your passport, SEVIS Form I-20, Form I-94, and Form CF-6059. When you are asked to provide information about your final destination, you MUST inform the CBP Officer that you will be a student enrolling at Ace Pilot

Training, Inc. and be prepared to provide them with the school's address. Upon the successful completion of this inspection, the CBP Officer will determine the valid length of your stay on the I-94 Arrival Departure Record Form.

If for some reason, the CBP Officer feels that the requirements for admission have not been satisfied, they may issue an I-515A Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor Form, which will authorize your temporary stay. In this situation, you must notify our office immediately so that the proper documentation can be submitted as soon as possible.

### **Check-In Procedure For All M-1 Vocational Students:**

Once you arrive in the United States, you must bring your passport and SEVIS Form I-20 and report immediately to our office, which is authorized to verify and report your arrival into the SEVIS system. Failure to submit this report within 30 days of the date that appears on the SEVIS Form I-20 may result in serious consequences, including a loss of M-1 status.

### **Maintaining a Full Course of Study:**

For vocational students using the M-1 visa, the U.S. government requires that you be enrolled in a full course of study during the period of stay authorized on your Form I-20.

Our office may authorize a reduced course load in the event of medical illness. In this situation, you may enroll in less than the full time requirements for your course of study for a period of up to 5 months. If you wish to discuss reducing your course load, please contact our office so that we can authorize this change by submitting into the SEVIS system the date that the reduced course load is to begin, the reason that a reduced course load is required, and the start date of the next term.

### **Reporting Local or Permanent Address Changes:**

In order to maintain your M-1 status, you must notify our office within ten days of any changes in your local residential address in the U.S. or permanent residential address abroad. If there is a change in your local residential address in the U.S. or your permanent residential address abroad, please contact our office immediately so that we may provide you with the required forms and update your SEVIS record accordingly.

### **Travel While on Your M-1 Student Visa:**

If you wish to travel outside of the country while in M-1 status, upon your re-entry into the United States you will be required to present a valid and unexpired passport, valid M-1 visa stamp, and a travel authorization signature on your current unexpired Form I-20. In order to request a travel authorization signature for your current I-20, please visit our office at least two weeks in advance of your anticipated travel so that we can verify your academic standing and enrollment in order to issue the signature.

**Please be sure to bring your current I-20!**

Please note that if you are planning to travel to a country other than your home country, it is possible that you will be required to obtain a visitor's visa for your trip. Please be sure to visit the Consulate website for the country you will be traveling to in order to research their country specific regulations and visa requirements. If you are planning travel within the United States, it is recommended that you have your passport and I-20 with you at all times, but the travel authorization signature on your Form I-20 is not required.

### **Extending M-1 Status Beyond the End Date on Your Form I-20:**

As an M-1 student, you are only eligible to extend the duration of your M-1 visa if you have a compelling educational or medical reason that has resulted in your inability to complete the program of study in the period of time originally granted on the Form I-20. If you would like to extend your stay, a Form I-539 Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status must be submitted at least 15 days but no more than 60 days before the end date indicated on your Form I-20. Make an appointment with our office so that we may discuss your options for extending your M-1 visa, prepare the appropriate forms, and appropriately update your student record on the SEVIS system.

### **Transfer Students:**

If you are a transfer student to Ace Pilot Training, you must first speak with the Designated School Official at your current school in order for them to transfer your M-1 SEVIS record to Ace Pilot Training. Your current school will update your student record on the SEVIS system to indicate that you are a "transfer out" and will determine your "release date," which indicates the end date for the program in which you are currently enrolled. Once the "transfer out" has been processed, Ace Pilot Training can issue a new Form I-20, and once the "release date" of your prior program has passed, our office will be granted access to your SEVIS record and can update your enrollment appropriately. Although your M-1

status will be valid during the period of time between the two programs, you will not be able to travel abroad until your new I-20 under Ace Pilot Training's program has been issued.

If you are a student of Ace Pilot Training and wish to transfer to another U.S. institution, you may not do so more than 6 months after you have been admitted as an M-1 student at Ace Pilot Training unless the reasons for which you are unable to remain at Ace Pilot Training are beyond your control. If you meet the above requirements for transfer, please visit our office to discuss the requirements that you must meet in order to be eligible for a transfer, and we can complete the preliminary steps required to update your SEVIS record.

### **Employment Allowed on Your M-1 Visa:**

Upon the completion of your course of study, you may be eligible for a temporary period of up to six months of employment for the purposes of gaining practical training in a field related to your course of study. In order to apply for this Optional Practical Training, you must apply through our office before the end date of the course of study indicated on your Form I-20 but no more than 90 days in advance of that date. Please see our office as soon as you think this might be an option you would like to pursue so that we may discuss practical training employment options and submit the appropriate paperwork. If approved, our office will update the SEVIS system and issue you a new Form I-20 indicating that you have been authorized to participate in Optional Practical Training.

Please note that employment without USCIS authorization is illegal and will jeopardize your status in the United States!

### **Keep Your Passport Valid:**

As an M-1 student, you must ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months in the future at all times. If you need to renew your passport while in the United States, please contact your country's Embassy for information regarding how to renew your passport as well as locations of your country's Embassies or Consulates in the United States.

### **Grace Period Upon Program Completion:**

As an M-1 student, you are eligible for a 30 day grace period in order to prepare for your departure from the United States. You will only be eligible for this grace period if you have maintained a full course of

study during your stay on the M-1 visa and if you have otherwise maintained legal M-1 status. The 30 days begin on the end date of the program or on the end date of the Optional Practical Training indicated on your Employment Authorization Card. Please note that you CANNOT use this period of time for employment, further study, or departure and re-entry into the United States.

**Conclusion:**

If for some reason, you have violated any of the guidelines stated above, either intentionally or accidentally, please notify our office immediately. It is possible that you will be considered “out of status,” and steps should be taken in order to rectify the situation and make sure that your M-1 status is reinstated as soon as possible in order to avoid possible repercussions by USCIS.

In addition, should you have any other questions regarding any of the information above, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Again, congratulations, and we look forward to welcoming you to Ace Pilot Training.