H-1B Travel

Successful travel begins with planning ahead. Visit U.S. Department of State’s visa website to begin planning and consider the following:

Do you have the necessary documents? As an H-1B employee there are specific documents you should plan to take with you whenever you travel outside the United States, you will find a travel document checklist below. In addition, each US Consulate has unique requirements for visa applicants. See http://usembassy.state.gov/ for Consulate-specific information.

Is your US visa stamp valid? All international visitors who travel outside of the US must have a valid visa stamp (for their current non-immigrant status) in order to re-enter the US. If your visa will expire prior to re-entering the U.S., or if you have a single entry visa, then you must apply for a new visa while outside of the U.S. The only exception to this regulation is if you are traveling to Canada or Mexico for less than 30 days. See the reverse side of this sheet for other important considerations when applying for a new US visa stamp.

Is your passport valid? In most cases, passports must be valid at least 6 months beyond the date you plan to re-enter the U.S. If you need to renew your passport, contact your home country’s embassy in the U.S. and learn about the procedures and timeline for passport extensions.

Do you need a visa to enter the country you’re visiting? If you intend to visit a country other than your home country, contact the consulate or embassy for the country you intend to visit to inquire whether you will need a visa. Learn about the procedures and timeline for visa applications at the Embassies of Other Nations in the U.S. website.

Do you have enough time? Some US Consulates have backlogs for visa interview appointments. Office of International Services (OIS) recommends scheduling your visa interview as soon as possible to avoid having to wait for an interview appointment. US Consulates have instructions for booking interview appointments online.

Are you a citizen of the country where the consulate is located? Recent changes in visa issuance have led some countries to change their policies regarding issuing visas to Third Country Nationals.

Considering applying for a US visa stamp in Mexico or Canada? Learn more about that process on the U.S. Department of State’s website.

Security Clearances & Visa Delays: If you are in a sensitive field of research to U.S. national security, your visa stamping could be delayed by a background check, which cannot be expedited. Visit OIS’s visa delays webpage for more information.
Pre-Travel Checklist

Required documents

☐ Original I-797
☐ Photocopy of entire I-797
☐ Copy of entire I-129 petition (including Labor Condition Application)
☐ Valid passport
☐ I-94 arrival record

Recommended documents

☐ Short letter from employing department (see p. 3 for an easy-to-follow template)
☐ Two recent paystubs
☐ Copy of most recent CV
☐ Copies of a few of latest publications, if applicable

If you have dependents:

☐ Original H-4 Approval notice (If dependent changed status to H-4 from within the US)
☐ Proof of relationship to H-1B employee (marriage or birth certificate)
☐ Valid Passport

If your dependents will travel without you, they should also bring copies of all the H-1B documents listed above.
Example letter of for visa interview

Date

Address

To Whom It May Concern:

Paragraph #1:

- Scholar's name and job title
- Appointment dates
- Amount of OSU salary per annum
- Funding sources and amounts of any U.S. government to be used to support the research

Paragraph #2:

- In layman's terms, a detailed and non-technical description of the research to be conducted by the scholar, whether it is basic research or applied research. If the research has no military or defense-related purposes, say so.
- Goals of research and practical applications
- Any export controlled technology and/or information to be shared
- A detailed description of how the scholar's qualifications match the requirements of the position

Paragraph #3:

- The scholar is expected to return to OSU to continue his/her research. A timely return to campus is important to the research group. Please feel free to contact me (the faculty who writes the letter) for further assistance if needed.

Signature of sponsoring professor

Name and title of sponsoring professor

Oregon State University
http://international.oregonstate.edu