

<Date>.

Dear <as appropriate>,

Travel to USA – things to be done:

1. Visa Processing :

T.T. Services, a division of **T.T. Enterprises Pvt. Ltd.**, an associate Company of the **TTK Group**, provides services in the area of expediting of visa applications to the US Consulate in South India.

Now a days, the US consulate does not entertain anybody coming to the US Consulate for visa processing. All Visa applications must be submitted to T. T. Services, which is located at the following address :

Chennai - Head Office

Address :

10, Sriman Srinivasa Cross Road
Venus Colony
Alwarpet, Chennai
Tamil Nadu
India - 600 018

Phone : 91 44 435 8079, 8089, 7145

FAX : 91 44 435 9999, 7146

E-Mail : tts@md5.vsnl.net.in

Working Hours :

Monday through Friday : 7 AM to 3.00 PM

Enquiries by phone : 9.30 AM to 3.00 PM

Enquiries in person : 3.00 PM to 4.00 PM

Saturday : 9.30 AM to 3.00 PM

Documents required for Tourist Visa :

(a) Documents – Visitor

- **Non-immigration Visa Application Form OF-156 ***

I have completed the application form for you. We have heard that US consulate requires the application form to be of a specific size, although they allow everyone to download the forms from the internet and submit it for Visa processing. If there is a restriction whatsoever, you may want to get a Form OF-156 from <Your Travel Agent/ TT Services> and fill out the information as we have written.

I have enclosed completed Form OF-156 (application form - Original + Photocopy). You will have to affix a photograph on Side 2 of the form.

- Passport valid for travel to the United States and with a validity date of atleast six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the US.
- Two photographs taken within the last 6 months, color, plain background, front view - size 1 1/2"/1 1/2" or 37mm/ 37mm (photographs should be signed at the back)
- Visa application fee (demand draft for Rs. 2115/- payable to American Consulate General <city> - payable at <city>)
- Visa issuance fee (demand draft for Rs. 3525/- payable to American Consulate General <city> - payable at <city>)

Note :

Consular fees will be accepted by way of demand drafts issued by Nationalized and foreign banks only. Demand drafts from cooperative banks will no longer be accepted for consular fees.

Separate demand drafts are necessary for the application and issuance fees. Your name and passport number must be included on the reverse of the demand draft. Demand drafts without this information will not be accepted. The fees listed below are effective November 1, 2000.

TT Services, 10 Sriman Srinivasa Cross Road, Venus Colony, Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018 (telephone 435 7145) will return the passports of successful applicants by courier. The service fee of Rs150, payable by demand draft to "TT Services" at Chennai, will be collected when your application is processed.

- Proof of Property (House)
- Latest income tax returns (last 3 years)
- Bank Statements

Basically, anything to prove that you will definitely be coming back to India. The US consulate should feel convinced that you will not settle down in US, but will have to come back to India to take care of commitments at home.

PS : Please check up with <Your Travel Agent> to confirm if the above mentioned financial documents from applicant are required.

A separate application needs to be filed for each applicant.

Some important points :

- The prime criterion of issuance of a visitor visa is whether the applicant convinces the consular officer that the applicant truly intends to return to his/her home country after a temporary stay in the United States. It is impossible to specify the exact form such documentation should be as each applicant's circumstances vary greatly. Each applicant must keep in mind that the interview will focus on his or her credibility and not the documents presented.

Documents showing that they will return to the home country after their temporary stay in the United States. Thus their stay is temporary. For example, job proof, property proof, bank accounts, family ties etc.

- Proof of property (House). Take the original ownership papers.
- Latest income tax returns (last 3 years). Should take originals with them.

- Some bank balance for at least few months before going for visa. Please note that simple bank letters showing simply the bank balance is not acceptable. You have to also take past few months (say 3 months) statements with you, or the passbook.

These help to persuade the consular officer that the visitor has commitments back at home and will definitely return back to India.

(b) Sponsorship documents :

The following documents are required and have been sent to you (Original + photocopy) :

- **Invitation letter** – Letter from me informing the US consulate that I shall be taking care of all your expenses and requesting them to grant a Tourist Visa.
- **Affidavit of Support (Form I-134)** – 2 sheets, attested by a Notary Public to confirm that I can financially support you while you are in US.
- Copy of my latest **H1 Visa approval notice** (I-797 Notice of action)/**Green Card** – this is to prove that I am legally allowed to work in the US.
- **Employment letter** – from <Your company's name> to confirm my employment with them.
- **Bank Statements**
- **Pay stubs**
- **Form W-2 for the last two years**(this is something like a Form –16 in India)
- Copy of **my passport** (all pages).

Note : One set (Original + Copy) has been sent to you.

Other points :

Once you have all the documents ready, please go to TT Services and submit the application. Normally, a personal appearance is not needed. However, in some cases, you might be called for a personal interview.

Purpose of the trip : Visiting my <your relation with the person whom you are sponsoring>. If the US consulate asks for a return ticket, medical insurance etc, tell them that those things will be bought after the Visa is issued.

We shall discuss about this during our next phone call.

POST – VISA PROCESSING :

1. Tickets :

Once you receive your visa in hand, we can proceed to block your tickets.

2. Overseas Medical Policy / Medical Insurance :

Possibly, any travel agent should be able to help you out. Please take a policy that would be valid for 180 days.

GIC offers the overseas mediclaim policy called 'Videsh Yatra Mitra Policy'. Please note that GIC has four subsidiaries in India. They are called:

- National Insurance Company Ltd
- Oriental Insurance Company Ltd
- New India Assurance Company Ltd
- United India Insurance Company Ltd

You can take OMP from any of the four companies listed above.

I have downloaded the application form (Oriental Insurance) and filled it up. You can use this as a reference, as the original form needs to be filled up in triplicate.

Also I have enclosed the Premium tables issued by the insurance companies (I think it is a standard one for all the companies).

Just to summarize, these are the following documents that needs to be submitted for Visa processing:

- Passport
- Form OF-156, duly filled, signed and photo affixed
- Draft for Rs. 2115
- Draft for Rs. 3525
- Financial documents
- Sponsorship documents :
 - Invitation letter (sent by me)
 - Notarized Affidavit of Support
 - Copy of my H1 approval notice/Green Card
 - Employment letter
 - Bank Statements
 - Pay stubs
 - Form W2
 - Copy of my passport (all pages)

More over the phone,

With love
<Your Name>

PS : Please see pages 5 through 7 for tips on “Travel to USA”.

Additional information required for Travel to USA :

- **Checked-in Baggage**

Most airlines allow a total of three pieces of luggage free of charge for each ticketed passenger - one carry-on bag and two checked items.

They allow two big bags as checked in baggage.

Total linear dimensions (length+height+width) of each checked in baggage must not exceed 158 cm (62 inches) and weight of each bag must not exceed 32 kgs(70 pounds).

- **Hand-Baggage**

You can carry one piece per person. You should have all the important Visa documents you carried to embassy/consulate, because they might need them at immigration at the port of entry (arrival at first international airport) in USA. Also keep one set of clothing, and other necessary stuff like toothbrush etc in it.

Each passenger is allowed one piece of carry-on luggage plus a briefcase/lap top computer/purse. Medicine, keys, important papers and travel documents (passport) should be carried on board by the passenger.

Carry-on luggage must fit underneath the passenger seat or in an overhead compartment. Maximum carry-on dimension is 22" x 14" x 9" (carry-on must fit in carry-on sizing box located at check-in counters).

- **Check in**

Attach small sticker/tag to baggage indicating your final destination address. Your Check-in only bags (not hand baggage) will be screened under X-ray machine and they will put stamp on the baggage tag.

Go to your Airline counter. And show your **Passport, Tickets**. Tell them again about your food preference (Indian Vegetarian) and seating preference.

They will weigh your baggage. They will ask you two questions "Did you pack the bags yourself?(answer is yes). Did anyone give you anything to carry?(answers is no). Tell them that the baggage needs to be checked in upto the final destination. Counter person will give you Boarding Pass with Baggage Sticker and passport / tickets back. Keep these documents safe. They'll tell you the Gate Number (Gate is where plane is parked). Now you have only your hand baggage with documents with you.

They will also give you the form called **Embarkation form**.

I have attached sample Embarkation forms filled in. Please use this as a reference.

- **Immigration**

Stand in the line for Immigration Check of Indian National. Whenever they will call you should go. There will be a Police Office sitting there. Go immediately once they call you. They will ask your

passport and might ask you some questions about your journey and purpose.

- **Customs**

Next you will go for CUSTOMS Check. They will ask us if we have anything to declare. You normally won't have anything to declare. You would have just Clothes and personal belonging.

- **Boarding**

You will proceed towards the Gate Number they gave at Check-in time. Gate number is also on the Boarding Pass.

Next you will go for SECURITY CHECK. Here they will scan every person (gents and ladies separate) and X-ray their hand baggage. Then you have to wait in a hall till they make announcement for Boarding.

You keep your boarding pass ready and enter the plane. Airhostess may help you locate your seat, if not ask them. Put your hand-baggage in overhead compartment (under seat in worst case). There will be blankets for each of you in your seat. If it is not there, ask the airhostess for one.

- **At Intermediate Airport**

Note : It's always advisable to keep your watch in sync with current time zone.

- **Before Arrival**

Before landing in US port-of-entry, you will have to fill two forms, namely **I-94 Arrival-Departure Record** and **Customs form**. (Sample filled in forms has been enclosed for your reference). Both of the forms will be given by flight attendant prior to landing in US. Fill these forms in only capital letters. Wherever they mention TYPE or PRINT, it means write in capital letters. Fill one I-94 form for each person. Fill only one customs form for the whole family.

The lower portion will be given back and it should be kept in Passport. It's required while going back. On the reverse side you may have to sign.

- **Arrival**

Getting out of plane

Take with you all the things including hand-baggage and start walking towards immigration check. Follow the signs for immigration. There will be separate lines for US citizens/Green Cardholders and for non-immigrant visa holders such as Visitor visa and H1B visa. Keep two filled forms filled in the passport. Also keep all other papers ready in case required. Every one in the family can walk together to Immigration Counter.

- **Immigration**

They will ask for passport and filled I-94 forms. They will ask you simple questions like ***how long you will stay? What's purpose of your trip? Where will you stay?*** Talk absolutely to the point. Make sure that whatever you say is written on the paper. Keep you answers simple and to the point such as "6 months", "Visiting my <mention relation> and see tourist places". They stamp your passport saying you are permitted for six-month stay(for visitor visa holders). They also staple a counter foil of I-94 form (Departure Record) in your passport. It is stamped with a date, which is the day until

when you are eligible to stay in the US. Your stay after that day in US is illegal.

Many people who come here on non-immigrant visa are confused regarding the duration for which they can stay legally in the United States. The visa stamp is used just to enter the United States. And you can enter United States at any period during the validity of the visa. (Whether you can enter once or multiple times is dependent whether your visa is single entry or it is multiple entry.) At the port of entry, immigration officer determines the duration for which you can stay in the United States. And that is the legal period for which you can stay. So if you are coming on visitor visa and your visa is expiring next month and immigration officer grants you six months stay, then you can stay here for six months.

- **Baggage Claim**

After clearing Immigration, move toward the baggage claim carousel assigned to your flight, simply follow the signs directing you to the place. Collect your luggage and look for signs directing you to customs clearance. At the customs clearance they may ask you to open your bags for a security check/verification.

- **Customs**

Push your trolley towards customs. Customs officer is going to ask you what are you bringing in. Your answer would normally be clothes and personal belonging. If they ask to open the bag, just cooperate. They are mainly looking for drugs etc. The officer will stamp on your form and keep it with him. Now you are free to go. Follow signs for “**Exit to Street**” and come out through that exit and <I/we> will be waiting for you.