



Hostos Community College International Student Services at The Office of Admissions and Recruitment

APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING AN I-20 CERTIFICATE

- **International students who are admitted into a degree program at Hostos Community College will need to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20) in order to enter and/or remain in the U.S. as an F-1 student. This requirement applies whether the student is a new applicant, a transfer student from another U.S. institution, or a student transferring between CUNY colleges. Please include the biographic page of your passport with your application.**
- **You must be admitted to Hostos Community College to submit an I-20 package and supporting documents.**
- **To enter the United States with any visa other than F-1 with the purpose of studying could be considered fraud in the eyes of the United States Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services.**
- **If you have a current B-1/B-2 visa, and are planning to attend school do not enter the United States with it. If you apply for a new visa other than F-1 visa, you must state clearly on your visa application that you intend to be a student and ask for a "PROSPECTIVE STUDENT" notation on your visa. If you do not do this, and enter the United States in the wrong status, you might not be eligible to change to F-1 student status. The International Student Services Office at Hostos Community College does not provide assistance with change of status.**

I-20 Application Deadlines

Initial/Overseas	Fall Semester	July 1
Initial/Overseas	Spring Semester	December 1
Transfer/Inside the U.S.	Fall or Spring Semester	15 days after first day of classes

**For questions, please contact:
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES AT
THE OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT
500 GRAND CONCOURSE, ROOM B-102
BRONX, NY 10451
(718) 319-7900
internationalservices@hostos.cuny.edu
www.hostos.cuny.edu**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

➤ What is the I-20 Certificate?

This is the Certificate of Eligibility for F-1 (Student) Status. The I-20 Certificate may be issued only to students:

1. Who have been admitted to Hostos Community College for a full-time program
2. Who are planning to register for a full-time course of study each semester at Hostos and
3. Provide sufficient evidence of financial support to live and study in the U.S. for 2-3 years of study without employment

➤ Who needs to obtain the I-20 Certificate?

There are strict United States government regulations which outlined who may receive an I-20 Certificate. Students who are outside the United States must have the I-20 Certificate in order to obtain the F-1 visa to enter the U.S. **OR**

Students who are currently in the United States under an active F-1 status may be eligible to receive the I-20 Certificate from Hostos Community College. Although some students are not eligible to receive the I-20 Certificate, they can still attend Hostos. If a student is unsure about their eligibility to receive the certificate, please inquire with the International Student Services.

➤ How to obtain the I-20 certificate?

To receive the I-20 Certificate, you must complete the attached form accurately and return it to the International Student Services with the required documents supporting the financial ability of yourself and /or your sponsor(s).

Acceptable documents must be submitted two weeks in advance of issuance of an I-20 certificate.

Unacceptable documents will be rejected and returned. Application must be completed exactly as indicated below. Please read and follow the instructions carefully to avoid delays in your process.

➤ What is the F-1 visa?

The F-1 visa is your travel document. It does not give you permission to enter the United States. When your visa is issued, the embassy or consulate will return the I-20 Certificate to you in a sealed envelope to be presented to the United States Immigration at the port of entry. The permission to enter the United States is given at the port of entry on a document known as the I-94. **DO NOT LOSE YOUR PORTION OF THE I-20 CERTIFICATE.**

Note: If you have an F-1 visa from a previous visit to the U.S. and it has not expired, you may travel directly to the United States with a new Hostos I-20 Certificate without visiting a United States embassy or consulate.

➤ What do I do if I am a F-1 student INSIDE the United States?

If you are an F-1 student at another institution, you do not need the I-20 Certificate before coming to Hostos. USCIS regulations state that you must submit your financial documentation to Hostos and sign your new I-20 Certificate **no later than the 15th day of classes at Hostos.**

Transfer students with valid F-1 status have 15 days after the first day of classes to submit their I-20 package to obtain a Hostos I-20 certificate.

DO NOT TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S. ON YOUR FORMER SCHOOL'S I-20. You will lose your legal status if you use the certificate I-20 of your old school and then do not return to classes there. Students will not be permitted to travel until they are registered for classes at Hostos. If it is imperative that you travel, you must first get the required financial papers to the International Student Services so that a Hostos I-20 Certificate for traveling can be issued.

➤ **How to get an F-1 visa at an overseas U.S. embassy or consulate?**

F-1 visa cannot be issued without an I-20 Certificate. To initiate the process to obtain an I-20 Certificate, you must **send to Hostos International Student Services your completed I-20 application and acceptable supporting documents.** When the financial papers are approved, Hostos will send you the I-20 Certificate and your original financial papers, which you must have to apply for a F-1 visa.

➤ **Can I use another type of visa to enter the U.S.?**

If you have another visa from a previous visit, do not use it to enter the United States. You must wait for your I-20 Certificate and apply for an F-1 visa. Do not get impatient and apply for a B-2 visitor (pleasure) visa to enter the United States. The U.S. government can request information from the school concerning when you applied for admission and when you were accepted. To enter the U.S. with a B-1 or B-2 visa when you intend to be a student is fraudulent. If you are found to have committed fraud, you can be denied permission to enter the U.S. for the rest of your life.

➤ **Can citizens of a Visa Waiver Program (VWP) designated country enter the U.S. without a visa to study?**

Citizens and/or nationals of VWP designated countries should not enter the United States without the appropriate visa if planning to study at Hostos. Although citizens from VWP countries are permitted to visit the United States without applying for visas at consulates or embassies, entry without visa restricts students to staying as a **tourist or business visitor for 90 days only. After the 90 days period, your legal status expires.** Entering the United States without the appropriate visa could prevent you from extending your permission to stay or change to an F-1 status.

➤ **Why does financial ability must be proven?**

- There are rigorous U.S. government regulations set to decide who may receive the I-20 certificate. Consequently, Hostos International Student Services must be strict about financial documentation.
- U.S. embassies and consulates are very demanding and we want to ensure that prospective students are not denied visas because financial standards are not fully met.
- Hostos International Student Services strongly encourages families to think carefully about the real costs of studying and living in New York to make sure that students' needs are provided for. An unrealistic budget could result in pain and suffering for prospective students.

➤ **What rules should students and sponsors follow before an I-20 form is issued?**

1) Submit proof of sponsor's income.

- a) Do not expect bank statements to prove the financial ability of the sponsor.
- b) Bank statements are very poor evidence of financial ability unless the amount of money is very large.
- c) Proof of sponsor's income should be on the employer's letterhead, on income tax receipts and forms or estimated by a bank when the sponsor is a self-employed businessperson.
- d) A company's income will not be accepted as proof of a sponsor's income. Hostos must have an official statement of the actual salary paid to the owner/sponsor.

2) Each sponsor must submit an affidavit stating exactly what is to be provided.

- a) All questions on affidavit forms must be answered.
- b) The sponsor in the presence of a Public Notary must sign all affidavits.
- c) The Public Notary must sign and the official seal of the Public Notary must be on the affidavit.
- d) Affidavits which have been changed in any way, must have the signature of both the sponsor and the Public Notary on each change. It is a crime to change a sworn statement.

There are Public Notaries at all U.S. embassies and consulates. In the U.S. many local pharmacists, lawyers and accountants are notaries. Though the name varies by country, notaries are officials licensed by the national or regional government to take sworn statements for courts of law or to witness contracts or property deeds.

- 3) **Documents from banks or anyone else, stating that a sponsor has “enough” or “sufficient” funds to support a student will not be accepted.**
 - a) Only the College can decide how much is enough and this is based on federal guidelines.
 - b) Financial papers must state actual dollar amounts **in U.S. currency**. Hostos will accept documents which indicate that the income or savings are “in the high five figures (or low six figures, etc.) in U.S. dollars”.
- 4) **Do not send documents separately.**
 - a) All financial documents must be submitted together.
 - b) Partial documentation will be considered incomplete and will be returned.
 - c) Documents submitted in person can be hand-delivered to the International Student Services by a designated person with a power-of-attorney.
- 5) **Sponsors should not promise too much money.**
 - a) Many sponsors seem to believe that, the more money they promise to give to the student, the more likely we are to issue the I-20 Certificate. However, *the opposite is true*.
 - b) The second most common reason why Hostos rejects financial documents is because the sponsor promises to provide more support than his/her income permits.
 - c) Sponsors should promise what they truly intend to give.
- 6) **Do not submit old documents.**
 - a) The Hostos as well as U.S. Government agencies require new documents (less than six (6) months old).
 - b) Older documents will be rejected and returned.
- 7) **Do not send copies.**
 - a) Except for tax documents, leases and deeds, all papers must be originals.
 - b) Copies are rejected and returned. Originals will be attached to I-20's issued for visa applications and returned to students who are outside the U.S.
 - c) Hostos will not accept documents sent by FAX.
- 8) **It is not important how many sponsors there are, whether or not they are U.S. citizens or where they reside.**
 - a) It is usually easier to get an F-1 visa when at least part of a student’s support comes from outside the U.S.
- 9) **Students can sponsor themselves, either partly or fully.**
 - a) No affidavits are needed.
 - b) Last 3 bank statements in the student’s name must be provided. The amount of money in the bank account must be divided by two because Hostos has two-year programs.
 - c) Information about source of income shown in the bank account must be provided.
- 10) **Scholarships may be used to qualify for the Form I-20.**
 - a) We must receive an award letter from the private or government scholarship board stating how much money is to be given and for how many years.
- 11) **Free Room and Board can be used to support a student.**
 - a) When free room and board is provided, the student will need less in cash from other sponsors.
 - b) Affidavit of free room and board must be sent with a copy of the property deed or rental lease.
 - c) Such affidavits will not be accepted if the place to live is too small or too far away from the college.
- 12) **Every dollar of support must be proven by student’s bank statements, proof of the sponsor’s income, or a lease or deed.**
 - a) Each dollar not provided by the student must be guaranteed in an affidavit by a sponsor.
- 13) **All supporting financial documents must be in English.**
 - a) In order to make sure that we approve your financial documents as quickly as possible, we request that you **officially translate** into the English language all supporting documents and that U.S. currency is used.

SPONSOR SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

A sponsor must show sufficient income and/or financial resources to assure that the student being sponsored will not become a public charge (receive Federal or State low income benefits or services) while in the United States. Evidence should consist of copies of any or all of the following documentation listed below that are applicable to the sponsor's situation. Failure to provide evidence of sufficient income and/or financial resources may result in the denial of the student's application for a visa or his/her removal from the United States. **It is advisable that all funding supporting documents be notarized.** Lastly, the sponsor must submit evidence of income and resources as appropriate.

Acceptable Supporting Evidence:

- A. Written statement from an officer of the bank or other financial institution or brokerage where the sponsor has accounts indicating the following details regarding the account:
 - i) Date account opened
 - ii) Total amount deposited for the past year
 - iii) Last 3 bank statements
 - iv) Present balance
- B. Statement of your employer on business stationery showing:
 - i) Date and nature of employment
 - ii) Salary paid
 - iii) Whether the position is temporary or permanent
- C. If self-employed:
 - i) Copy of last income tax return filed or
 - ii) Report of commercial rating concern
 - iii) Schedule of assets with supporting documents

Important Notes:

- The issuance of an I-20 Certificate by Hostos Community College does not guarantee the approval of the F-1 student status by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service or the approval of the F-1 student visa by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate office in your home country.
- Unacceptable financial documents will be rejected and returned. Application must be completed exactly as indicated. Please read and follow the instructions carefully to avoid delays in your process. Almost half of received documents are unsatisfactory because students and/or sponsors do not follow the indicated instructions.

ESTIMATE OF EXPENSES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ATTENDING HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Student Tuition Expenses – Amount provided by Hostos Office of the Bursar

Student Living Expenses – Amounts based on calculations provided by CUNY Office of Student Financial Aid

Tuition per year	\$ 8,086.40*
Books and Supplies	\$ 1,364.00
Transportation	\$ 1,122.00
Personal Expenses	\$ 4,641.00
Housing	\$ 13,536.00
Meals	\$ 3,652.00
Student Expenses excluding housing	\$ 10,779.00
Total First Year Student Expenses	\$ 32,401.40

***Tuition and Fees per academic year (2 semesters) plus fees at Hostos Community College. Calculation based on 12 credits per semester.**

Tuition and Fees stated above are based on the students taking at least 12 credits per semester. This is the minimum number of credits required to be a full-time student (necessary to maintain lawful immigration status). If you take more than 12-unit credits, you will be charged at the rate of \$320.00 per credit.

Students planning to bring a spouse or child/children under an F-2 status must show an additional \$10,000 per year to support each dependent.

I-20 Application Deadlines

Initial/Overseas	Fall Semester	July 1
Initial/Overseas	Spring Semester	December 1
Transfer/Inside the U.S.	Fall or Spring Semester	15 days after first day of classes

SEVIS Fee Payment: Instruction Sheet

New SEVIS I-901 fees went into effect on June 24, 2019. **The fee is \$350**, to be collected from F visa applicants. The fee will be used by the Department of Homeland Security to pay costs associated with the operation of the federal SEVIS program, including the administration and maintenance of SEVIS, compliance activities, and the hiring of federal liaison officers. Prior to appearing for a visa interview (or for Canadian citizens who are visa exempt, prior to entering the United States), all individuals seeking an *initial* F-1 visa from a U.S. embassy or consulate who have in their possession a SEVIS form I-20 with an issuance date of September 1, 2004 or later will need to pay the SEVIS fee.

Students applying for admission to Hostos for the Fall 2019 semester or later will have to pay the SEVIS fee before they can apply for a visa. Those who are visa exempt (e.g. Canadian citizens) will have to pay the SEVIS fee before they can enter the United States.

Who has to pay the fee?

New students who need to apply for an F-1 visa in order to enter the United States, and who have been issued a form I-20 for initial attendance dated on or after September 1, 2019, must pay the SEVIS fee before going to the US embassy or consulate for their visa interview. If that individual's visa application is denied, a new SEVIS fee payment will not be required if a subsequent visa application is filed for the same type of program within 12 months of the initial denial. New students who are citizens of Canada wishing to apply for F-1 status at a U.S. port of entry with a form I-20 for initial attendance dated on or after September 1, 2019 must pay the SEVIS fee prior to entering the United States.

Method of payment:

The federal SEVIS fee can be paid electronically on the internet by credit card (Visa, MasterCard or American Express), or by mail with an international money order in U.S. currency, or foreign draft drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in U.S. currency, or by check or money order from a U.S. bank. A special web site has been established for internet fee collection. The website is www.FMJfee.com. Fee payment can also be accepted from any third party, either in the United States or abroad. In other words, a friend or relative can pay the fee on behalf of a student. The Department of Homeland Security will issue an official paper receipt acknowledging every payment regardless of payment method. Express delivery of the receipt can be requested at additional cost. Anyone who pays the fee electronically will be able to print out an electronic receipt immediately at the time of payment for use in advance of the delivery of the paper receipt.

To print a copy of the SEVIS fee application and read about other payment options, visit the SEVIS website at: www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq

For Information on How to apply for an F-1 visa in your county visit: www.travel.state.gov



Application for the Immigration Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20)

International students who are admitted into a degree program at CUNY will need to obtain an I-20 Certificate of Eligibility (Form I-20), in order to enter and/or remain in the U.S. as an F-1 student. This requirement applies whether you are a new student, a transfer student from another U.S. university, or a student transferring between CUNY colleges.

(Please print clearly)

- 1. Full name Sex: F M X
2. Present Mailing Address
3. Email Phone Number Fax
4. Date of birth Place of Birth
5. Country (ies) of Citizenship Country of Residence
6. Permanent Overseas Address
7. Address in the U.S.A. (required)
8. Expected Semester of Enrollment: Fall 20 Winter 20 Spring 20 Summer 20
9. Degree Program: Associate Degree Certificate Program
10. Academic Major
11. Are you currently at a U.S. institution or college? Yes No
12. Do you currently hold F-1 status? Yes No

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANTS ALREADY IN THE U.S.

If you are currently in the U.S., please indicate your immigration status. Attach a copy of the passport pages with the passport number, expiration date of passport, and the U.S. visa stamp. Include copies of both sides of Form I-94 for yourself and accompanying family members.

- 13. F-1 Student Status I-94 Admissions #
14. Institution that issued most recent Form I-20 SEVIS # N
15. Current U.S. school name
15 (b). Current U.S. school address
16. Other Immigration Status (If Applicable, specify type)
17. I-94 Admission No. I-94 Expiration date

Declaration & Certification of Finances

Please indicate the source and amount of your financial support for the first two years for Associate’s degree candidates. The CUNY college that has admitted you requires documentation of guaranteed support for the first year and projected support for future years. Note that costs may rise 7-10% annually. Total amounts must meet or exceed the estimate of expenses (see “Sponsor Supporting Evidence” page).

U.S. immigration authorities require colleges to receive satisfactory financial certifications from prospective students before issuing a Form I-20. Therefore, you must attach original documents for each source of financial support you indicate. Please refer to the “Sponsor Supporting Evidence” page for a list of acceptable supporting documents. Be sure to have an additional set of original documents for your appointment at the U.S. Consulate (or Embassy) overseas.

Complete and send in this page with your application. Provide as much detail as possible.

SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT (Amount in U.S. Dollars)	Guaranteed Support	Projected Support	Projected Support	Projected Support
	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	4 th Year
A. Student				
Name:				
Name of Bank:				
Location (City and Country):				
The student must provide the following documents in English:				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bank officer’s summary statement of account history 2. Stock brokerage account statements, if any 				
	\$	\$	\$	\$
B. Parents and/or other individual sponsors				
Name:				
Relationship to student:				
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Name:				
Relationship to student:				
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Name:				
Relationship to student:				
	\$	\$	\$	\$
C. Government, University, or Other Sponsor				
Source	\$	\$	\$	\$
Source	\$	\$	\$	\$
Source	\$	\$	\$	\$
Attach current signed official copy of the terms of sponsorship, including amount of support in U.S. Dollars and period covered				
Grand Totals (Each total must equal the estimate of expenses for one year)				
	\$	\$	\$	\$

The college cannot issue a Form I-20 until you meet all requirements for financial documentation.

By signing my name to this form, I certify that the information above is a correct statement of my arrangements for financing my studies at a two year or four year college of The City University of New York.

Student’s Signature _____ **Date** _____

Print Name _____

AFFIDAVIT OF SUPPORT

This form is for individuals using their own income and/or savings to support a student. It must be completed by the person who will provide the student with full or partial financial support and/or room and board during the student's course of study at The City University of New York. **Sponsors providing financial support must complete items 1-6; sponsors providing room and/or board must complete Items 1 and 7 (only).**

SPONSOR INFORMATION

1) I, _____, citizen of _____
(Name of sponsor) (Country/ies)
and residing at _____
(Street) (City/State) (Country) (Postal Code) (Telephone)

Certify the following:

2) I am employed with _____
(Name of employer)
located at _____
(Street) (City/State) (Country) (Postal Code) (Telephone)
I receive an annual income of \$ _____ (U.S.) from this employment.

Attach a current salary confirmation statement written by that employer, or verification of annual income for self-employed or retired individuals. The employer statement or verification of annual income must be written in English or come with a certified translation.

3) I have \$ _____ (U.S.) on deposit with (Name of Bank) _____
Address of Bank: _____
(Number and Street) (City/State) (Country) (Postal Code)

Attach bank officer's statement of account history.

4a) I currently support _____ persons (including myself). Our total annual income is \$ _____ (U.S.).
Our total family expenses are \$ _____ (U.S.).

4b) I sponsor _____ (number) individuals for immigration in addition to this affidavit.

STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION

5) This affidavit is executed on behalf of _____ who was born on _____
(Name of student) (MM/DD/YYYY)
S/he is my: _____
(Relationship to sponsor)

6) I hereby certify that I am willing, able, and do commit to provide _____ with the annual
(Name of student)
amount of \$ _____ (U.S.) for her/his tuition, fees, and/or living expenses each year during the entire program of study at The City University of New York until _____ (give a date when the sponsorship is expected to terminate).

AFFIDAVIT OF SPONSOR PROVIDING FREE ROOM AND BOARD
(cash value to the student of \$13,536 or \$17,188)

ROOM AND BOARD SUPPORT INFORMATION (To be completed if student will live in the sponsor's home in the U.S.).

7) I hereby certify that I will provide _____ with (check one):
(Name of student)

_____ Room only in my home at the address indicated above (valued at \$13,536) **or**

_____ Full room and board in my home as indicated above (valued at \$17,188) during each year that the student follows a program of study at CUNY.

Note that this value cannot be included in any amount of support being provided in question #6, above. Attach a copy of your lease or deed or copy of a statement from your landlord.

By signing my name to this affidavit, I certify that the information above is a correct statement of my agreement to sponsor the student herein named.

This affidavit must be signed.

Please print name: _____ Date _____

Signature of sponsor: _____ Date _____

AFFIRMATION OR OATH

I hereby affirm that I understand the contents of this affidavit and that the statements are accurate.

Signature of sponsor _____

Sworn and subscribed before me this _____ **day of** _____, **in the year** _____

Signature of Office of administering Oath _____ **OFFICIAL SEAL HERE**