

Visas for Foreigners in China



Chinese visa is a permit issued to a foreigner by the Chinese visa authorities for entry into, exit from or transit through the Chinese territory.

The Chinese visa authorities may issue a diplomatic, courtesy, service or ordinary visa to a foreigner according to his identity, purpose of visit to China and passport type.

The first thing you need to organize for making your move to China is to get a visa. Unless you only need a tourist visa, you should leave plenty of time for gathering all the documents you require. Two months is a safe bet, although the process can take longer.

Typically the Chinese embassy will take a week to process your visa application providing all documents are satisfactory and there are no further questions. However be aware that Chinese visas are only valid for entry within 3 months of their issue date, therefore although it is necessary to leave sufficient time to obtain your visa it is also important not to get your visa too far in advance either.

Types of visas

Chinese visas are classified according to the purpose of your stay in China. For a long-term stay in China, you need documentation from an organization, which is necessary to prove to authorities that you will not be staying in China longer than your visa allows.

(1) C visa is issued to crewmembers performing duties on board of international trains, airliners or vessels, accompanying family members of vessel crews, and drivers of international road transport vehicles.

(2) D visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to reside permanently in China.

(3) F visa is issued to foreign nationals who are invited to China for exchange activities, visits or investigations.

(4) G visa is issued to foreign nationals transiting China.

(5) J1 visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China as resident correspondents of foreign countries' resident news agencies in China, while J2 visa is issued to foreign correspondents who come to China for covering special events in a short term.

(6) L visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China for

sightseeing; a group visa may be issued to a group of foreign nationals on a sightseeing trip to China.

(7) M visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China for business or trading activities.

(8) Q1 visa is issued on the ground of family reunion to family members of Chinese citizens residing in China and family members of foreign nationals with permanent resident status in China, as well as to people who need to stay in China for reasons such as foster care, while Q2 visa is issued to people who intend to pay a short visit to their relatives in China who are Chinese citizens residing in China or foreign nationals with permanent resident status in China.

(9) R visa is issued to foreign professionals who are highly skilled or whose skills are imperatively needed by China.

(10) S1 visa is issued to spouses, parents, underage children and parents-in-law of foreign nationals who reside in China for reasons such as work and study, who come to China for long-term visits to relatives, as well as people who need to reside in China for other private affairs, while S2 visa is issued to family members of foreign nationals who stay or reside in China for reasons such as work and study, who come to China for short-term visits to relatives, as well as people who need to stay in

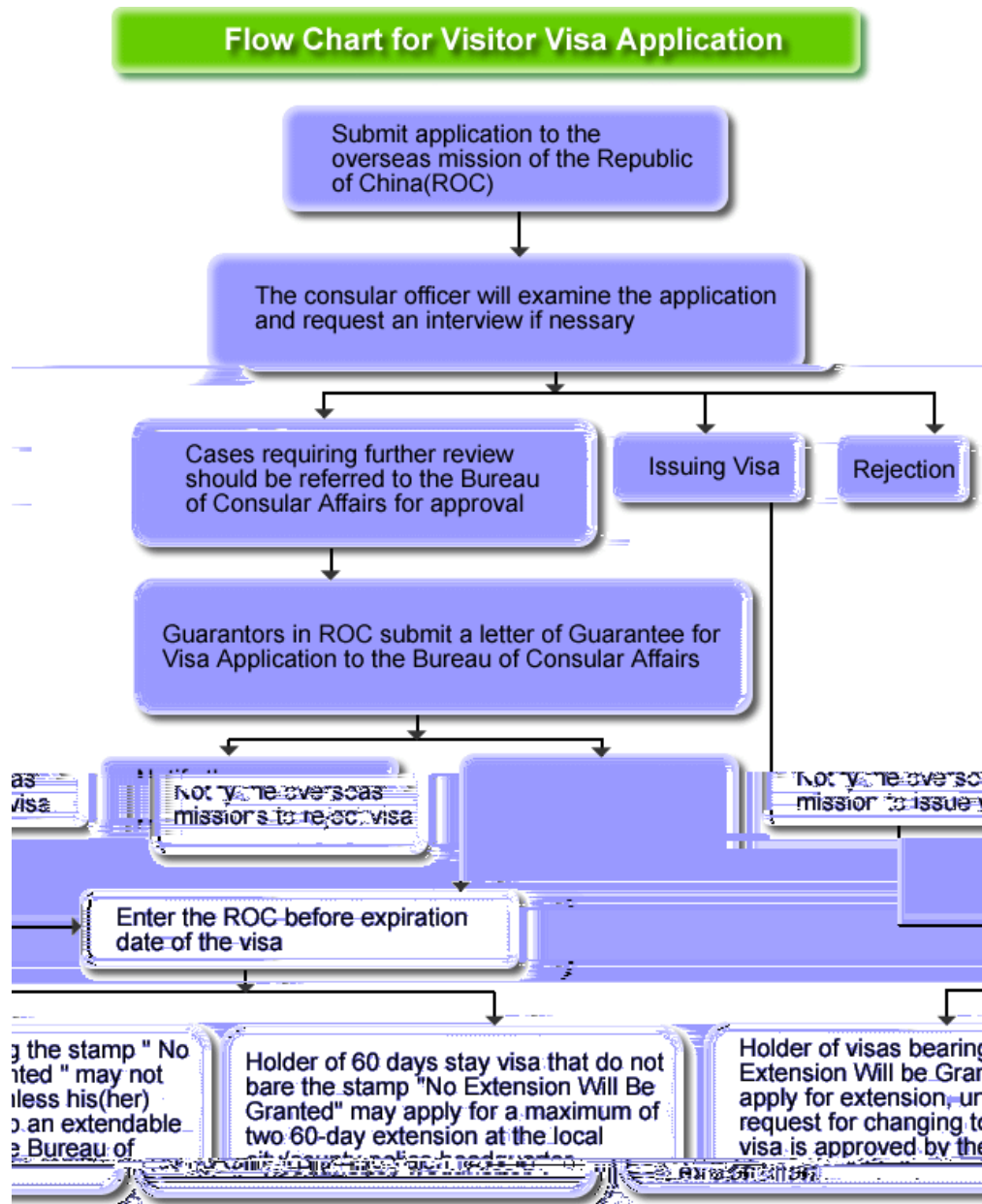
China for other private affairs.

(11) X1 visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China for long-term study, while X2 visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China for short-term study.

(12) Z visa is issued to foreign nationals who come to China for employment.

Applying for a Chinese visa

apply for.



Visa Renewal

If you enter into China on a tourist (L) visa, a business (F) visa or a work (Z) visa, and want to stay in China for longer than the stay time limit or validity period specified on the current visa, you can apply for the newel

of your visa at the Ministry of Public Security and its affiliates at the provincial or city level, these affiliates are collectively known as Public Security Bureaus (PSB). There are some types of renewals you can choose, also there are some restrictions you may need to know when you apply for the visa renewals.

	Renewal of L visa	Renewal of F visa	Renewal of Z visa
Type of renewals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days with zero entry • 30 days with single entry • 6 / 12 month with 0/1/2/M entry(restrictions applied) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-90 days with 0/1/2 entries • 6 month with multiple entries • 12 month with multiple entries 	One year multiple entry
Documents required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport • Photo • Residence registration certificate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport • Photo • Residence registration certificate • Documents from your host in China. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport • Photo • Residence registration certificate • Documents from your work unit in China.
Restrictions and Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L visa can be renewed for at most twice at each entry. • To apply for 6 or 12 month, you need to have a Chinese spouse or natural born Chinese relatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The times of F visa renewal is no limited, but (consecutively) staying in China on F visas can not be more than 365 days at each entry. • To apply for F visa renewal, you need a host unit in China. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To renew a Z visa is actually to renew your residence permit. The Z visa is only used to enter into China, then replaced by residence permit. • To apply for Z visa renewal, you need documents from your work unit in China.

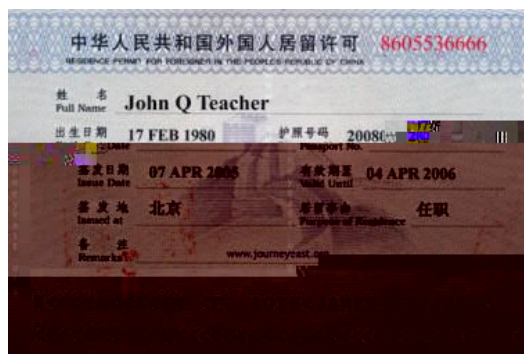
Changing visas

It is illegal to work in China on an L or F visa, so students or tourists are not permitted to take up employment. If discovered, you will be fired, fined and often deported, so don't take the risk. However, you can change visa types if you happen to find a job in China. In most provinces, you can switch visa directly at the local PSB (Public Security Bureau). Although some local PSB's may require that you leave the country to obtain a new visa.

Family members

Spouses and children receive the same type of visa and residence permit as the person who will be employed or studying in China, but they have to fill out an individual application form and pay the application fee.

Residence Permits in China



It is not your visa but your residence permit that gives you the right to live in China. Upon arrival in China, you have 30 days to obtain your residence permit.

Your initial visa grants you the right to enter China for a specific purpose, but expires after a few months. If you wish to stay longer in China, you

will need to apply for a residence permit which works like a multiple-entry visa, allowing you to leave the country and return without an additional visa as long as the permit remains valid (even if your original visa has expired).

Types of residence permits

There are three types of residence permits that allow you to live in China:

Permanent residence permits (little green booklets) are issued to those holding a D visa and are renewable every 10 years.

Temporary residence permits are valid for 6-12 months. Generally required for visiting scholars or those entering for job training.

Foreigner Residence Permits are normally valid for one year and are renewable annually. They are the standard residence permits issued to the majority of foreigners working in China.

Document needed

In order to receive a residence permit, you will have to provide the following documentation:

Your passport with the respective visa matching the residence permit you are applying for

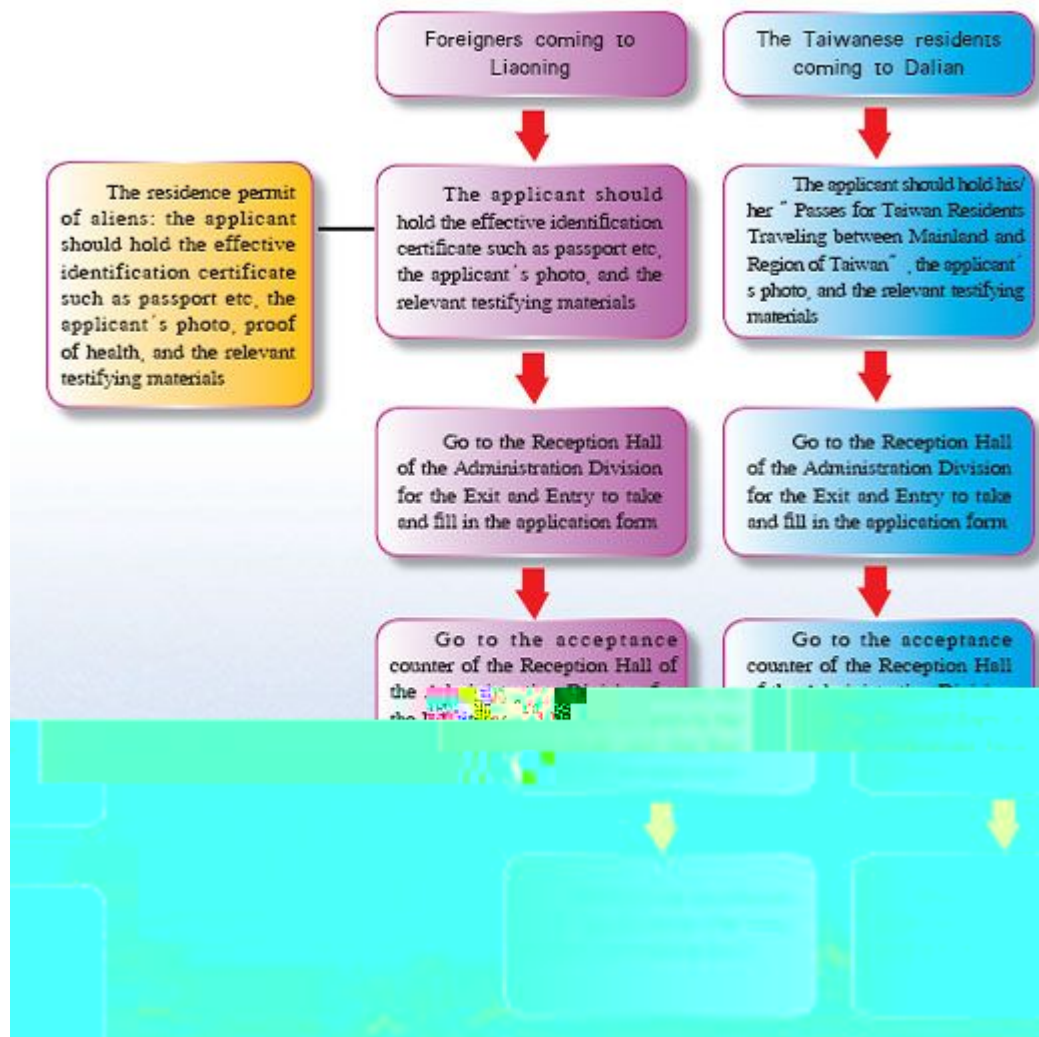
A passport photo

Your Residence Registration

The respective application form

If applicable, your job contract and work permit

Procedures



Physical Exam Certificate

In theory, you are required to present a physical examination certificate in order to obtain a residence permit (the Chinese embassy lists them as required documents for residence visas).

Source: <http://www.foreignercn.com/>