

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT'S
PASSPORT TO ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE!**



INFORMATION ABOUT F-1 FULL TIME STUDENT NON-IMMIGRANT STATUS

- **WHAT IS “F-1” FULL TIME STUDENT STATUS?**

"F-1" status is a nonimmigrant status granted to individuals whose main purpose for entering the United States (U.S.) is to complete a full course of study and then return to their home country upon completion of their studies.

- **WHAT IS A FORM I-20?**

The Form I-20 otherwise known as a Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status is a U.S. government form on which Essex County College certifies to the U.S. government that an individual is eligible for F-1 student status. To receive a Form I-20, an individual must be accepted for admission to Essex County College, must have declared a major course of study for a degree, must intend to study full time and must have the financial resources to study and live in the U.S. without working illegally or suffering from poverty. **A Form I-20 is only issued by the school you plan to attend when you enter the U.S.**

- **WHY DO YOU NEED A FORM I-20?**

A Form I-20 is required to obtain an F-1 (full-time student) visa at the U.S. Embassy in your home country. A Form I-20 is also required to keep lawful F-1 status when transferring or changing schools in the U.S.

- **DOES EVERYBODY NEED AN I-20?**

NO, some international students do not need I-20. If you are maintaining another non-immigrant status in the U.S., you do not have to have an I-20 and may attend school **part-time**. Dependent children in E, F, H, I, J, L, M, N, O, P, R, or S status need to change status after their 21st birthday, if they marry, or if they want to attend school full - time.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO CONSIDER!!!!

- **IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO ATTEND SCHOOL IN THE U.S., DO NOT ENTER THE COUNTRY WITH A B-1, B-2, OR B-1/B-2 VISA.** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) prohibits a B nonimmigrant (both B-1 visitors for business and B-2 visitors for pleasure) from “enrolling in course of study or taking other actions inconsistent with B nonimmigrant status” unless and until the Service has approved the B nonimmigrant’s change to “an appropriate student non-immigrant status”.
- **IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO ATTEND SCHOOL IN THE U.S., DO NOT ENTER THE COUNTRY WITHOUT A VISA.** If you are citizens or nationals of countries participating in The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) you will not be able to extend your stay, and you will not be able to change to student status. VWP enables most of citizens and nationals of participating countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without first obtaining a visa. Travelers must have a valid Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) approval prior to travel.
- **STUDENTS WHO HAVE ENTERED THE U.S. IN OTHER NON-IMMIGRANT STATUSES (FOR EXAMPLE: F-2, J-2, H-4, AND OTHER DEPENDENTS) MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR TO CHANGE TO F-1 STATUS.**

HOW TO OBTAIN A FORM I-20:

1. Send an application for admission to Essex County College- Enrollment Services together with all of the following documents:

- Completed and signed application for a Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) Student Status (Form I-20)
- Notarized sponsor's affidavit of annual financial support and affidavit of free room and board if applicable. These affidavits may be photocopied if needed
- Any other documents which prove that you can support your minimum annual expenses
- Proof of high school graduation
- **Please note:** To be admitted, all international students must present evidence of educational achievement, equivalent to a high school diploma in the United States. **Such equivalency may be examination results such as the General Certificate of Education (GCE) or its equivalent, Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Secondary Education Certificate, West African School Certificate, or documents such as Bachiller, Baccalaureat and Diplome**
- International students transferring from another U.S. school must submit copies of all previous Form I-20s, passport, visa, Form I-94*, official college transcript and an international Student Advisor's Report

*Foreign visitors to the U.S. arriving via air or sea no longer need to complete paper Customs and Border Protection Form I-94 or I-94W. Those who need to prove their legal-visitor status—to employers, schools/universities or government agencies—can access their CBP arrival/departure record information online:

<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html>

- **The application deadline for the Fall semester is May 1 for students residing outside the U.S and July 1 for transfer students attending U.S. schools.**
- **The application deadline for the Spring semester is August 1 for students residing outside the U.S. and November 1 for transfer students attending U.S. schools.**

2. A review of the required documents will be made upon receipt. If the documents meet the U.S. government's requirements, a Form I-20 will be issued as follows:

- If you are not in the U.S., we will issue your SEVIS Form I-20 in accordance with Part I and Part II of your Form I-20 application
- If you are an F-1 student in the U.S., we will issue your SEVIS Form I-20 only if you plan to travel outside the country before school begins (completed Part III, number three on your application for a Form I-20).
- If you do not plan to travel, you will receive instructions about how to transfer/change U.S. schools, change an educational level at Essex County College

INFORMATION ABOUT PROVING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- **AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MUST BE ABLE TO PROVE ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO COVER THE MINIMUM ANNUAL EXPENSES FOR THE ENTIRE PROGRAM OF STUDY**

To receive an F-1 student visa, the U.S. embassy or consulate in your home country requires evidence that funds are available to cover one year's minimum expenses, and evidence that sufficient funds are, or will be available for every year of the program.

- **WHAT IS A SPONSOR?**

A sponsor is your source of financial support while you are studying in the U.S.

A person who is giving you a place to live and food to eat is also a sponsor.

A sponsor may be one or more family members, friends, or organizations.

You may sponsor yourself completely or partially.

However, a family member who is receiving money from another family member to give you is not a sponsor.

- **SPONSOR (S) MUST SUBMIT "NOTARIZED" AFFIDAVIT (S).**

Each sponsor must submit a Sponsor's Affidavit of Annual Financial Support (included with your application for a Form I-20). The affidavit must state in U.S. dollars the amount to be provided annually for the student's support. Affidavits must be signed by the sponsor in the presence of a notary public, and include the notary public's official seal. There are notary publics at all U.S. embassies and consulates.

- **FREE ROOM AND BOARD COUNTS AS FINANCIAL SUPPORT.**

A person who is giving you a place to live and food to eat may also be considered a sponsor. This sponsor must submit a notarized Sponsor's Affidavit of Free Room and Board (included with your application for a Form I-20) with a copy of the property deed or rental lease, utilities bill of the apartment you will stay when you attend school. Free room and board reduces living expenses by the amount indicated for housing, utilities and food expenses. If the sponsor is also providing other cash support, the sponsor should also submit a Sponsor's Affidavit of Annual Financial Support.

Affidavits for Free Room and Board will not be accepted if the place to live is too small or too far from Essex County College.

- **DOCUMENTS WHICH PROVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT ARE:**

SPONSOR'S AFFIDAVITS OF SUPPORT, (included in your application for a Form I-20)

PROOF OF EMPLOYMENT INCOME (Letter from sponsor's employer indicating date of employment and annual salary in U.S. dollars.)

TAX RETURNS, and

BANK LETTERS, (Bank letters must include:

- The date the account was opened,
- Average annual balance, and
- Present account balance in U.S. dollars.
- **Bank letters saying 'enough' or 'sufficient' funds are available, or that 'the account holder is capable of supporting the student' will not be accepted.**
- **Bank letters from a sponsor's business will NOT be accepted!**
- **Self-employed individuals who wish to act as a student sponsor must submit PERSONAL bank letter.**
- **If a bank statement is in the name of more than one-person, each individual must submit an affidavit of support.)**

- **ALL FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS MUST BE IN ENGLISH,**
- **ALL FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS MUST BE LESS THAN TWO MONTHS OLD, AND**
- **ALL FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS MUST BE QUOTED IN U.S. DOLLARS.**

- **YOUR SPONSOR'S INCOME IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR SPONSOR'S BANK LETTER.**

Bank letters alone are very poor evidence of a sponsor's ability to support you. If a bank letter is the only evidence of a sponsor's financial ability to support your education in the U.S. at Essex County College an account balance in excess of \$18,000 might be required by the U.S. embassy to obtain your visa. Proof of a sponsor's income however is a strong indicator of the sponsor's ability to support your educational needs beyond the first year that you are in the U.S. It also greatly reduces the amount of money required in the sponsor's bank account. Proof of the sponsor's income must be on an employer's letterhead, on income tax returns or receipts, or estimates by a bank or private accountant if the sponsor is self-employed.

The income of a company is not the income of the owner of the business.

- **NON-LIQUID FUNDS OR PROPERTY ARE NOT ACCEPTED!**

- Income from investments and property should appear in bank accounts.
- **Retirement accounts are not accepted.**

- **SCHOLARSHIPS.**

- Students receiving scholarships may use the scholarship as a source of financial support. Official award letters indicating the annual amount of the scholarship must be presented.

**FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-2017**

The amounts **below** represent the minimum estimated expenses for **one year** at Essex County College. The budget does not allow for luxuries and you will want to have more money available, if possible. **You must be able to prove that you can support these minimum annual expenses to be eligible for a Form I-20.**

TUITION AND SCHOOL FEES

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS	\$	6,696*
Course Lab Fee	\$	**

*This includes tuition **for 12 credits and general and student activity fees for both the Fall and Spring semesters.**

Summer sessions are not included.

**additional fees may apply depends of your major

The College reserves the right, with no prior notice to restructure tuition and fee rates.

THE TUITION AND FEES FOR YOUR PROGRAM HAVE BEEN ENTERED IN THE "WHAT ARE YOUR MINIMUM ANNUAL FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS?" WORKBOX FOR YOU.

LIVING EXPENSES:

HOUSING AND UTILITIES	\$	4,200
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This is based on the average cost of single (private) room in a shared house or apartment.

FOOD	\$	3,600
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PERSONAL NECESSITIES & CLOTHING	\$	1,200
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BOOKS AND SUPPLIES	\$	1,200
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(On average students should expect to pay \$150 per class on books and supplies.)

TOTAL MINIMUM ANNUAL

LIVING EXPENSES:	\$	10,200
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*International student health insurance might not seem important to you, however we highly recommend that you purchase private health insurance

THE LIVING EXPENSES FOR YOUR PROGRAM HAVE BEEN ENTERED IN THE "WHAT ARE YOUR MINIMUM ANNUAL FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS?" WORKBOX FOR YOU.

DEPENDENT EXPENSES

Students planning to bring a spouse or children, or who have family now with them in the U.S., must show an additional **\$6,800 per year to support the spouse and \$2,520 per year for each child.** These amounts do not include medical insurance. Although medical insurance is not legally required for F-2 dependents, it is highly recommended.

A student should not assume that he/she would be able to work to help meet expenses!! The Immigration Service strictly controls employment!

WORKBOX

WHAT ARE YOUR MINIMUM ANNUAL FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS?

TUITION AND FEES	\$	6,696.00*
LIVING EXPENSES	\$	10,200.00
SUBTOTAL (STUDENT ONLY -NO DEPENDENTS)	\$	<u>16,896.00</u>
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HEALTH INSURANCE (IF ANY)	\$	<u>***</u>
DEPENDENT EXPENSES (IF ANY)	\$	<u> </u>
TOTAL:	\$	<u> </u>

ENTER THIS AMOUNT ON YOUR APPLICATION FOR FORM I-20.

* Additional fees may apply depends of your major and courses taken

** * International student health insurance might not seem important, however we highly recommend to purchase private health insurance