

MAKING YOUR STAY OFFICIAL



A. Visa Requirements for France

➤ Tourist visit of less than three month

U.S. citizens planning to enter and visit France as tourists do not require a visa. Citizens are permitted to remain in the country a maximum of 90 days.

CAVEAT: There is no provision in our own law for intercession by foreign embassies on behalf of their citizens who wish to circumvent our established procedures. For this reason, the Consulate is not in a position to intercede with the French authorities on behalf of Americans seeking visa exemptions and work permits.

➤ Stays of More Than Three Months:

Americans planning to stay longer than three months or for purposes other than tourism must have a long-stay visa (visa de long séjour). They should apply for the appropriate long-stay visa at the French Consulate having jurisdiction over their place of residence in the U.S.

Note: It is not possible for an American or a citizen of most non-E.U. countries to come to France as a tourist and then change his status to that of a worker, a student or a resident. The French authorities will require such individuals to return to their country of residence to apply for the appropriate visa. Bearers of long-stay visas must apply for a "Carte de séjour" within a week of their arrival.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

This information sheet outlines the general requirements for the various types of French visas and lists the locations of the French consular offices in the U.S. authorized to issue visas. Specific information and application forms are available from those offices.

A visa applicant will be required to submit an application form accompanied by supporting documents. At a minimum, an applicant will have to submit a valid passport, one or more passport-type photographs and proof that the applicant can support himself and any dependents who may accompany him during a stay in France.

Any applicant less than 18 years will have to present a written authorization from his parents or guardian. Fees are charged for the issuance of all types of French visas.

Proof of Financial Resources

Proof of financial resources or support can take the form of bank statements, letters from banks confirming arrangements for regular transfers of funds from a U.S. bank account to an account in a French bank, letters from family or friends guaranteeing regular support or a "certificat d'hébergement" from a French family or friends with whom the applicant will be staying in France.

Such letters and documents should be notarized. Students may submit a letter from a study abroad program guaranteeing board and lodging, evidence of a fellowship or scholarship or, if a veteran, a Certificate of Eligibility from the Veterans Administration.

Special Requirements for Workers

In addition to the basic requirements, an American who wishes to work in France needs a work contract approved by the French Ministry of Labor.

This means that the French employer is required to present the signed contract to the Ministry with a request for its approval. If and when the Ministry has approved the contract, it is forwarded to the "Office des Migrations Internationales" (O.M.I.) for transmission to the appropriate French Consulate in the U.S.

The O.M.I. charges the employer a fee for this service. The Consulate will notify the American who can then proceed with visa formalities. A medical examination will be required (within last three months and usually by a doctor on a list prepared by the French Consulate); the visa applicant is expected to pay the doctor's fee.

Special Requirements for Students

In addition to the basic requirements cited above, a student is required to obtain from the French university or school a letter of admission ("attestation de pré-inscription"), if registering for the first time with a French university, or other evidence of registration ("certificat d'inscription" or "autorisation d'inscription"), depending on the level and type of studies.

The letter of admission or registration is normally reviewed by the French cultural affairs officer who may also examine the applicant's academic credentials before the student visa can be issued by a consular officer. The applicant will also need a medical examination (same as for a worker, as noted above).

Special Requirements For Au Pairs

The Au pair will be required to present a copy of a work contract signed by herself/himself and the French family and approved by the French Ministry of Labor (see the Embassy's information sheet on "Au Pair Employment in France"). As the worker or student, the au pair must have a medical examination to obtain a visa.

Special Requirements for Marriage

Americans intending to come to France to marry, and to take up residence in France for a period exceeding three months, must apply for a long-stay visa for marriage ("visa de long séjour pour mariage"). U.S. Citizens, tourists in France, may also marry in France, provided they comply with French law. At least one party to the marriage must have a period of forty days residence preceding the date of the civil ceremony (30 days of residence plus 10 days for publication of the bans).

See information sheet on marriage formalities for France. For more information, please contact directly the French authorities.

Residence permits ("Cartes de séjour")

An American intending to stay in France for more than 3 months, whether to study, to work or to reside without being gainfully employed, must have the appropriate long-stay visa ("visa de long séjour") in his passport on arrival in France in order to be able to apply for a "carte de séjour".

The visa must be obtained from the French Consulate having jurisdiction over the American's place of residence in the U.S. (see the Embassy's information sheet on "Visa Requirements for France"). Applications for long-term-validity French visas cannot be made by Americans in third countries, eg, England or Belgium, unless the American is a local resident of that country for one or more years.

It is not possible for an American or a citizen of a non-Common Market country to come to France without a long-term visa and then apply within the country for a residence permit. The French authorities will require such persons to return to their country of residence to apply for the appropriate visa.

It should be noted that the Embassy is not in a position to intervene on behalf of American citizens who, knowingly or unknowingly, enter France without any visa or without the appropriate visa, or who change their plans after arrival in France. Such Americans will have to comply with the French Government visa requirement before they can apply for a "carte de séjour".

How to apply for a "carte de séjour"

To apply for a "carte de séjour", the following basic documents must be submitted (others may be required in individual cases):

- Valid passport with long-stay visa (with photocopy of passport title page and French visa page);
- Three black & white passport-type photographs (3,5x4,5cm);
- Proof of financial resources (applicable in all cases);
- Medical Insurance/Medical certificate issued by a doctor approved by the French Consulate; full translation of a U.S. medical insurance made by a sworn translator;
- Proof of place of residence
- For a student: pre-registration form or letter of admission into a school; proof of French bank account where funds from the U.S. must be deposited.
- For an "Au pair": contract approved by French Ministry of Labor, 80 rue de la Croix Nivert Paris 15e, and pre-registration form or letter of admission into school.
- For a worker: contract with employer.
- One self-addressed and stamped envelope.

Temporary Residence Document

If it is not possible to issue the "carte de séjour" immediately, the applicant will be given a temporary authorization "récépissé de demande de carte de séjour" which is valid for up to three months, and which may be used as evidence that an application has been made for a residence permit. The applicant should carry it until he/she receives his/her "carte de séjour".

To apply, You should inquire at the local police station or at the Mairie (town hall) about procedures for obtaining a "carte de séjour" In some departments, the préfetures have delegated the authority to process such applications to local officials. In others, the American may have to apply at the "Direction de la Réglementation" of the Préfecture or the nearest Sous-Préfecture.

Types of “Cartes de Séjour”

The French authorities issue two types of cards to foreigners, depending on their status: a “carte de séjour temporaire” or a “carte de résident”.

“Cartes de séjour” are issued to individuals 18 years of age and above. Parents of children below the age of 18 should obtain a visa de long séjour for their children before coming to France.

Most Americans coming to France for stays of more than three months are issued a “carte de séjour temporaire”. This card is valid for up to one year, and it may be renewed. There is no fee for the initial “carte de séjour”.

If the Préfectoral authorities decline to renew a “carte de séjour temporaire”, the bearer must leave France before his initial “carte” expires.

The “carte de résident” is for foreigners who come to France with the intention of taking up residence.

It is valid for ten years and renewable if the holder can show proof that he/she either is exercising a profession in France or has sufficient means to maintain himself/herself without being employed in France.

A medical examination is usually required. In order to qualify for a 10 year-card, the foreigner must show proof that he has lived in France for at least three consecutive years. Spouses of French citizens, however, are automatically entitled to the 10 year-card.

Some Information About Required Documents

The most acceptable proof of financial resources is a statement from the applicant's French bank showing account number and amount or a letter from the French bank certifying that the applicant's account is regularly credited with a specified amount from a U.S. or other external source.

For proof of financial sources, students or others who will not be employed can present a notarized letter from their parents (it must be accompanied by a French translation), stating that the parents guarantee to support their son or daughter at a specified rate per month. Distant relatives and friends can also make such statements, but the basis of the relationship and the support must be explained.

Préfecture of Police will require evidence that the student is a full-time student. Before issuing a student's “carte de séjour temporaire”, for example, Préfecture expects to see a pre-registration form which clearly indicates the schedule of classes and the number of hours of study. Préfecture reports that 20 hours is the basic minimum weekly requirement for French-language studies. Students who attend only evening classes or who are enrolled as only auditors (“auditeurs libres”) do not qualify for student status.

Renewal of Residence Permits

To renew a “carte de séjour”, the holder again contacts one of the police centers

to obtain an appointment at the Préfecture of Police. This initial step should be taken one month before the expiration of a “carte de séjour temporaire” (two months for “cartes de résident”).

If Préfecture is satisfied with the explanation given by the applicant, the renewal of the “carte de séjour temporaire” is granted upon payment of FF450 (for workers, as of January 2001), for the others and to obtain more information, please contact directly the information line of your Prefecture.

For renewal of a “carte de séjour” 'salarié' and 'visiteur', the bearer must have proof that he/she has declared and paid (if appropriate) taxes. The documents must be either originals or copies certified by the tax authorities.

For renewal of a student “carte de séjour”, in addition to the documents listed on page 18, the student will have to produce proof of the amounts of money received from the United States during the previous year.

Change of Address

If the holder of a residence permit moves, he/she must inform the police commissariat having jurisdiction over his new place of residence in France. They must present an electricity bill or "quittance de loyer" (rental receipt).

This is especially important if the resident is in the process of renewing his/her “carte de séjour” as the Préfecture de Police will not approve the application unless the change of address has been recorded by the local police in the appropriate space on the card.

B. Employment in France

Americans hoping to enter the French labor market are cautioned that it is very difficult to find employment, either temporary or permanent, in France. To be able to work in France, Americans, except for those in a privileged situation (see below), must have arranged employment approved by the French Ministry of Labor and have obtained a long-stay visa as a worker before entering France (see the page on "Visa Requirements for France").

Americans who disregard the visa requirement and apply in France for a work permit are required to leave the country to obtain the appropriate visa at a French consular office in the United States. Americans should not come to France in the expectation of being able to find a job and to regularize their status after arrival. These expectations are unlikely to be fulfilled and personal hardship may result. Most foreigners are not eligible for French Social Security and unemployment benefits. In some cases, individuals may have difficulties with the French authorities and may face expulsion.

➤ Employment Situation:

Since July 1974 there has been a virtual freeze on the employment of nationals of all countries other than nationals of member countries of the European Common Market. Unemployment in France has been over the three million mark since 1993, and French laws and regulations governing immigration and employment in France are being enforced with increasing rigor.

A few categories of Americans in France are in a privileged position in regard to employment. These are:

- Bearers of carte de résident who have resided in France in that category for ten years
- Spouses of French citizens
- Students who have studied in France two of the preceding years and who have a parent with four years of residence in France.

Most Americans, however, do not fall into any of the privileged categories. The only other Americans who have any chance for full-time employment in France are highly skilled technicians and qualified managerial (“cadre”) personnel. Some students can qualify for part-time au pair employment, and other students can qualify for part-time or summer employment. There are also some voluntary collective work programs. The Consulate cannot assist Americans to find employment in France.

➤ **Employment with American Firms in France:**

The Consulate has no information on employment opportunities with private firms in France. As a rule, American firms with overseas operations keep their American staff to a minimum and the employment of Americans is normally arranged in the U.S., not in France. Americans interested in working in Rennes’ District should contact the domestic employment or personnel offices of U.S. firms.

A detailed list, "American Firms in France", is available at the **American Chamber of Commerce in France**, 21, avenue George-V 75008 Paris (Tel: **01 40 73 89 90**). The Chamber of Commerce itself does not handle inquiries on employment opportunities.

➤ **Establishment of a Business in France**

Americans considering the establishment of a business in the district can best begin by contacting the Commercial Attaché at the U.S. Consulate in Rennes for information and guidance:

Eric Beaty: ebeaty@fr.psinet.com or **02 23 44 09 62**.

➤ **Teaching Positions**

The teaching field in France is largely closed to Americans because teachers in French public secondary schools and the public universities must be French citizens.

At the secondary level, the only exceptions are for teaching assistants. Public universities can hire foreigners as visiting professors (“Professeurs Associés”) or as “Maîtres de Conférences Associés”, “Assistants” and “Lecteurs”.

The Franco-American Commission for Educational Exchange in Paris (Fulbright Commission) can provide information on openings for visiting lecturers in France and has a general information sheet on "Teaching Positions in France" with useful addresses in both France and the United States. Interested persons may write to:

➤ **How to obtain the Ministry of Labor's Authorisation to Work**

The American who finds a prospective employer in France must depend on the employer for the initial and essential step of obtaining the authorization of the French Ministry of Labor to hire him. This authorization is a prerequisite document for the issuance of a long-stay visa by a French Consul in the United States. The American must inform the employer of the French Consulate in the United States at which he will be applying for a visa so that the authorization of the Ministry of Labor can be sent to that office. After the visa has been issued and the American enters France, he must apply at the "Préfecture de Police" at the local "Préfecture" for a "carte de séjour" (see info on Residence Permits /"Cartes de séjour").

➤ **"Carte de Séjour/Résident/Travail"**

A foreigner who wants to reside and work in France receives one of the following documents:

1) A "Carte de Séjour Temporaire Salarié": This type of card is valid for 1 year maximum, with the annotation "salarié" or showing the specific professional activity under which the contract was approved, as well as the French department(s) in which the bearer can be employed. This type of card can be renewed two months before the expiration date and upon presentation of a new work contract. After three years of continuous residence in France, the bearer may request a "carte de résident", which is valid 10 years.

2) A "Carte de Résident": This card is valid 10 years. It is automatically renewed, and authorizes its owner to carry on any professional activity of his choice in all French departments. In order to qualify for a 10-year card, the foreigner must show proof that he has lived in France for at least three consecutive years. Spouses of French citizens are entitled to the 10-year card.

Additional Information

The following book may be very useful:

Working in France, by Pineau, Carol and Kelly, Maureen,
Published and sold by Frank Books, B.P. 29, 94301 Vincennes Cedex, France.
It is available in the US from:

A-L Books, 45 Newbury Street Suite 305, Boston, MA 02116.

➤ **Students in part-time employment**

American and other foreign students in France can, under certain conditions, obtain a temporary work permit ("autorisation provisoire de travail") for part-time work during the summer vacation months or during the regular school year. Students in any school which does not provide French Social Security medical care coverage of students are not eligible for temporary work permits.

If they have completed one academic year of study in France, part-time work during the school year is limited to a maximum of 20 hours per week, and during the summer vacation, a maximum of 39 hours per week. Each year the French Government issues instructions during the last trimester of the academic year governing part-time employment from June 1 of the current year through May 31 of the following year.

Part-time employment during the summer vacation

The following people can be:

- Students pursuing higher (university) studies, including établissements d'enseignement supérieur, facultés, grandes écoles and écoles de préparation aux grandes écoles.
- Students, 16 years and older, in secondary and technical schools (collèges and lycées).
- Students aged 14 and 15 (light work only). Summer work cannot exceed 3 months and must fall within the time frame of June 1 to October 31 except for a maximum of 15 days each for the Christmas & Easter holidays. The work period for students aged 14 & 15 is limited to one-half of their school vacation time.

Part-time employment during the school year

Part-time employment during the second academic year is restricted to American and other foreign students attending French universities and other institutions of higher learning. A student must submit his or her current student card ("Carte d'Etudiant") in order to be eligible. Secondary and technical school students are not eligible.

Temporary work permits are usually given to students who do not have sufficient private resources to pursue their studies.

Thus, recipients of student grants and those who have sufficient means are not authorized to have temporary work permits. Students wishing to work part-time during the school year must, in addition to the usual documents (see below), submit a letter justifying the need to work as a student. The part-time work must fall within the academic year. The temporary work permit is valid for three months and may be renewed upon presentation of evidence of continuing studies.

Where to Apply for Temporary Work Permit

Americans attending French universities should apply for their "Autorisation provisoire de travail" at the Direction Départementale du Travail, Service de la Main d'Oeuvre Etrangère, of the Department in which they are a student.

Documents required

- Valid residence card ("carte de séjour")
- French university student card ("carte d'étudiant")
- Letter from employer stating the following:
 - Name and address of applicant
 - Position of job description
 - Wages offered

- Number of hours worked
- Place of work
- Length of employment.

In addition to the documents listed above, students in French secondary and technical schools must present a letter from their parents authorizing them to work if they are under 18, and foreign students aged 14 and 15 must furnish proof that their parents are legally residing in France. Also, students in secondary and technical schools must present a certificat de scolarité in lieu of a "carte d'étudiant".

How to Find Part-Time Jobs

It is up to the student to find his own job. Those at a French university can consult the Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires (**CROUS**). The CROUS office at each university will have job opportunities on file.

Students can consult the classified sections of local newspapers for job offers, and they can approach hotels, restaurants, service stations, garages, tourist agencies and other establishments likely to need additional employees for the summer season. A good source of information about temporary employment in France is the Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse (**CIDJ**). The CIDJ offers a useful information sheet: "Réglementation et Recherche d'Emploi pour les Etudiants Etrangers pendant les Vacances Universitaires" (No. 5.543).

The Council on International Educational Exchange has negotiated reciprocal agreements with the governments of the U.S. States and France, allowing American students enrolled full-time in an American university or on an American study abroad program to seek temporary employment, by obtaining an "autorisation provisoire de travail" (temporary work permit). This permit may be used for full-time work for a maximum period of three months, at any time of year. Applicants must directly contact the Odeon office of the C.I.E.E.

In the U.S., contact:

Work Abroad, CIEE
205 East 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel: (212) 661-1414

In France, contact:

Work in France, CIEE
1, Place de l'Odéon - 75006 Paris
Tel: 01 44 41 74 74

The annual grape and other agricultural harvests in France offer opportunities to young people for temporary jobs. Also, some summer camps ("colonies de vacances") need foreign students because of their language qualifications. Such employment would not come under the 20 hours per week limitation (ask CIDJ for their information sheet on "Travaux Saisonniers Agricoles").

➤ **“Au pair” employment:**

“Au pair” programs are available to foreign students studying in France, male as well as female.

An “Au pair” receives room, board and spending money in return for light housework, baby-sitting, and help at mealtimes.

These programs are monitored by the French Ministry of Labor which has established the rules and requirements for “Au pair” work. For administrative purposes, an “au pair” is designated as a “stagiaire aide familiale”.

Basic requirements

An “Au pair” must be at least 18 years of age and no more than 30. The student is expected to have a fair knowledge of, and to be studying, the French language. During the school year, a minimum stay of three months is required.

The regular program length is normally one year, but may be extended to a maximum of 18 months. A student may stay with more than one family during the au pair period, but the total stay cannot exceed 18 months.

There are also summer “Au pair” programs of one to three months. In these cases, the requirement that the “Au pair” be taking French courses is waived if the student has completed at least one year of college-level studies in the language.

Social Security Coverage

The family must declare the “au pair” as a “stagiaire aide familiale” to the French Social Security Administration (U.R.S.S.A.F.) and make the monthly contribution (cotisation), so that the “au pair” may receive social security benefits in the event of illness or accidents. As of June 1988, this monthly contribution was approximately 600.00 francs.

Au Pair Visa Requirements

American citizens coming to France to work as “Au pair” must obtain the appropriate “Au pair” visa in the U.S. from the French Consulate having jurisdiction over their place of residence. This requirement is mandatory: it is not possible to enter France as a “tourist” and then change status to that of “Au pair”.

The classic “Au pair” (one who will be taking some French language and civilization courses while working for a French family) should arrange a work agreement or contract directly with a family, or through an “Au pair” organization, and then apply to the Consulate for a visa de long séjour as a “stagiaire aide familiale”.

A work contract approved by the French Ministry of Labor is a prerequisite for a visa. See the Embassy's information sheet on "Visa Requirements for France" for a list of the addresses of French consular offices in the United States.

Americans who have come to France with a student visa and have obtained a residence permit and registered at a French university or school can obtain “Au pair” status after arrival in France.

As in the case of the classic “Au pair”, the student “Au pair” will need to find a family and obtain the French Ministry of Labor's approval of the work contract.

Approval of Work Contract

The French family or “Au pair” organization can obtain contract forms in triplicate from the Foreign Labor Branch of the Ministry of Labor office (Direction Départementale du Travail et de la Main d'Oeuvre) at the Préfecture.

The completed contract forms, signed by both parties, must be returned to the Service de la Main d'Oeuvre Etrangère accompanied by:

- A medical certificate from a doctor who has examined the “au pair” within the last three months, along with a French translation, if not in French
- The student card (if applying as a student already resident in France) or transcript or other evidence of student status in the United States (if applying for the visa in the United States as a regular “Au pair”)

The Service de la Main d'Oeuvre Etrangère will approve and stamp the contract form, returning two copies to the family or organization, which must provide one copy to the au pair for use in applying for the visa and for residence and work permits.

Residence and Work Permits

After arrival in France with a visa, the classic “Au pair” must apply within eight days for a residence permit (please see the page on “Residence Permits/”Cartes de séjour” for France”).

Along with their work contract, the classic “Au pair” must present evidence of registration in a French language school (Alliance Française, the Sorbonne, etc.). **Evening classes are not acceptable.**

Having obtained a “carte de séjour”, the “Au pair” returns to the “Service de la Main d'Oeuvre Etrangère” to receive a temporary work permit (autorisation provisoire de travail). The permit is normally valid for six months, and is renewable.

C. Directions Régionales/Départementales du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle (DRTEFP/DDTEFP):

BRITTANY

Direction Régionale du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle

13-15, rue Dupont des Loges
BP 3147

35031 Rennes Cedex

Tel: 02 99 31 57 04

Fax: 02 99 30 46 00

<http://www.sdtefp-bretagne.travail.gouv.fr>

DDTEFP Côtes-d'Armor

Place du Président Salvador Allende
BP 2248
22022 Saint-Brieuc-Cedex 2
Tel: 02 96 62 65 65 Fax: 02 96 62 65 99

DDTEFP Finistère

6, venelle de Kergos
29196 Quimper Cedex
Tel: 02 98 55 63 02 Fax: 02 98 55 83 55

DDTEFP Ille-et-Vilaine

18, avenue Henri Fréville
BP 41105
35041 Rennes Cedex
Tel: 02 99 26 57 57 Fax: 02 99 26 57 52

DDTEFP Morbihan

Parc Pompidou
Rue de Rohan - CP 3457
56034 Vannes
Tel: 02 97 26 26 26 Fax: 02 97 26 26 39

LOIRE REGION

Direction Régionale du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle

26, boulevard Vincent Gâche
BP 46339
44263 Nantes Cedex 2
Tel: 02 40 41 72 00 Fax: 02 40 89 22 44
<http://www.drtefp-paysdelaloire.travail.gouv.fr>

DDTEFP Loire-Atlantique

Tour de Bretagne
Place de Bretagne
44047 Nantes Cedex 01
Tel: 02 40 12 35 00

Fax: 02 40 12 35 90

DDTEFP Maine-et-Loire

7, rue Bouche Thomas
49043 Angers Cedex 01
Tel: 02 41 54 53 52

Fax: 02 41 47 14 85

DDTEFP Mayenne

Cité administrative
Rue Mac Donald - BP 3850
53030 Laval Cedex 9
Tel: 02 43 67 60 60

Fax: 02 43 67 60 71

DDTEFP Sarthe

11, avenue René Laënnec
72018 Le Mans Cedex
Tel: 02 43 39 41 41

Fax: 02 43 28 64 71

DDTEFP Vendée

Cité Administrative Travot
BP 789
85020 La Roche-Sur-Yon Cedex
tel: 02 51 45 21 00

fax: 02.51.37.88.51

LOWER NORMANDY

DDTEFP Calvados

3, place Saint-Clair
BP70034
14202 Hérouville Saint-Clair Cedex
Tel: 02 31 47 74 00

Fax: 02 31 47 73 01

DDTEFP Manche

Centre d'Affaires Atlantique
Boulevard Félix Amiot - BP 240
50100 Cherbourg Cedex

Tel: 02 33 88 32 00

Fax: 02 33 88 32 32

DDTEFP Orne

57, rue Cazault
61013 Alençon Cedex

Tel: 02 33 82 54 00

Fax: 02 33 82 54 49