



VISA TRAVEL OPTIONS FOR CES

Business Visitors (B-1 and ESTA Visa Waiver Program travel)

Foreign nationals may conduct business activities for up to 90 days when entering the United States with ESTA, pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program. Travel for more than 90 days, but up to six months, will require a B-1 visa obtained at a U.S. consulate. Additional information regarding the Visa Waiver Program may be found [here](#). Travelers applying for ESTA may apply [here](#).

Permissible Activities on ESTA/B-1 Visa

Activities that are incidental to work that will principally be performed outside of the U.S., including:

- Participating in a trade show, conference, or seminar
- Attending business meetings
- Taking orders for goods manufactured abroad
- Negotiating contracts

Prohibited Activities on ESTA/B-1 Visa

Business visitors should not engage in productive work activities. Activities that result in a benefit to a U.S. employer are often categorized as productive work. The Foreign Affairs manual contains helpful guidance on permitted activities in [9 FAM 402.2-5](#).

Alternative Options Providing U.S. Work Authorization

E-2 VISA

The [E-2 Treaty Investor visa](#) is available to nationals of a country which holds a treaty with the United States and has invested a substantial amount of capital in a real and operating commercial enterprise in the United States. The employee seeking to enter the U.S. using an E-2 visa must be:

- an executive/supervisory employee; or
- employed in a position that requires skills essential to the company's operation.

Initial company E-2 registration with the U.S. consulate is required but, once the company has been registered, additional employees may apply for E-2 visas with abbreviated application packages.

L-1 VISA

The L-1 Intracompany Transferee visa is available to employees of multinational companies who have been **employed with a foreign entity for a continuous period of at least one year** before seeking to transfer to a related U.S. entity with a qualifying relationship.

The transferee must be either:

- a manager of people or an essential business function; or
- a specialized knowledge employee with unique knowledge of the company's products, services, equipment, techniques or advanced knowledge of the company's processes and procedures.

Employees of multinational companies holding a blanket L-1 approval are eligible to apply for an L-1 visa directly at the consulate with a letter of support from their employer and a copy of the L-1 blanket petition approval.

H-2B VISA

The H-2B visa permits the temporary hire to perform labor or services in the U.S. The employment must be of a temporary nature for a limited period of time. Additional information for employers seeking to participate in the H-2B program is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Please visit the [Visa Wizard](#), a U.S. government website, for additional guidance on visas for temporary visits or work.

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