

SHORT-STAY 'C' VISA TO VISIT FAMILY MEMBERS IN IRELAND

1. What is a Short Stay 'C' Visa?

A short stay 'C' visa acts as a pre-clearance to enter the Irish State. It does not guarantee a right to enter the State and a final decision will be made by INIS or GNIB officials at the State border. A 'C' visa is granted for a maximum of 90 days. Persons with a 'C' visa are not required to register with GNIB and do not have any residency rights in the State and may not work or study in the State for the duration of their stay.

2. Do I need a Short Stay 'C' Visa to travel to Ireland?

If you **do not** fit within one of the following categories of people then you will be required to have a visa to travel to Ireland:

- 1) EEA Nationals;
- 2) Non-visa required nationals – Citizens of countries listed in S.I. 345 of 2011 Schedule 1;
- 3) People coming within the terms of the Visa Waiver Programme – Citizens of Bahrain, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Montenegro, Oman, Peoples Republic of China, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan who hold a 'General visa' to enter Britain;
- 4) Holders of a 1951 Geneva Convention Travel Document issued by Belgium, Czech

Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden or Switzerland;

- 5) Family Members of Union citizens who hold residence cards as referred to in Article 12 of Directive 2004/38EC and are travelling with their EU citizen family member.

3. How do I make an application?

Step 1: An online application can be made through the INIS website (<https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx>). You must complete the online application form in English. Once you have completed the first pages of the application form you will be issued with a visa transaction number. Keep this number safe as you will require this number to log back into your online application should the webpage expire or should you wish to return to it at a later date. As you come to the end of your application you will have the opportunity to review all the information you have entered and to print this. Once you click the 'Submit' box on the final page you will not have the opportunity to edit any of the information provided in the application. On clicking submit you will be allowed to print a visa summary sheet. This sheet contains details of your visa application and the address to which supporting documentation should be sent. This summary sheet must be signed by the applicant and returned with the supporting documentation.

Step 2: The supporting documentation and signed summary sheet must be sent, within a specified time period, to the embassy or consulate named on the summary sheet. Failure to send in the visa summary sheet and the supporting documentation within this time period will result in the application being deemed withdrawn.

4. What type of information is required for the only application form?

You should have the following details to hand when making a visa application:

- 1) Your passport number and the passport numbers of any expired passports;
- 2) Details of previous applications (both successful and unsuccessful) that you have made;
- 3) The name, address and phone number of your main family member in Ireland;
- 4) The names, addresses, phone numbers, '69' type number (if applicable) and passport numbers of your family members/host in Ireland;
- 5) The name, address and contact details of your employer (if applicable);
- 6) Names of, and relationship to, people that you are travelling with;
- 7) Details of any criminal convictions in Ireland or abroad (if applicable);
- 8) Proposed dates of travel.

The full list of questions is available on the INIS information note (http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Information_on_completing_your_online_application) on completing the online visa application, which is available in several languages.

5. What if I submitted incorrect information in the online visa application?

The INIS policy is clear in this respect:

“If you provide false, fraudulent or misleading information or documentation, your application will be refused, without any right to appeal. Any future applications made by you will also be refused.”

If you have inadvertently made a mistake on the online visa application form you should contact the visa office for further advice. If the error is of a minor nature then you may be able to correct the information provided in a covering letter.

6. What documentation is required?

Failure to provide sufficient documentation is one of the most common reasons for refusal of a visa application. Please note that all documentation provided must be in English or accompanied with a notarised translation. **Provision of the all the required documentation will not guarantee a successful application.**

The following documentation must be provided in all circumstances however we also recommend checking the website of the embassy you are applying to for any additional requirements:

- Online application form;
- Signed summary form;
- 2 x passport sized photographs (signed on reverse);
- Fee;
- Cover-letter;
- Passport valid for 6 months after the date of departure from the State;
- Copy of expired passport (if applicable);
- Letter of Invitation from your family member in Ireland;
- Written undertaking by you confirming that you will adhere to the conditions of your visa;
- Written undertaking by your family member confirming that you will adhere to the conditions of your visa;
- Written consent of both parents to the application if the applicant is a child under the age of 18. The written consent should be accompanied by a copy of each parent's identity document which also bears their signature;
- Evidence of any previous visa refusals (if applicable);
- **Evidence of relationship between you and your family member in Ireland:** You should provide documentation to establish the nature of your relationship with your family member (when applying for a child you should provide the original birth certificate). In addition, evidence of the relationship should be submitted e.g. family photos, evidence of correspondence incl. phone bills, international call cards, Skype

/Facebook records, greetings cards, letters and any evidence of previous time spent together including flight booking details, boarding passes.

- **Evidence of the family member's residency in the State:** You should establish that your family member is legally resident in the State. If your family member is an Irish or EEA national you should provide a copy of their national passport. If not, then you should provide a copy of their passport and a copy of their up-to-date GNIB card. Additionally, you should provide proof of their address in the State by submitting up-to-date utility bills. You should also provide details of any additional family members living in the State.
- **Evidence that you have permission to return to the country of your residence on expiry of your visa:** If you are currently living in a country of which you are not a citizen you must establish that you have a right to return there following the expiry of your visa in Ireland. You will be required to prove that your residency in that State will not expire for at least three months after your proposed date of departure from the State.
- **Evidence that you intend to return to your country of permanent residence on expiry of your visa (obligation to return):** You need to prove to the visa office that you intend to abide by the terms of your visa application and return to your country of residence on the expiry of your visa. If you

have a spouse or children living in the country of your residence you should include your marriage certificate and their birth certificates in the application. If you are in employment you should provide a letter (on headed paper) from your employer stating how long you have been employed there, the date you will be on annual leave from, the date you will be returning to work in that employment, and your three most recent payslips. If you are a student you should provide a letter from your college (on headed paper) stating the course you are studying, how many years you have been a student there, how many years/terms you have left at that college, and that you will be returning there following your visit to Ireland. You should also detail any other commitments which would require you to return to your country of residence e.g. care of an elderly relative.

- **Evidence of financial circumstances:** You will be required to provide that evidence that you will not become a burden on the State during your time in Ireland and that there are sufficient funds available to cover the cost of your travel to and your stay in the State. You must submit an up-to-date original and detailed bank account statement covering the past six months. If you have any financial resources which you also wish to be taken into account you should also provide evidence of these e.g. savings accounts. Your family member should also provide a detailed six month

bank statement. Your application may be strengthened by showing evidence of your family member's economic activity in the State e.g. evidence of family members employment in the State.

7. What information should my coverletter contain?

The cover-letter should outline your reasons for wishing to visit Ireland and detail any family members living in Ireland who are not named on your visa application form. You should outline how long you plan on staying in the State. Your cover-letter should specifically address your obligation to return home after your visa expires. You should detail all the reasons why you will return to your country of residence on expiry of your visa. Your cover-letter should also address any the reasons for previous visa refusals as previous visa refusals may be viewed as prejudicial. Your cover-letter should specifically contain an undertaking that you will observe the conditions of your visa, that you will not become a burden on the State, and that you will leave the State on the expiry of your permission to remain.

8. What information should a letter of invitation contain?

The letter of invitation should be written by your family member in Ireland. Your family member should outline the length of your proposed stay in Ireland and confirm that they will provide accommodation/ board/financial assistance to you for the duration of that stay. The letter should be

addressed to the embassy to which you are sending your documents.

9. I have previously been refused a visa –will that affect my current visa application?

You must disclose all previous visa refusals when making a visa application. A previous visa refusal can be prejudicial to your current application and may be viewed as having an adverse immigration history. You should include letters of refusal with your application and then address each of the reasons for refusal. If your last visa application was refused on the basis that you provided false or misleading information your current application may automatically be refused.

10. In what circumstances will a 'C' visa be extended?

'C' visas will generally not be extended. However INIS have recently introduced the option of granting a Stamp 0 to people who have entered the State on a 'C' visa and, due to exceptional circumstances e.g. the death or illness of a close family member living in the State may need to stay longer than originally applied for. Applications may be made to INIS and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. In addition under section 4(7) of the Immigration Act 2004 the Minister or an immigration officer has the power to vary the terms of your leave to land.

11. What happens if I overstay my visa application?

If you have stayed past the expiry of your visa permission you are no longer legally resident in the

State. Overstaying your visa may impact on your ability to successfully apply for visas in the future. If you wish to apply for residency in the State you should seek legal advice as soon as possible.

12. How long will the visa application take?

The INIS website states that applications are processed within, on average, four to six weeks. Some applications can take as long as several months to be processed.

13. Will my documents be returned to me?

Original documents such as birth certificates and marriage certificates will be returned to you. Bank Statements and letters from employers, for example, may be retained by the visa office. If you require specific documents to be returned you should include an itemised list of documents that you wish to have returned to you with your application.

14. Do I need medical insurance for the duration of my stay?

Yes, proof of this will be required before entering the State.

15. Where can I get further information?

Further information is available on the INIS website (<http://inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Irish%20Visa%20Information>).

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