

US-China Fast-Track Travel Channel Program FAQ

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Details are subject to change at any time

What is the purpose of the Fast-Track Travel Channel Program (the “Program”)?

The purpose of the Program is to provide a more efficient, predictable, and reliable channel for essential US company executives, technical personnel, and their families and dependents to travel from the US to China.

The Program would also ensure that businesspeople living in China who need to return to the US for family or business reasons can return to China.

What are the eligibility requirements for the Program?

For travelers:

- The Program is open to employees of US companies and their family members, whether based in the US or elsewhere. The scope of the Program includes travelers of all nationalities.
- Travelers must provide a compelling business reason to justify their necessity for urgent travel to China. Travel should be for essential business that contributes to trade, and China’s economic development.
- Dependent family members under the age of 18 are eligible.
- Travelers must show proof of vaccination (except for minors under the age of three and/or where regulations allow).

All companies MUST:

- Be a US company (see below for definition).
- Have a valid business license (“营业执照”) and be registered in China.
- Be a member company of either AmCham China, AmCham Shanghai, or the US-China Business Council.
- Submit the applications on behalf of the invited traveler(s).

To qualify as a US company under the terms of the Program, companies must meet **one** of the following criteria:

- Company’s headquarters are located in the United States.
- Company’s primary investment capital is from the United States.

What are AmCham China’s responsibilities for PU letter, Visa, and Health Code applications?

For PU letter:

AmCham China will collect all required documents (including passport information, business license etc.), verify AmCham China membership, and carefully screen applicants for their eligibility into the Program.

For eligible travelers, AmCham China will then send an official letter to the local Foreign Affairs Office (FAO) supporting their participation in the Program.

For Visa:

Using the PU letter, travelers will need to independently apply for their visa in accordance with China's immigration requirements. AmCham China is unable to play any role in this step.

For Health Code:

When traveling to China, travelers must comply with China's entry requirements and quarantine rules, which includes vaccination and testing. Travelers should check regularly on their local Chinese Embassy or Consulate website for the latest travel and quarantine requirements. Part of the process includes submitting negative test results prior to travel in order to receive a green health code issued by the local Chinese Embassy or Consulate. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has assured us that travelers in our Program should not experience issues related to the issuance of a green health code.

What is a PU letter?

A PU letter is an invitation letter issued by the relevant FAO for travelers and their dependents to support their visa application. The requirements for a PU letter may vary in different local district FAOs.

What are the benefits of the Program compared to regular PU letter process?

Under our fast-track process, AmCham China will provide a cover letter to provincial/municipal FAOs to expedite the PU letter issuance process and to enhance the chances of approval. Under the Program, companies will be instructed by AmCham China to submit their information directly to the provincial/municipal FAOs (bypassing the district FAOs), reducing PU letter issuance time to between five (5) and ten (10) business days, down from the current processing time of up to two months.

Is quarantine covered under the Program?

No. Travelers are required to adhere to China's entry and health requirements. These requirements could change as conditions warrant. Quarantine hotels are designated by local authorities and travelers under the Program will not receive any special treatment with regards to quarantine.

What qualifies as a "necessity for urgent travel" to China?

The Chinese government has stressed that there are still strict COVID-19 travel restrictions in place and that people should only travel if they have an "urgent need" to do so. Applicants for PU letters must provide a detailed explanation to demonstrate their urgency and necessity to travel to China, as it relates to their company's business impact and their role therein. The provincial/municipal FAO will make the final determination on whether the applicant meets this criterion.

Can family members be included on the PU letter application?

Yes. Family members are restricted to the main applicant's spouse and children under 18 years old. The Beijing FAO has informed us that they will not allow any exceptions to this rule.

Do family members all need to travel on the same flight?

No. Family members travelling separately can still apply together on a single application for a PU letter.

What types of visas will be issued under the Program?

There are three types of eligible visas that can be issued under the Program: Z (work), M (business), and S1 (family dependent).

What happens if the information contained in the application has changed after submission?

If the information provided is incorrect or has changed after submission, the company will need to resubmit the application. The applicant should notify AmCham China of any changes immediately.

What are the costs for participating in the Program?

The administrative fee for each PU letter application is RMB 7,000. This fee, which is non-refundable and is in line with market costs for similar services, will enable AmCham China to pay for the resources necessary to create and maintain the Program. Each PU letter application refers to each family submission, so if an employee applies together with his or her spouse and family dependent members, the cost for the entire family will still be RMB 7,000.

Can I apply for a PU letter in Beijing or in another province or region?

Yes. The Program covers all of mainland China.

After submitting the application material, how long will it take to receive approval (or not)?

AmCham China will submit applications in batches to the local FAOs, as per their request. The timing for submissions is subject to the volume of applications and the travel dates of the applicants.

Can companies use the regular channel to apply for PU letters?

Yes. The regular application channel for PU letter is still available to companies, depending on the current regulations of the location. If you are not enrolled in the Program, you will need to apply at the district level for a PU letter; this process could take up to two months and could be subject to additional restrictions as per the local FAO.

Can travelers reapply for a PU letter if they have previously been refused?

Yes. However, there is no guarantee for approval. The final decision on PU letters rests with the local FAOs.

Do I need to include a copy of my AmCham China PU cover letter for my visa and health code application?

This is not a Chinese government requirement, but we recommend that you include your cover letter from AmCham China with your visa application and health code submission to show that you are officially in the Program.

If I have a valid Chinese Foreigner's Residence Permit (外国人居留许可) and do not need a PU letter, how can I benefit from joining the Program?

If you are currently in China and already have valid documents to re-enter China, AmCham China will issue eligible members a cover letter to assist with the issuance of their green health code. This letter will confirm that you are part of the Program and will be issued by AmCham China free of charge. MOFA has assured us that travelers in our Program should not experience issues related to the issuance of a green health code.

Can an individual employee of a US company apply for PU letter?

No. The US company must apply for a PU letter on behalf of the traveler.

Are employees of international schools eligible for the Program?

Currently, companies eligible for the Program must have a valid business license (“营业执照”), which most international schools in China do not have. AmCham China will continue to advocate for the inclusion of all international schools in the Program in the future.

Does this Program have government support?

Yes. On December 1, 2021, MOFA formally approved this Program and has since provided policy advice on the Program to provincial FAOs in China, as well as to Chinese Embassies and Consulates worldwide.

PLEASE NOTE THAT AMCHAM CHINA DOES NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE APPROVAL OR OTHERWISE OF YOUR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS OR FOR THE AUTHENTICITY OF THEM. THE TRAVELER AND HIS OR HER COMPANY MUST ACCEPT FULL RESPONSIBILITY – FINANCIAL, LEGAL, OR OTHERWISE – RELATING TO ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY COSTS THAT MAY BE INCURRED FROM QUARANTINE OR ILLNESS IN CHINA.