



Dear Future AFSer/Applicant,

Please find enclosed general instructions on obtaining a **D/VC Student Visa** for the Czech Republic. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** As you will note, obtaining a visa is a detailed and time consuming process, and for this reason, visa information is sent not only to students who are guaranteed, but also to students whose applications are still in review. It is important that you begin preparing for this process immediately.

Visa documents submitted by you later than the deadline (see below) will most likely result in your traveling late or not being able to participate in the program. You are responsible for any additional cost incurred by your late submission of documents.

Obtaining a Passport

If you still do not have a passport, you must apply for one **immediately!** You cannot obtain any other type of travel or residence authorization without a valid passport and it will take approximately 4-6 weeks to obtain one. If you delay in obtaining your passport, you will need to request that your passport application be “expedited” (rushed) which will mean an additional cost.

Additional Support Documents

In order for AFS to obtain your visa for the Czech Republic, along with the completed visa application and other documents required by the Czech authorities, **we will also need additional support documents and approvals which are provided by AFS-Czech Republic and the Czech Government. AFS-Czech Republic will prepare these documents and forward them to the AFS USA office in New York as soon as your placement has been confirmed. AFS USA will then immediately apply for your visa.**

The process of obtaining the necessary approvals and documentation for this process can take time and in some cases, possible delays may result. **If your documentation does not arrive within adequate time to obtain a visa, you may have to travel later than originally scheduled. Staff in the National Offices of both AFS-USA and AFS in Czech Republic will continue to monitor the situation closely in the up coming months. Be assured that AFS-Czech Republic is doing everything possible to have all placements confirmed as early as possible.** In addition to this, visa and immigration

regulations are constantly changing. Participants who we feel may not be able to travel as scheduled will be notified approximately two weeks prior to the original departure date.

Domestic Travel

Regarding your domestic travel to the gateway orientation site, please do not book any tickets until you receive what we call the *Travel Notification Packet* in the mail from the AFS USA Travel and Logistics Department. This packet will give you important detailed information about travel and logistics for your trip. AFS always recommends that participants book domestic tickets that are both refundable and changeable. This is due in part to the possibility of changes in international flights students will be taking to return home, but also due to the fact that complications may arise in obtaining visas and these complications can at times delay a student's departure. **Please note that participants will be responsible for paying any penalties incurred for changes they may need to make in their domestic travel in the event that they are not able to obtain their visa in time for their scheduled departure.**

Taking Trips before the Start of your Program

You should not plan any excursions outside of the United States **three months** prior to your program. As mentioned before, obtaining a visa takes time and your passport will be required. Should you choose to travel before the start of your program and not allow enough time for AFS to procure your visa, **you will run the risk of not being able to participate on this program.**

Getting Started

We have included here some additional information concerning the visa application process for the Czech Republic. AFS will obtain this visa for you. It is very important, however, that you follow the accompanying instructions very carefully and comply with all the requirements.

Should you have any questions or require assistance, do not hesitate to contact your Admissions Advisor at 800-237-4636.

Sincerely,

AFS-Visa Team



VISA INFORMATION

CZECH REPUBLIC YEAR AND SEMESTER PROGRAMS 2008-09

A visa is required for your entry and stay in the Czech Republic. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** To do so you must follow these instructions carefully and promptly. **DO NOT WAIT** to begin this process. Any procrastination, errors or omissions will involve delays that could jeopardize your travel arrangements. The visa process takes approximately three months. **It is very important that you return the following items to AFS immediately or no later than May 15th.**

In January 2000, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs implemented a series of changes to obtaining a Long Stay Study Visa for the Czech Republic. Once your visa application is submitted to the consulate, it will be reviewed and forwarded directly to the Ministry in the Czech Republic for approval. This process is very time consuming and can take over three months in some cases. AFS can only submit your application once documentation regarding your program has been provided by both AFS-Czech Republic and the Czech Government. AFS will carefully monitor the processing of your visa and contact you immediately if there are any complications. Unfortunately, there is no way that we nor the consulate can anticipate the date your visa will be released. In most cases that involve delays, participants will be contacted approximately two weeks prior to departure.

It is very important that you follow these instructions carefully and comply with all the consulate's requirements. Any mistakes or delays will prevent the consulate from sending your application to the Czech Republic for approval.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO SEND AFS:

1. **UNITED STATES PASSPORT**: + 3 copies of picture/signature page.

Yes, you must send AFS your passport since the visa is a stamp that the consulate will affix to one of its free pages.

- Your passport must be ***signed*** and valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay. (An unsigned passport is not considered valid.)

If you hold a passport from a country other than the US, please call your Admissions Advisor **IMMEDIATELY** at 1-800-237-4636. Additional documents may be required. If you do not yet have your U.S. passport, you must apply **RIGHT AWAY**. You can not apply for a visa without a valid passport. In some cases, you may have to expedite (a rush service) your passport application at an additional cost. Normal processing time may take 4-6 weeks excluding peak seasons. You can inquire at your local post office or check the State Department website at <http://travel.state.gov/> about how and where you can apply.

2. **APPLICATION FORM** (enclosed) + 1 copy

- Thoroughly fill out the entire form. Do not forget to sign the form!
- Make sure to print out the application form on a **color printer**, as **the form needs to be in red**. If you do not have a color printer, you can go to Kinko's or another copyshop and print the form out there. The consulate will not accept the application otherwise!
- Please refer to the enclosed sample application to help you properly complete the form.
- Use only a ball point pen with blue or black ink to complete the application, do not use pencil or red ink.
- Sign and date (day/month/year) where indicated, complete without dots or hyphens.
- **Write your full name, including your middle name, as it is written in your passport on all documents.**
- The application must be completed in legible, **all capital** letters.
- Question 28: **Schengen states** are a number of states within Europe that have a mutual border agreement, they include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

3. **TWO (2) COLOR PASSPORT-TYPE PHOTOGRAPHS**

- Digital prints, snapshots or graduation photos are **not** acceptable.
- Photos must have a **FULL FACE VIEW**, side or angled views are not accepted.
- Write your name on the back of each photo.
- The background must be white or light blue.

4. **DOCUMENT CONFIRMING SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

- Two **notarized** copies of **both sides** of a credit card (Visa, Mastercard...) in **your name** and with a validity for at least the duration of your stay in the Czech Republic. You may cover part of the credit card number before you make a copy of it.

5. **NOTARIZED COPY OF YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE** + 2 Copies

- You will need to submit **a notarized copy of your birth certificate** so that the consulate can request an **international report of no criminal activity** for you.

6. **REQUEST FOR CZECH CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK** (enclosed) + 1 Copy

- Please refer to sample when completing this form.
- Must be fully completed and your **signature must be notarized** by a Notary Public.

7. **AFFIDAVIT FORM** (enclosed) + 1 Copy

- Fill out and sign where indicated.

This form must be notarized by a notary public.

8. **PROCESSING FEE**

- The consulate will charge a processing fee of **\$168.00**. (*Please note that this fee changes every two weeks*). This includes a fee of \$12 for the Criminal History Record.
- The payment should be a **MONEY ORDER** made payable to the **Consulate General of Czech Republic**. **The consulate will not accept personal checks.**

Please send the above items to us **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** or **no later than May 15th**. Please use a traceable mail service such as UPS, DHL or Federal Express and remember to retain your tracking number. *Do not use regular, certified, priority or delivery confirmation mail. The US Postal Service will not be able to locate your package should it become lost in their care.* Please send these items to:

International Documents/ CZE NH08
AFS-USA
One Whitehall St., 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10004

NOTE: Please do not call AFS to check if your documents were received. AFS will contact you in case something is missing or if documents are not received

in time. You can check with your delivery service to see if the package was delivered.

YOUR PASSPORT AND VISA WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT YOUR GATEWAY ORIENTATION.

Before sending your passport, remember to retain a copy for your records. Please check with your airline carrier for an alternative form of identification for domestic travel to your orientation.

If you have questions regarding these instructions, please do not hesitate to contact your **Admission Advisor** in Portland at **1-800-237-4636**.

AFS will apply for your visa. Visa requirements, issuance regulations and fees are established by government authorities and/or consular officials, who reserve the right to make changes at any time. Please note that AFS cannot intercede to revoke decisions made by these authorities. Therefore AFS is not responsible for any changes in requirements or fees that occur after we have provided you with these instructions.