

## **PHOTOGRAPH REQUIREMENTS FOR NON IMMIGRANT VISAS**

- a. The photograph **WITHOUT** glasses of each visa applicant must be an unmounted full-face photo taken within the past six months. A “full face” photo is one in which the applicant is facing the camera directly. The applicant should not be looking down or to either side, and the face should cover about 50 percent of the area of the photo. Although variations in hair styles and in head coverings make it difficult to rigorously define the term “face”, in general, the head of the applicant, including both face and hair, should be shown from the crown of the head to the tip of the chin on top and bottom, and from hairline side-to-side. It is preferable that the ears be exposed. The key requirement is that the photograph clearly identifies the applicant.
- b. The photograph should measure 2 inches square (roughly 50mm square) with the head centered in the frame. The head (measured from the top of the hair to the bottom of the chin) should measure between 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches (25mm to 35 mm) with the eye level between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches (28 mm and 35 mm) from the bottom of the photo. Photos may be either in color or black and white and must be taken against a white or off-white background. Photos should be printed without borders. Photos should be stapled or glued to Form DS-156, Nonimmigrant Visa Application. If the photograph is stapled, the staples should be placed as far away as possible from the applicant’s face. Photos taken in front of busy, patterned, or dark backgrounds will **not** be accepted.
- c. Head coverings and hats are only acceptable due to religious beliefs, and even then, may not obscure any portion of the face of the applicant. Sunglasses or other paraphernalia, which detracts from the face, as defined above are **not** acceptable unless required for medical reasons (an eye patch, for example). A photograph depicting a person wearing a traditional facemask or veil that does not permit adequate identification is **not** acceptable. Photos of military, airline or other personnel wearing hats are **not** acceptable. Photographs of applicants wearing tribal, national costume or other headgear not specifically religious in nature are **not** acceptable.
- d. Since a separate visa is issued to each qualified applicant, an individual photo is required in all cases. Group photos are **not** acceptable.

Last Updated/Reviewed: 31 March 2005