Dependents

Policy

A dependent is an individual (spouse or child under the age of 21 who is not married) who accompanies the primary student to the U.S. The student's designation is an F-1, and any dependents would be F-2s. Dependents are only allowed to remain in the U.S. as long as the primary (F-1) is in status. A dependent would have his or her own I-20 and it will be valid for the length of time that the F-1 student's I-20 is valid. Prior to issuing an I-20 to a dependent, the F-1 student will need to document additional funding to demonstrate that resources are available to cover all costs of the dependents living in the U.S. Students must demonstrate a total of $5,000 for each dependent that they wish to bring. $5000 is designated for personal expenses. Insurance for F-2 Dependents is not required but HIGHLY recommended. If you wish to purchase insurance from Baylor for your dependents, you need to contact the Insurance Office at this link: Insurance. If you choose to use Baylor's insurance for your dependents, you must notify the Baylor Insurance Office by the 12th class day of each fall or spring semester if your dependents will not be in the U.S. during those terms and you do not want to be billed. If you or your dependents leave the U.S. in the middle of any term, you will still be charged for the entire term - insurance fees cannot be refunded or prorated for a few months. It is your responsibility to let the Insurance Office know if your dependents are no longer in the U.S.

When considering whether to bring a dependent with you, there are several important considerations. The first semester of any academic program can be challenging for any student. When a student is coming to a new culture and will also be communicating in a language other than
his or her primary language, this can create an even more difficult situation. For this reason, the Center for Global Education recommends that students come for one semester without any dependents so they can focus on transitioning to the new culture and on beginning their academic program. There are benefits and drawbacks to bringing dependents the first semester as well as for waiting for one semester. Each student in consultation with his or her program advisor will need to consider what is best. This information is put forth as the CGE’s recommendation. It is not a policy.

Some issues for the student to consider:

- How strong are the student’s English language skills? How strong are the dependent’s English language skills?
- What previous experience does the student or their dependents have in the United States?
- What will the dependents do while the student is in classes/studying? (remember they cannot work)
- Does the student have the financial means to support them while they are here?
- Will the dependent be able to drive? Will the student or dependent have a car?

To qualify for F-2 status, a spouse or unmarried, minor (under age 21) child must establish to the satisfaction of the consular officer and the immigration officer at the port of entry that:

- He or she is the spouse (as evidenced by a valid marriage certificate) or child (as evidenced by a valid birth certificate) of the F-1 principal;
- He or she has sufficient funds to cover his/her expenses, or that other arrangements have been made to provide for such expenses once in the United States;
- He or she intends to leave the United States upon the completion of the status of the principal F-1 student;
- If the dependents are following to join the student, "the F-1 student is, or will be within 30 days, enrolled in a full course of study or engaged in approved practical training following completion of studies."

Benefits and Restrictions:

- An F-2 spouse or F-2 child may enroll in less than a full course of study at a college or university. If the F-2 enrolls at Baylor for even 1 credit, then they will be charged for Baylor’s health insurance.
- An F-2 spouse or F-2 child is not eligible to engage in employment.
- An F-2 child may engage in full-time study, including any full course of study, in any elementary or secondary school (kindergarten through twelfth grade)

Expenses

Procedure

1. An F-1 student should consult with a Baylor DSO about bringing any dependents.
2. The F-1 student will be required to show financial documentation based on the required funding for dependents determined by Baylor.
3. Once the initial I-20 is created and sent to the dependents, they must follow all steps for getting a visa and
4. If a dependent decides to leave the country, the F-1 should notify a DSO to discuss any possible implications regarding re-entering the U.S., insurance, etc.

If you are already at Baylor University and want to bring your dependents, please use the link below. If you are not currently at Baylor University, you will request to add your dependents when you request your initial I-20 (you should not use the link below).

Request to Add Dependents