



Embassy of the United States of America
100 Duke & Young Streets, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana

Installment One Hundred and Three

Ask the Consul – Invitations to Visit and Immigration Issues

This edition of Ask the Consul addresses three common questions asked at the U.S. Embassy. The first applies to applicants being petitioned to migrate, the others are about ties and invitations to visit.

I am applying for an immigrant visa. Do I need to tell the Consular Officer about my previous immigration and/or police problems even though they were years ago? Does it matter if I was convicted of a crime or not?

Yes! You do need to tell the Consular Officer the truth about any previous immigration and/ or police problems that you may have had. Part of your application for an immigrant visa is a form which specifically includes questions about previous immigration infractions and problems with the police.

The Consular Officer needs you to tell them about it, even if it happened many years ago and regardless of whether or not you were convicted. It is much better for your immigrant visa case for you to be honest and upfront than for the Consul to discover your history by other means. Also, remember that you have verbally sworn to tell the truth in your immigrant visa interview and have signed your application stating that all the information is true and complete to the best of your knowledge.

Failure to disclose previous voluntary returns, deportations, entry without inspections, and nonimmigrant visa overstays, arrests, detentions, or convictions, etc. will only lead to a loss of credibility on your part and a long

delay while the Embassy reviews your case. Failure to tell the truth may even lead to an ineligibility that will prevent you from receiving a visa.

If you have any Department of Homeland Security, court, or police records from the U.S. or any other country, it is advisable to bring copies with you to the interview so that your immigrant visa process can proceed quickly.

I was invited to visit the U.S. by an American citizen. If my friend in America will pay for my travel, do I need to bring all of my own documents, such as bank and job letters, or will the invitation alone be sufficient?

In order to qualify for a tourist or business visa, every applicant must successfully demonstrate strong ties to Guyana and the intention to return to Guyana following a brief stay in the United States. This requirement applies to all those wishing to travel to the United States, regardless of whether they have an invitation from an American citizen or not. The officers do not look at any documents at all for tourists' visas. Your ties to Guyana, personal background and reasons for travel are the most important factors in the decision.

What constitutes ties?

Consular officers consider many factors. For example, the Consular officer may ask about your employment, personal financial situation, and family here in Guyana, family in the United States, or previous travel to the United States and other countries. We understand that each applicant has a different background. It is your responsibility to demonstrate to the consular officer what your intentions are.

“Ask the Consul” is a bi-weekly column from the U.S. Embassy answering questions about U.S. immigration law and visa issues. If you have a general question about visa policy please email it to us at AskGeorge@state.gov. We select questions every other week and publish the answers in Stabroek News and on our website at <http://georgetown.usembassy.gov/ask-the-consul.html> For more information about visas please see <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov> or <http://georgetown.usembassy.gov/>.

Other than the questions we select, we DO NOT respond to questions sent to Ask the Consul. Please contact the visa inquiries unit (email visageorge@state.gov or call 225-7965 between 8 am and 4 pm Monday through Friday) if you have questions about a specific case.