

In the case of a tour involving performances in more than one location, the petition must be submitted to the USINS Center with jurisdiction over the location of your presenter. Be sure that your presenter files your petition as early as possible. Even cases involving only routine processing require anywhere from 15 to 30 days (or longer) to be approved.

After receiving the USINS approval notice from your U.S. presenter, as a Canadian citizen you may simply apply at the U.S. port of entry, armed with the I-797 Notice of Approval from the USINS and proof of your Canadian citizenship. It may also be possible for you to obtain an O or P visa at the U.S. consulate if you wish. A duplicate of the approved petition is sent directly to the particular U.S. port of entry or consulate; your presenter must specify the port of entry on the petition when dealing with Immigration.

Support Documentation: Explanations and Helpful Hints

Keep in mind that, beyond demonstrating to U.S. Immigration officials that you will be legitimately employed in the United States, you are also trying to reassure them of your qualifications. To do this, it is necessary to submit, along with your petition, documented evidence of your accomplishments and artistic ability.

The visa classifications for performing artists listed below indicate the customary types of evidence required for foreigners who wish to perform in the United States. Be sure to provide evidence of your credentials as specified under the visa classification applicable to you. Additional, unlisted evidence may also be submitted, if you feel such evidence demonstrates your accomplishments and artistic ability and is comparable to the types of proof specified.

As are all governments, the United States government is responsible for ensuring and protecting jobs for its work force. United States Immigration law requires that your past performances meet specific regulatory criteria to qualify for the various visa classifications available to performers.

Immigration officials must make sure that you meet the standards that apply to the visa classification you seek. In cases where there is a strike or a lockout in the United States involving artists in your category, there may be a stoppage of visas for foreign replacements.

To assist them in evaluating the merit of your performance and its impact on working conditions, U.S. Immigration officers are required to obtain the opinions of U.S. labour unions (e.g., the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), the Screen Actors Guild, the Directors Guild, etc.). Clearly, this requirement is to your disadvantage (as it was intended to be) unless you are renowned in your particular field. Do not be overly concerned, however, since these opinions are only advisory and visa applications can be approved without the support of labour unions provided that you supply countervailing documentation. When a motion picture or television production is involved, a second consultation from a management association is required.