



Letter of Invitation and Declaration of Sponsorship

LETTER OF INVITATION

Foreign visitors subject to visa requirements who would like to travel to Switzerland to visit family or friends, or for business purposes, may be required to submit a letter of invitation from the Swiss host with their visa application.

The letter of invitation should be written in one of Switzerland's official languages (German, French, Italian); it is not bound to any particular format. However, it has to contain the following elements:

- Declaration by the host (company or private individual) that he/she is expecting the applicant
- Contact details of the host and applicant (surname, first name(s), date of birth, address and nationality)
- Date the letter was written
- Signature (handwritten or electronic) of the host (for companies this should be the person authorised to sign according to the commercial or trade register)

The letter of invitation may also contain other elements, for example:

- Reference that the host intends to accommodate the applicant (board and lodging)
- Other reasons in support of the applicant's visit to Switzerland

The visa applicant must provide the Swiss embassy or consulate with proof of sufficient financial means to stay in Switzerland. If the costs for travel, accommodation and food are to be met by the host, this must be mentioned in the letter of invitation.

The purpose of the letter of invitation is to attest the applicant's reason for visiting Switzerland. It does not act as a guarantee for the applicant's financial means nor for his leaving Switzerland. If on account of the individual circumstances there is doubt about the applicant's departure from Switzerland, a visa will not be issued despite the letter of invitation. The host can cover the costs of the applicant's stay in Switzerland but cannot legally vouch for their guest's departure from the country.

Depending on which embassy or consulate is responsible for issuing the visa, the letter of invitation (a copy of which is sufficient) must either be sent directly from Switzerland to the visa section of the appropriate embassy or consulate, or be submitted by the foreign visitor with his visa application. We recommend you consult the website of the embassy or consulate responsible beforehand in case it has a different practice www.swiss-visa.ch

DECLARATION OF SPONSORSHIP

If the visa applicant does not have sufficient financial means to support him or herself in Switzerland, or the authorities have reason to doubt that sufficient funds exist, the Swiss embassy or consulate may ask the applicant to submit a declaration of sponsorship. In a declaration of sponsorship the guarantor undertakes to meet costs that are not covered (including accident, sickness, return transport) which may otherwise arise for public welfare or private medical services on account of the applicant's stay in Switzerland. The sum guaranteed by the sponsor is CHF 30,000 and applies to individuals or groups and families of up to 10 people who are travelling together.

The declaration of sponsorship is **not** available online or from a migration office in Switzerland. It can only be obtained from the Swiss embassy or consulate responsible for processing the visa application. It is therefore not possible to speed up the visa procedure.

A declaration of sponsorship that has been approved by a communal or cantonal authority does not entitle the applicant to a visa. If the main criterion for the applicant's departure from Switzerland is not met, a visa may be refused despite submission of a declaration of sponsorship. The guarantor can cover the costs of the applicant's stay in Switzerland but cannot legally vouch for their guest's departure from the country.

PROCEDURE

1. Foreign visitors who require a visa should submit their application to the [Swiss embassy or consulate](#) responsible for their place of residence (for a trip to Switzerland to visit family/friends or for business purposes, including letter of invitation).
2. If the Swiss embassy or consulate requires a declaration of sponsorship, it will provide the applicant with the declaration form. The applicant should complete the form as far as possible before forwarding it to the guarantor (host). Some embassies and consulates may send the declaration form directly to the guarantor.
3. The guarantor should complete and sign the form before returning it to the communal or cantonal authority responsible. The guarantor should check with the authority in question if the form should be returned in person.
4. The communal or cantonal authority responsible then examines the declaration of sponsorship (financial solvency of the guarantor/host).
5. The canton informs the embassy or consulate of its findings. The latter then makes a decision regarding the visa application.

OTHER DOCUMENTS

Further documents must be submitted if required by the authority responsible for verifying the declaration of sponsorship.

FEES

The processing of the visa application form by the cantonal or communal authority is subject to a charge. As a rule, this administrative charge is to be paid in advance using a payment slip (for details of payment consult the competent authority).



WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT THE DECLARATION OF SPONSORSHIP?

A guarantor living in one of the following cantons must submit the declaration of sponsorship to the [local authority of that commune](#) (e.g. resident's register office, communal chancellery, etc.):

- Aargau
- Basel-Land
- Bern
- Fribourg
- Graubünden
- Schwyz
- St. Gallen
- Thurgau
- Uri
- Vaud
- Valais
- Zurich

A guarantor living in one of the following cantons must submit the declaration of sponsorship to the **cantonal migration authority**:

AI Amt für Ausländerfragen Marktgasse 2 9050 Appenzell Tel. 071 788 95 21	JU Service de la population 1, rue du 24-septembre 2800 Delémont Tel. 032 420 56 80	SH Migrationsamt und Passbüro Mühlentalstrasse 105 8200 Schaffhausen Tel. 052 632 74 76
AR Migrationsamt Landsgemeindeplatz 5 Postfach 162 9043 Trogen Tel. 071 343 63 33	LU Amt für Migration Fruttstrasse 15 Postfach 6002 Luzern Tel. 041 228 77 80	SO Migration und Schweizer Ausweise Ambassadorshof 4509 Solothurn Tel. 032 627 28 37/40
BS Justiz- und Sicherheitsdepartement Bevölkerungsdienste und Migration Spiegelgasse 6 Postfach 4001 Basel Tel. 061 267 70 70	NE Service des migrations Office du séjour et de l'établissement Case postale 124 Rue de Tivoli 28 2003 Neuchâtel Tel. : 032 889 63 10	TI Sezione della popolazione Ufficio della migrazione Via Lugano 4 6501 Bellinzona Tel.: 091 814 55 00
GE Office cantonal de la population Service des Etrangers et des Con- fédérés Route de Chancy 88 1213 Onex Tel. 022 546 46 46	NW Amt für Justiz Abteilung Migration Kreuzstrasse 2 6371 Stans Tel.: 041 618 44 90 / 91	ZG Amt für Migration (AFM) Aabachstrasse 1 Postfach 857 6301 Zug Tel. 041 728 50 50
GL Departement für Sicherheit und Justiz Fachstelle Migration Postgasse 29 8750 Glarus Tel. 055 646 68 90	OW Amt für Migration St. Antonistrasse 4 6061 Sarnen Tel. 041 666 66 70	FL Ausländer- und Passamt (APA) Städtle 38 FL-9490 Vaduz Tel. 00423 236 61 41

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Please contact the competent cantonal authority (at the address above) for information on the status of investigations regarding the declaration of sponsorship and on individual cantonal procedures regarding this declaration form.
- For questions on statutory provisions or letters of invitation contact the State Secretariat for Migration SEM on 058 465 77 60 or via the [contact form](#).