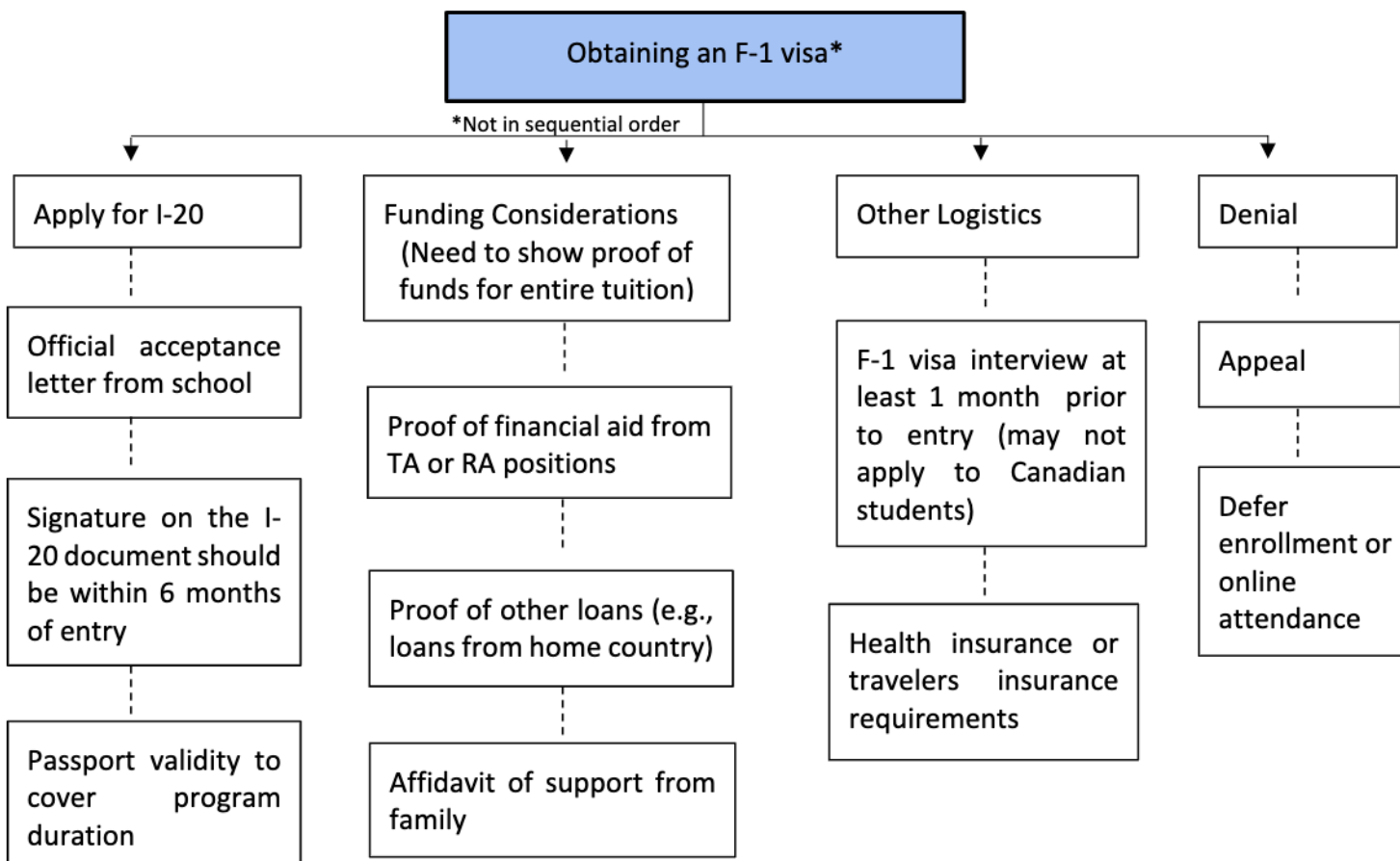


## F-1 VISA INFORMATION SHEET

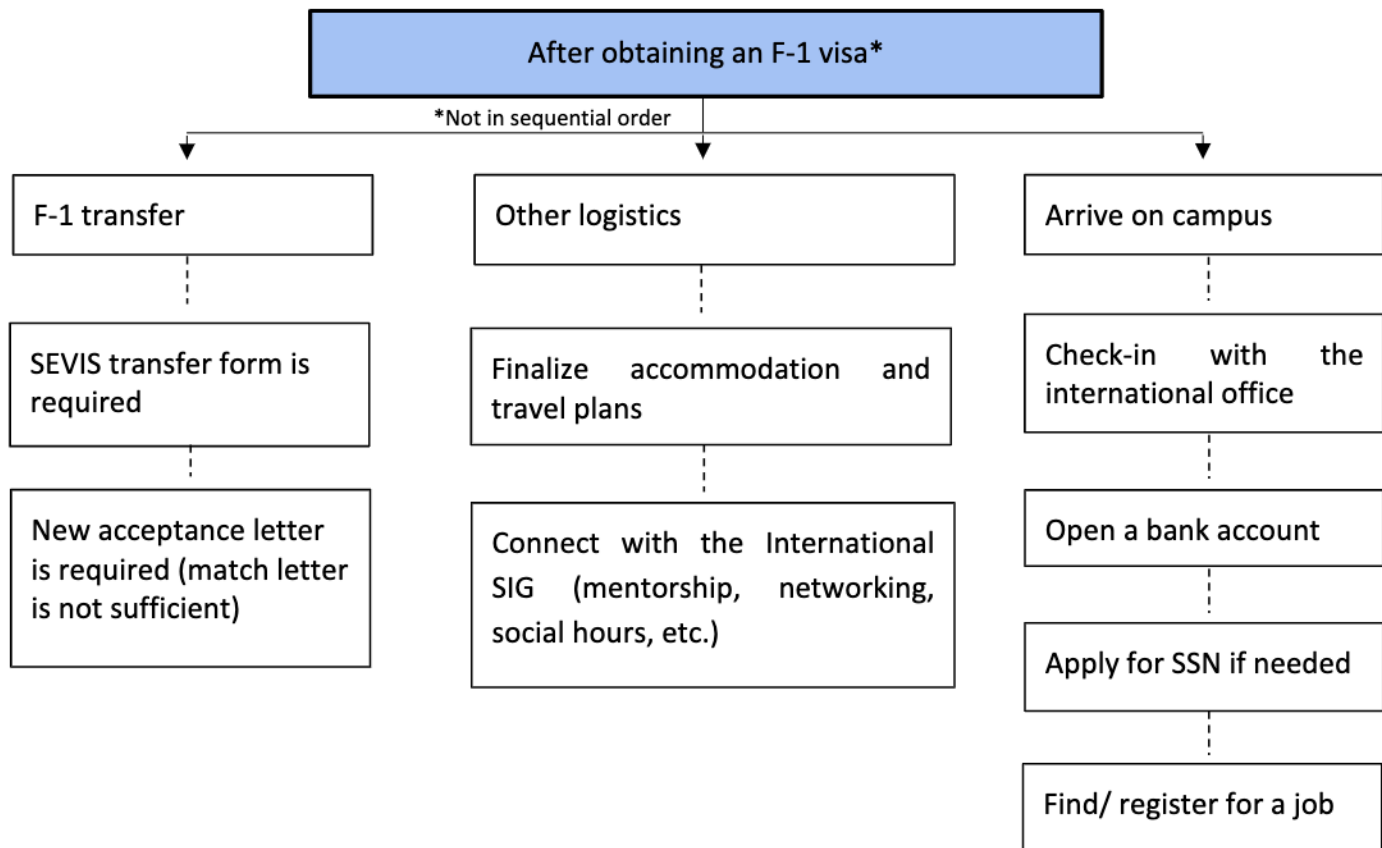
The charts provide an overview of the process before and after obtaining an F-1 visa. Information on the application process and fees can be found [here](#). Please check with your school for information regarding your program. Consider consulting with a reputed visa agent or immigration lawyer if you have specific questions.



### Considerations specific to genetic counseling school

- For an F-1 visa application, an email from the National Matching Services (NMS) or a welcome email from the program director may not be sufficient. Make sure to obtain an official acceptance letter on school/program letterhead.
- Show finances to cover the estimated expenses of the entire program tuition. Check [here](#) for more information.
- Although international students are not eligible for any federal loans in the U.S., you may qualify for financial assistance through teaching or research positions (TA or RA) within the school.
- Check with your program about any specific requirements for health insurance. You will likely need proof of vaccinations/ titers, and/or other health records.
- In case you are denied an F1 visa, get in touch with the program to see whether they will defer the enrollment to next year.

This document does not contain legal advice. Please check with your school, the international center, and/or an attorney for updated information and requirements.



### Considerations specific to genetic counseling school

- Reach out to international SIG to see if there are any international GCs/students in your area that might be able to connect with you when you are here.
- Orientation held by the school/ university may not be mandatory. Check with your program director and classmates about attendance to help plan your travel.
- Consider arriving 1-2 weeks earlier, if possible, to adjust to time change and transition to life in the US.
- Complete the official check-in with the international office to be registered as a student for the year (SEVIS account). Most forms/ documents are maintained by the international office instead of the program, so check in with the international office early and often.
- You can use your passport or obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) to get a regular bank account or student bank account on-campus.
- States have different laws for driving/ obtaining a driver's license. Learn more [here](#). Consider public transport, short term rentals like Zip Car, or rideshare options like Uber and Lyft if commuting to clinic.
- You will need an SSN for a job and may need to pay taxes based on income even for job within your program. See [here](#) for more information on students and employment.
- Check with your school or international office if a CPT application is needed for your rotation. Click [here](#) for more details. A new I-20 is issued with a new CPT each time, do not discard any I-20s.

This document does not contain legal advice. Please check with your school, the international center, and/or an attorney for updated information and requirements.



### TRANSITION FROM F-1 VISA

- GC students occasionally extend their time in the program to complete their thesis/ project/ rotations, but you may be eligible to do this only ONE time (as opposed to domestic students who might be able to do it more than once). Make sure to check with your program and international office.
- Optional Practical Training (OPT) generally allows you to work for 1 year on a student visa. Click [here](#) for more information. This would apply to all genetic counseling roles.
- Certain programs have the option of STEM OPT Extension, which extends OPT by 2 years. Check with your program or international office if they qualify. Click [here](#) for details for STEM OPT Extension.
- Click [here](#) for Information on H-1B visa (USCIS website)
- Click [here](#) for information on the TN visa (USCIS website)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- U.S. Department of State website on [Student Visa](#)
- Other International SIG resources:
  - [Program list](#) with STEM OPT information (updated regularly)
  - H-1B information sheet
  - TN visa information sheet
  - Green card information sheet
- To contact the International SIG, please email [nsgcinternationalsig@gmail.com](mailto:nsgcinternationalsig@gmail.com)

----- END -----