



Consulate General of Italy in San Francisco
visti.sanfrancisco@esteri.it

ELECTIVE RESIDENCY VISA (National Visa)

The elective residency visa is targeted at wealthy persons (especially those who are retired and/or of Italian origin) who wish to reside **permanently** in Italy and who can demonstrate a stable and ample pension income and high financial resources.

The elective residency visa is **NOT** for extended tourism. It is not an end-run around the limited validity of Schengen tourist visas or the visa-waiver program, nor is it for letting you join family members or friends who have accepted temporary jobs in Italy. An individual applies for the elective residency visa with the intention of establishing a permanent home in Italy.

Individuals who receive an elective residency visa **cannot work for a domestic employer or rely on a salary**; they must be able to sustain themselves from their existing financial assets, such as annuities, stocks, pensions, bonds, and so forth.

The elective residency visa is for **exactly 365 days**: no more, no less. Upon arriving in Italy, applicants must apply at the local Questura (police headquarters) for a permesso di soggiorno (residency permit, similar to a U.S. green card). The Questura will verify annually that the applicant still meets all the requirements for the elective residency visa and re-issue the permesso di soggiorno.

The elective residency visa is **the most strictly regulated visa**. The law requires Consular officers to investigate elective residency visa applications thoroughly. The Ministry permits Consular officers to take up to 90 days (three months) to review and process an elective residency visa application. Therefore, although we make every effort to keep our processing time at thirty days, the visa department of this Consulate strongly recommends that applicants do **not** purchase airplane tickets until they have received their visas. Processing time **cannot** be accelerated.



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Applicants must submit all fourteen (14) required documents. For appointment instructions, please see [our webpage](#).

Each appointment is for one adult and any minor children they may have.

Applicants must pay the **national visa fee** for this visa.

Applicants must each submit the following documents:

1. **Passport** or travel document accepted by the Schengen countries valid for a minimum of 15 months after the application date. The passport must have **two** blank pages. **(plus: photocopy of the page with personal data and expiration date, plus page with signature if it does not appear on the same page).**
2. **Proof of physical residence** in our jurisdiction, such as a photocopy of driver's license, state ID, or utility bill (please do not send us original IDs other than passports).
3. **Proof of legal permanent residence** in the United States (only **non-U.S.** citizens): U.S. Alien Registration Card or valid long-term U.S. visa, valid for at least three months beyond the intended departure from the Schengen member states. **U.S. B1/B2 visas are not acceptable for this purpose.** B1/B2 visa holders must apply at a Consulate in their home country. **(plus: photocopy of the residence card or the passport page with the longterm U.S. visa).**
4. **One** recent ICAO standard **photograph**: 45mm (1,77 inch) by 35mm (1,37 inch) in size, full face, front view, color. It must be glued to the national visa application form, in the top right.
5. **One** [national visa application form](#) completely and clearly filled out.
6. **Lease, rental contract, or deed for property in Italy.**
 - o The lease, rental contract, or deed must be in the applicant's name.
 - o A lease or rental contract must be for a minimum of one year (365 days).
 - o If renting or leasing, the applicant must present an original copy of a "Contratto di Locazione ad Uso Abitativo", complete with proof your landlord has registered it with the Agenzia delle Entrate, the Italian tax authorities.
 - o [Click here to download a sample contract](#). Your contract must be materially similar to this one.
 - o A third party's offer of hospitality or a hotel stay is unacceptable. If the applicant does not have a lease, rental contract, or deed in their name, the visa application will be denied.
7. **Proof of substantial and steady passive private income** (including Social Security, pensions, or annuities) from property, stable economic and commercial activities, or from other sources; proof may be provided by various means, such as letters from the applicant's bank, statements from a fund, copy of last pension check received etc.
8. **FBI Criminal Background check ("Identity History Summary") issued within the last six months.** Applicants can find instructions for ordering their background checks through www.fbi.gov. Please note that these require fingerprinting by a local police authority.



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9. **One [Declaration for Mailing Passports](#)** completely and clearly filled out
10. **A self-addressed** (from yourself and to yourself) **pre-paid USPS Priority or Express Mail envelope** so that your passport can be mailed back to you.
11. **Bank statements for the last three months**, showing the passive income requested in #7.
12. **Last two years of federal tax returns**
 - Tax returns must be complete with all Schedules and attachments; the Form 1040 by itself is usually insufficient.
13. **Letter from applicant specifying their reasons for emigrating to Italy and where they plan to reside.**
14. **A cashier's check or money order for the national visa application fee** made out to the Consulate General of Italy, upon presentation of the visa application. The fee adjusts every three months - Jan. 1st, April 1st, July 1st, Oct. 1st – based on the government's official euro-dollar exchange rate, and is posted on the Consulate's website.

Consular officers may request additional documents at their discretion. **Please be aware that submitting the required documentation does not guarantee the issuance of a visa.**

We strongly urge you to take a photocopy of the application and supporting documents with you to Italy, because the domestic immigration authorities may ask you to show the documents submitted to obtain a visa. There are nine time zones of difference between Italy and the U.S. West Coast, so if the authorities must wait for us to send them those documents, it may be severely inconvenient for you.