



Homes for Expats

YOUR DUTCH HOUSING SPECIALISTS

DAFT Visa Application Checklist

A complete step-by-step guide for American entrepreneurs moving to the Netherlands.

We have helped many American clients take this exciting step. This checklist gives you every document, appointment and timeline you will need to apply for the DAFT visa with confidence.

Step 1. Personal Documents You Will Need

- **Valid U.S. passport.**
It must be valid for the entire duration of your planned stay.
 - **Original apostilled birth certificate**
This must be issued in the U.S. and apostilled in the same state.
 - **Apostilled marriage certificate (if applicable).**
Required if your spouse is applying with you or you plan to register them.
 - **Apostilled divorce or death certificate (if applicable).**
Only required if you were previously married.
 - **Signed antecedents certificate.**
This is an IND form confirming you have no criminal background.
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Step 2. Set Up Your Dutch Business

To qualify for the DAFT visa, you must register and operate a business in the Netherlands.

- **Choose your business structure.**
Most applicants register as a sole proprietorship. A private limited company is also allowed.
 - **Register your business with the Chamber of Commerce.**
You will need a Dutch address for this.
 - **Open a Dutch business bank account.**
This must be in the business name, not your personal name.
 - **Deposit a minimum of €4,500.**
These funds must stay in the business account throughout your stay.
 - **Prepare an opening balance sheet.**
Preferably reviewed or signed by a Dutch accountant.
 - **Write a short business overview.**
A simple one-page summary is enough. A full business plan is optional.
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Step 3. Arrange Health Insurance

Health insurance is mandatory for everyone living in the Netherlands.

- **Apply for Dutch public health insurance.**
This becomes available after you register with the municipality.
 - **If you are not eligible right away, use private international insurance.**
You must be covered from the day you arrive.
 - **Keep your insurance active and fully paid at all times.**
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Step 4. Schedule Your IND Appointment

Once your business and documents are ready, book your IND appointment to apply for the DAFT visa.

Bring the following with you:

- Completed DAFT application form.
- Valid U.S. passport.
- Signed antecedents certificate.
- Business registration from the Chamber of Commerce.
- Recent bank statement showing €4,500 in your business account.
- Opening balance sheet.
- Proof of health insurance.
- Signed rental contract that allows registration.

At your appointment:

- Pay the IND application fee.
€405 for the main applicant.
€243 for a spouse.
€81 per child under 18.
 - Provide your photo and fingerprints.
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Step 5. Register with the Municipality (Gemeente)

After your IND appointment, register at your local gemeente to receive your BSN (citizen service number).

Bring the following with you:

- Valid U.S. passport.
- Apostilled birth certificate.
- Apostilled marriage certificate (if applicable).
- Signed rental contract.

You will receive your BSN number during or shortly after the appointment.

Step 6. After Your IND Appointment

- Wait for your residence permit approval.
This usually takes four to six weeks.
 - Collect your residence permit card from the IND.
Your first permit will be valid for two years.
 - Apply for renewal before your permit expires.
You must show that your business is still active and financially sound.
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Ongoing Obligations and Renewal

To keep your DAFT visa valid, make sure you:

- Keep the €4,500 in your business account at all times.
 - Maintain accurate financial records and yearly balance sheets.
 - Keep your Dutch health insurance active and paid.
 - Stay registered at a Dutch address and update the gemeente if you move.
 - File annual Dutch tax returns.
 - Renew your residence permit on time.
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Optional but Helpful

- Open a personal Dutch bank account for daily use.
 - Set up your DigiD for access to government services online.
 - Talk to a Dutch accountant about VAT and business tax obligations.
 - Take Dutch classes or ask your gemeente about integration options.
 - Save both digital and printed copies of all documents.
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If you are planning to apply for the DAFT visa and want help bringing the housing, business and relocation pieces together smoothly, we are here to assist you with your journey. We can help you find a home where you can register, connect you with trusted English-speaking partners, and support you every step of the way. From housing to utilities, moving partners to immigration lawyers, we have a support network and years of experience that will not only provide invaluable help, but also give you the peace of mind that your journey is fully supported.

For the most up-to-date information, visit the official IND website:
www.ind.nl/en/residence-permits

At Homes for Expats, every story, every client and every move matters to us. Because if it matters to you, it matters to us.

Get in touch:

WhatsApp: +31 6 28 32 22 35

Email: info@exhs.nl

Website: www.homesforexpats.nl