

# APPLYING FOR A RESIDENCE PERMIT AUTHORIZING YOU TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT / START A BUSINESS



A foreign student who has just obtained a diploma at least equivalent to the master's degree, a "licence professionnelle" degree, or any diploma listed in the "[arrêté](#)" may stay in France after completing their studies to gain initial work experience or create a business, by applying for a **temporary residence card "job search/ business creation "** (Recherche d'emploi / Création d'entreprise - RECE) valid for one year.

Students from countries that have bilateral agreements with France can apply for a **provisional residence permit (Autorisation provisoire de séjour - APS)** for the same reason. The duration of the APS and conditions for the delivery will depend on the agreement. Countries with such a bilateral agreement are: Bénin, Burkina Faso, Maurice, Tunisia, Cape Verde, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon and India. Students of Algerian nationality do not benefit from this option.

This non-renewable residence permit is issued upon graduation. Therefore, a student residence permit cannot be requested again once a RECE residence permit has been granted.

Former students who have left France can also request for a RECE status in the form of a visa in their country, within a maximum of four years after graduating in France.

*Quick tip:* If you are a student resident permit holder, and you wish to change status towards a "RECE" residence permit but you don't have all the necessary documents in your possession yet to complete the request, apply for a renewal of your "student" residence permit between 4 and 2 months before your residence permit expires, explaining your situation in the "observations" section. You will receive an "attestation de prolongation d'instruction" during the period you need to gather the necessary documents to process your request for RECE or APS.

## PROCEDURE AND DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

**Students living in Paris (75)** must submit their application online [on this website](#). The documents to be provided must be uploaded on the platform as PDF documents only.

After processing the documents on the platform, the préfecture will invite the student to go to an appointment to the préfecture of Paris. On the day of the appointment, the student must bring copies and originals of every required document.

**For students living outside of Paris**, it's necessary to consult the website of the préfecture of residence to check the local application procedure.

List of documents to be provided:

- ☐ Valid student residence permit, or student VLS-TS + confirmation of online validation of the visa.
- ☐ Passport (pages related to identity information, validity dates and entry stamps).
- ☐ Recent passport photograph complying with current standards (no e-photo).
- ☐ Proof of your health insurance coverage.
- ☐ Recent proof of address (less than 6 months):
  - if tenant: electricity bill (or gas, water, landline telephone or Internet service bill) or rental lease agreement less than 6 months old or rent receipt or housing tax statement;
  - if staying in a hotel: hotel certificate and bill;

- if staying at someone's house: dated and signed statement from the host, copy of their identity card or residence card, deed of ownership (or the host's statement of residence tax or copy of the rental lease agreement or the host's electricity, gas, water, landline telephone or Internet service bill). A template of a housing certificate from a host ("attestation d'hébergement") can be found [here](#).
- ☐ Master's degree or equivalent diploma or "licence professionnelle" degree obtained in France in the last 12 months or "**attestation de réussite définitive**" (final examination certificate) delivered by the jury.
- ☐ *New from July 2024:* "Contrat d'engagement à respecter les principes de la République" (Agreement to respect the principles of the Republic) [in French](#) completed and signed.  
Signing this agreement is mandatory (subject to exceptions). This document is to be added to your residence permit application. More information and a template of the agreement can be found [here](#).

During the appointment, the originals and copies of the documents must be presented to the agent, and a "récépissé" of residence permit application is delivered to the student.

*Quick tip:* on the day of the appointment and before leaving the prefecture, check the récépissé issued to make sure it allows you to work. It should be written "autorise son titulaire à travailler" at the bottom.

## AFTER SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

The récépissé obtained after the approval of the file by the préfecture allows the applicant to work without having to request a work permit.

The "job search/ business creation" residence card holder is allowed to work full-time as long as they work in their field of studies or research and earn a gross salary of at least 1,5 times [the SMIC](#) (€2 702,70€ per month in July 2025). They can carry out more than one contract during the resident permit validity period.

When the residence card is ready to be collected at the prefecture, a text message is sent to the applicant's mobile phone. In most prefectures, it is necessary to make an appointment on the prefecture's website before going to collect the residence permit. Students living in Paris will find information about collecting the card and making the needed appointment [on the Préfecture de Police de Paris website](#).

On the day of the appointment, the original of the passport and a €75 printed tax stamp will be requested. Tax stamps can be bought [on the tax department's website](#). In the case of bilateral agreement students do not have to pay any tax to obtain their APS.

*Quick tip:* **The residence card must be collected before it expires** because no new application for a new residence card will be possible if the card has not been collected.

If the student hasn't received a text message within 2 months after collecting their récépissé, they can write to the prefecture to ask if the residence permit is ready to be collected and/or make an appointment to collect it. **It is advisable to book for an appointment to collect the card just before the expiry date of the récépissé.** If the card is not ready, the prefecture will have to give a new récépissé.

*Important note:* The young graduate will have to apply for a change of status towards a professional status, according to their situation ("salarié", "travailleur temporaire", "talent",...) before the expiry date of RECE card or APS.