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SEVIS FEE NOTICE FOR F-1 & J-1 VISA APPLICANTS

A United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule requires F-1 and J-1 visa applicants to pay a one-time fee to supplement the administration and maintenance costs of the Student and Exchange Information System (SEVIS).

Who pays the SEVIS fee?

- Prospective F-1 students with “initial attendance” I-20s dated on or after 9/1/2004 who are applying for an “initial entry” visa from outside the US.
- Prospective J-1 exchange visitors with “initial attendance” DS-2019s dated on or after 9/1/2004 who are applying for an “initial entry” visa from outside the US. Those participating in a US Government-sponsored program (example: Fulbright) do not pay the fee.
- Students or exchange visitors with “initial attendance” I-20s or DS-2019s dated on or after 9/1/2004 who are applying for a change to J-1 or F-1 status from another visa type.
- An exchange visitor applying for a change of category within the J-1 visa type (example: change from J-1 Student to J-1 Researcher.)
- Current F-1 students in the US filing for reinstatement after being out of status more than 5 months, and who are issued an I-20 issued for reinstatement that is dated on or after 9/1/04.
- Current J-1 exchange visitors in the US applying for re-instatement for a substantive violation or has been out of status longer than 120 days, but less than 270 days.

Will other F-1 students or J-1 exchange visitors in the US have to pay?

No, unless the student’s circumstances change so that he or she fits one of the categories mentioned above.

What about my spouse and children?

F-2 and J-2 dependents do not have to pay the fee, even if the I-20 or DS-2019 that the spouse or children use is issued on or after 9/1/2004.

Do I have to pay if I transfer to another school, travel outside the US or renew my visa?

The SEVIS fee is not required when transferring schools, changing to another degree program or level, requesting a program extension, renewing a visa or using program benefits such as practical training or academic training. If you are in status when you travel internationally and are not physically outside of the U.S. for more than five months, you will not be required to pay the fee.

When do I pay the SEVIS fee?

If paying online, the fee must be paid at least 3 business days prior to your visa interview, or applying for admission at a US port-of-entry for those exempt from the visa requirement.

If paying by mail, allow 2 weeks for the payment to be received and another 2 weeks to receive your receipt. You may pay a premium processing fee for faster receipt delivery.

The fee must be paid prior to submission of a change of status petition or reinstatement application.

Can I pay the SEVIS fee at a university, consulate or port of entry?

No. At this time the SEVIS fee can only be processed by the Department of Homeland Security via mail or the Internet.

How do I pay the fee?

The fee can be paid to the DHS by mail or online and must be accompanied by a Form I-901. It can be paid by you or by a third party, inside or outside the US. **Do NOT pay the fee prior to September 1, 2004.**

To Pay By Mail

1. Obtain a Form I-901 "Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants."
 - Download the form from www.FMJfee.com (NOTE: This link will not be active prior to September 1, 2004.)
 - Request the form by phone at 1-800-870-3676 (inside the US) or call the IEP office
2. Complete the Form I-901. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form.
3. Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on US banks only) made payable to "The Department of Homeland Security." Many foreign banks are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. You may therefore, obtain a check from: 1) a bank chartered or operated in the United States; b) a foreign subsidiary of a U.S. bank, or c) a foreign bank that has an arrangement with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a U.S. bank.
4. Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on Form I-901).
5. A Form I-797 receipt notice should be mailed within 3 days of processing the fee. Allow 2 weeks for your payment to reach the processing center and another two weeks for the receipt to be mailed to you. Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents. Bring it with you to your visa interview.

To Pay Online

1. Find the Form I-901 at www.FMJfee.com. (NOTE: This link will not be active prior to September 1, 2004.)
2. Complete the form online and supply the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form.
3. Print a copy of the online receipt.
4. Make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

To Pay via Western Union

See this web page for information how to pay at Western Union offices with the Quick Pay service.

http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm

To find a list of Western Union offices that offer the Quick Pay service, see this web page:

<http://www.payment-solutions.com/agent.asp>

Note: Another person (friend or family) can make the payment for you by either of the above methods.

Will the DHS keep a record of my payment on file?

Fee payments should be entered into your permanent immigration (SEVIS) record but it is strongly recommended that you retain a copy of your fee receipt (form I-797) to use as needed.

I applied to more than one school, and have more than one I-20 form. What happens if I pay the SEVIS fee for one school, and then I change my mind and decide that I want to attend the other school? Is my paid SEVIS fee transferable?

Yes. But you must bring the I-20 form with the SEVIS ID number that you listed on the I-901 form with you to the U.S. consulate/embassy.

What do I need to do to apply for an F-1 visa, change of status or reinstatement?

- Obtain the appropriate Form I-20 from a DHS-approved school.
- Pay the SEVIS fee by mail or online.
- Make a copy of the I-797 (mail) or computer receipt (online) for your records.
- Submit a copy of the I-797 or computer receipt with your visa, change of status or reinstatement application OR
- Students who are exempt from visa requirements, such as Canadians, should take a copy of the SEVIS fee receipt to present at the port of entry with the appropriate I-20. It will not be possible to pay the fee at the port of entry.
- Students applying for a change of status or reinstatement application who previously paid the SEVIS fee while attending a different school, should submit a copy of that school's I-20 form with the application.

What if my F-1 visa application is denied?

The SEVIS fee will not be refunded. However, if you reapply for a new F-1 visa within 12 months of the denial, you will not have to pay the fee again.

For more information regarding the new SEVIS fee requirement or other visa-related matters, contact International Education and Programs (IEP.)

Note: For an electronic version with active links see the posting of this document on the "Resources and Links" page on the IEP web site at <http://www.calpoly.edu/~iep/>

Helpful Links:

- U.S. Embassies Abroad** http://travel.state.gov/visa/questions_embassy.html
US ICE - Special Registration <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/specialregistration/index.htm>
Visa Processing Times http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_wait.php
Fees for Visa Services <http://travel.state.gov/visa/vofees.html>
Visa Photo Requirements <http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/guide.pdf>
Visa Denials http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi_denials.html
U.S. VISIT - http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/content_multi_image/content_multi_image_0006.xml
Visas for Third Country Nationals in Canada or Mexico http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1759.html
Visa Waiver Countries http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html
Special Visa Processing for citizens of North Korea, Cuba, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, & Libya http://travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors_info_additional4.html
Links to info for temporary visitors http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1304.html
Airport Status <http://www.fly.faa.gov/flyfaa/usmap.jsp>