

## **Office of Global Engagement New F-1 SEVIS Fee Requirement**

Beginning October 27, 2008, a new United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) I-901 SEVIS fee goes into effect. This rule requires F-1 applicants to pay a onetime fee of \$200 to supplement the administration and maintenance costs of the Student and Exchange Information System (SEVIS). The following information specifically addresses fee issues for F-1 students.

### **Who pays the SEVIS fee?**

- Prospective students with “initial attendance” I-20s dated on or after 10/27/2008 who are applying for an “initial” F-1 visa from outside the U.S.
- Prospective students with “initial attendance” I-20s dated on or after 10/27/2008 who are applying for a change to F-1 status from another visa category.
- Current F-1 students in the U.S. filing for reinstatement after being out of status more than 5 months, and who are issued an I-20 for reinstatement that is dated on or after 10/27/2008.

### **Will other F-1 students in the U.S. 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 F-2 dependents?**

F-2 dependents do not have to pay the fee, even if the I-20 that they use is issued on or after 10/27/2008.

### **Do I have to pay if I transfer to another school, travel outside the U.S. 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 an F-1 visa or using F-1 program benefits such as practical 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?**

The fee must be paid at least 7 business days prior to applying for your visa, or applying for admission at a U.S. port-of-entry for those exempt from the visa requirement. 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 I-901 form. It can be paid by you or by a third party, inside or outside of the U.S.

**To pay by mail:**

1. Obtain an I-901 form, "Remittance for Certain F, J, and M, Non-immigrants."
  - a. Download the form from [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com)
  - b. Request the form by phone at 1-800-870-3676 (inside the U.S.)
2. Complete the I-901 form. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form and your passport.
3. Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on U.S. banks only<sup>1</sup>) in the amount of \$200 USD, made payable to "The Department of Homeland Security."
4. Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on the I-901 form.
5. An I-797 form receipt notice should be mailed within 7 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of your receipt and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

**To pay online:**

1. Find the I-901 form at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).
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. Be sure to make copies of your receipt and keep it with your other important immigration documents.

**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 (I-797 form) 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 decide that I want to attend the other school? Is my paid SEVIS fee transferable?**

Yes. But you must submit 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. For change of status or reinstatement applications, please see next question.

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

- Obtain the appropriate I-20 form from a DHS-approved school.
- Pay the SEVIS I-901 fee by mail or online.
- Make a copy of the I-797 (mail) or computer receipt for your records.
- Submit a copy of the I-797 or computer receipt with your visa, change of status or reinstatement application

**OR**

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<sup>1</sup> Many foreign banks are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank. You may therefore obtain a check from a) a bank chartered or operated in the U.S., b) a foreign subsidiary of a U.S., or c) a foreign bank that has an arrangement with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft on a U.S. bank.

- 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.
- For change of status or reinstatement applications, if you previously paid the SEVIS fee while attending a different school, you should submit a copy of that school's I-20 form with your 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. Keep your I-901 SEVIS fee receipt.

**For more information regarding the new SEVIS fee requirement of other visa related matters, contact International Students and Scholars Office.**

**Helpful Links:**

**Visa Photo Requirements**

<http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html>

**U.S. VISIT**

<http://www.fly.faa.gov/flyfaa/usmap.jsp>