I-901 SEVIS Fee for F/J Nonimmigrant Students and Exchange Visitors

Beginning September 1, 2004, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will collect a congressionally mandated fee to cover the costs of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). International students and exchange visitors are subject to this fee, which will be used to administer and maintain the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), support compliance activities, and establish SEVIS Liaison Officers to provide information and assistance to students and schools.

Some schools charge a fee by the year or semester to support their foreign student/exchange visitor offices and automated systems. These fees are neither mandated nor collected by the U.S. Government.

The payment of I-901 fees are recorded and tracked in SEVIS, the system for collecting, maintaining, and managing information about non-immigrant student and exchange visitors in the United States.

Who pays the fee?
Those who wish to enter the United States either as a student or an exchange visitor with a Form I-20 or DS-2019 dated on or after September 1, 2004. Participants of federally sponsored exchange visitor programs, which are designated by program codes beginning with G-1, G-2, or G-3, are not subject to this fee. Spouses and dependent children (F-2, M-2) of students or exchange visitors (J-2) do not pay this fee.

How much is the fee?
- Students (F-1, F-3, M-1, or M-3) $200
- Spouses and dependent children (F-2, M-2, or J-2) None of students or exchange visitors
- Exchange visitors (J-1) $180

When do prospective students or exchange visitors pay the SEVIS fee?
- Applicants who require a visa to enter the United States must pay the SEVIS fee before going to the U.S. embassy or consulate for their visa interviews.
- Applicants who are citizens of Canada, Bermuda, Bahamas and residents of certain other islands (see 8CFR 212.1a) wishing to apply for F-1, F-3, M-1, M-3 or J-1 status at a Port of Entry into the United States must pay the SEVIS fee before appearing at the Port of Entry.

How is the fee paid?
- Online at www.FMJfee.com using a credit card or debit card and completing the online Form I-901 (Fee for Remittance for Certain F, M, and J Nonimmigrants); or
- Through the mail by submitting a completed Form I-901 and a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and payable in U.S. currency; or
- By a third party such as a school or a sponsor; or
- By selected sponsors of an exchange program by submitting a bulk or group payment.

International Student and Scholar Services Office
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**When must the fee be paid?**
The fee must be paid to ensure that the payment can be deposited and recorded in SEVIS prior to the scheduled visa interview. The interviewing consular will confirm that the fee has been paid by accessing SEVIS. To allow for adequate processing time the fee must be paid:
- At least three business days prior to the visa interview date for electronic submissions
- For regular mail submissions, 15 business days should be allowed before the scheduled visa interview - this time frame allows adequate time for the fee payment to be received at the DHS address listed on the Form 1-901, deposited, and recorded in SEVIS
- And local mail processing times to these processing time processing times for accuracy

**How will the payment be verified?**
The payment will be recorded in the SEVIS system. However, it is recommended that the paper I-797 or the Internet-generated receipt by brought to the visa interview.
- DHS will issue an official paper receipt (I-797) for every payment received
- Individuals who are paying by mail, may request Express delivery service for the I-797 receipt at an additional cost of $35
- Individuals who file electronically will be able to print an electronic receipt immediately at the time of payment

**When must continuing students (F-1, F-3, M-1, or M-3 non-immigrants who have begun but not finished a program) pay the SEVIS fee?**
These students must pay the SEVIS fee before:
- Filing an application for reinstatement when they have been out of status for more than five months; or
- When applying for a new visa and returning to the United States after an absence of more than five months that did not involve authorized overseas study; or
- When filing an application for a change of status to an F, M, or J classification except for changes between F-1 an F-3 or between M-1 and M-3.

**When must continuing exchange visitors (J-1 non-immigrants who have begun, but not finished a program) pay the SEVIS fee?**
These students must pay the SEVIS fee before:
- Filing a reinstatement application after a substantive violation; or
- Filing a reinstatement application after one is out of status between 121 and 269 days; or
- Applying for a change of exchange visitor category unless the new exchange visitor category is fee exempt (federally sponsored programs with program codes that start with F-1, G-2, or G-3).