

STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS) FEE PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR F-1 STUDENTS

Purpose

This handout is designed for students in F-1 status. It will provide you with information regarding options for payment of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fee.

SEVIS Fee Requirements

Beginning September 1, 2004, a new U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule went into effect which requires F-1 visa applicants to pay a one-time 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 related to F-1 students.

F-1 Students Subject to the SEVIS Fee

The following F-1 students are required to pay the SEVIS fee:

- Prospective students with “initial attendance” Forms I-20 issued on or after September 1, 2004 who are applying for an F-1 visa at a U.S. Consular Office outside the U.S.
- Prospective students with “initial attendance” Forms I-20 issued on or after September 1, 2004 who are exempt from visa requirements (e.g., Canadian citizens) who are applying for admission to the U.S. at a U.S. port-of-entry
- Prospective students with “initial attendance” Forms I-20 dated on or after September 1, 2004 who are applying for a change to F-1 status from another immigration status in the U.S.
- Current students in the U.S. filing for reinstatement who are issued a Form I-20 for reinstatement that is dated on or after September 1, 2004.
- Current students who are subject to visa voidance and are applying for issuance of a new F-1 visa at a U.S. Consular Office outside of the U.S.

F-1 Students Not Subject to the SEVIS Fee

An F-1 student who does not fall into the above-mentioned categories is not subject to the SEVIS fee unless the student’s circumstances change so that he or she fits one of the categories mentioned above.

The SEVIS fee is not required when changing to another degree program or level, requesting a program extension, renewing an F-1 visa or using F-1 program benefits such as curricular or optional 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.

F-2 Dependents Not Subject to the SEVIS Fee

F-2 dependents do not have to pay the SEVIS fee, even if the Forms I-20 that the F-2 dependents use were issued on or after September 1, 2004.

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SEVIS Fee Payment Options

The SEVIS fee must be paid online through use of a credit card, locally using the Western Union Quick Pay service, or by mail through use of a check or money order at least three days prior to the date SEVIS fee payment verification is required by the U.S. Consular Office. ISSS highly recommends that you file and pay the required SEVIS fee online with a credit card or in person through the Western Union Quick Pay service instead of by mail with a check or money order since the online option and the Western Union Quick Pay option result in speedier processing of your required fee payment.

Online payment option: To pay the SEVIS fee online and obtain the required receipt for payment, you must (1) complete and submit the Form I-901 online at www.fmjfee.com with the required Visa, MasterCard or American Express information for payment of the \$200.00 SEVIS fee (please make sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your Form I-20); and (2) print a copy of the online payment receipt for your records and for submission of your F-1 visa application.

Western Union Quick Pay Option: To pay the SEVIS fee through Western Union Quick Pay and obtain the required receipt for payment, you must (1) print out and bring a copy of the instructions for SEVIS Form I-901 fee payment by Western Union Quick Pay along with a copy of the sample form, Form I-20, and the \$200.00 SEVIS fee, to a local participating Western Union Agent location (instructions and sample form can be found online: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm>; the nearest Western Union Agent location can be found online: <http://www.payment-solutions.com/agent.asp>); (2) request and complete the Blue Form at the Western Union Agent location according to the instructions provided on the SEVIS website (http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm); (3) submit the Blue Form and \$200.00 SEVIS fee to the Western Union Agent who will transmit the payment and information on your behalf; and (4) obtain the properly completed Western Union receipt for your records and for submission of your F-1 visa application.

Mail payment option: To pay the SEVIS fee by mail and to obtain the required receipt for payment, you must (1) download and print Form I-901, available at www.fmjfee.com; (2) complete Form I-901 (please make sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your Form I-20); (3) prepare a check or money order in the amount of \$200.00, payable to the "Department of Homeland Security;" (4) mail the completed Form I-901 and payment to I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee, P.O. Box 970020, St. Louis, MO 63197-0020, or, for expedited delivery of your payment, mail the completed Form I-901 and payment to I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee, 1005 Convention Plaza, St. Louis, MO 63101, United States, Phone number: 1-314-418-8833 (U.S. country code: 011); and (5) wait for Form I-797 receipt notice for your records and for submission of your F-1 visa application.

Please note that payment coupons are generated only when you complete your Form I-901 online and choose to pay by check or money order, in which case you should print and mail the coupon with your payment. You will not need to fill in a paper Form I-901 as well. When your payment is received at the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), the coupon will be used to match your payment to the information you entered.

Whether you pay online with a credit card, in person through the Western Union Quick Pay service, or by mail through check or money order, please note that the website dedicated to the I-901 fee (www.fmjfee.com) allows you to verify online that your SEVIS I-901 fee payment has been received and when the official receipt for the payment was issued.

For detailed and helpful information on the SEVIS fee, required Form I-901 information, payment options, processing times and other related issues, please read the information provided through the SEVP website: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq.htm>.

For further information, visit the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) website at www.miami.edu/internationalservices and/or contact your ISSS Advisor at iss@miami.edu

Although your International Student and Scholar Advisor is here to assist you, it is your responsibility to maintain your immigration status. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the regulations that govern your status. Failure to comply with these regulations will result in the loss of your student status and may subject you to deportation.