



SEVIS I-901 Fee Instructions for F-1 Students

Effective September 1, 2004, the Department of Homeland Security implemented regulations requiring a SEVIS fee for students and scholars in the SEVIS system. **Effective October 27, 2008 the fee was increased to \$200 for all the students applying for F-1 visa.** The regulations describing who must pay the fee and how to pay it are described below. For detailed information, please visit <http://www.ice.gov/sevis>.

In general, you need to:

- Either have been accepted into an approved school or be currently enrolled in one. You will need a Form I-20.
- Determine if you need to pay the fee. For more information, see the section, below.
- Pay the fee in time to have it processed before either 1) a consular or DHS official must make a decision about your visa, 2) entry into the United States or 3) other application where the fee is required.

FEE MUST BE PAID BEFORE A VISA WILL BE ISSUED!!

Who Must Pay and When:

1. New Applicants for Student Status (F-1)

If you are applying for an F1 student visa for the first time ever, **pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee.** (New students may skip the immediate following paragraphs and go directly to the **How to Pay** section.)

2. Applicants Reapplying for Student Status (F-1) after a Denial of that Status

- If you have not previously paid the SEVIS I-901 fee, **pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**

3. Do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee, if you already paid the SEVIS I-901 fee and are:

- Reapplying for a visa within twelve months of the date of initial denial
- From a country for which an F-1 visa is not required and you are reapplying for status as a student at the POE within 12 months of the date of initial denial
- Filing a motion to reopen a denied change of status application for a change of status to F-1

4. Continuing Students (F-1) in the United States

- If you are a continuing student, who has maintained status and has not completed your program of study, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a continuing student, who has maintained status and is transferring or changing program levels, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a student who has been out of status for less than five months, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a student who has been out of status for more than five months, **pay the SEVIS I-901 Fee before you file for reinstatement.**

5. Continuing Students (F-1) not in the United States

- If you are a continuing student who has been out of the United States for less than five months and maintained your status prior to leaving the United States, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a continuing student who has been out of the United States for more than five months, maintained your status prior to leaving the United States, and have been participating in authorized study abroad, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a student who has been out of the United States for more than five months and have **not** participated in authorized study abroad, you are no longer considered a continuing student by DHS. You need a new initial Form I-20 from a school and you need to **pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**
- If you are a student who did not maintain status or you completed a previous program, you are no longer considered a continuing student by DHS. You need a new initial Form I-20 from a school and you need to **pay the SEVIS I-901 fee.**

6. Spouse or Minor Children of Students

- If you are the spouse or minor child of a student, **do not pay the SEVIS I-901 fee** unless you are applying to change status to F-1, M-1, or J-1.

How to Pay:

What are the options for fee payment?

Currently, the options for individuals to pay the fee are 1) by credit or debit card via the Internet 2) by check or money order mailed to SEVP (address below) or 3) by Western Union Quick Pay™ service (available in more than 130 countries).

Form I-901

You will need to fill in a Form I-901 with information from your Form I-20 and pay the required fee. For most people, the **SEVIS I-901 fee is \$200.** You have the option of paying an additional \$30 to have your receipt sent by expedited delivery (courier service) rather than by mail.

You can fill in the Form I-901 online at www.fmjfee.com or send a paper version to:

By Mail

I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee
P.O. Box 970020
St. Louis, MO 63197-0020
United States

By Courier (to expedite delivery to SEVP)

I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee
1005 Convention Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63101
United States
Phone Number: 1-314-418-4393 (United States Country Code 011)

If you have Internet access, completing the form online will help ensure that you provide all the information in the correct format. This helps speed processing. Paper forms are scanned and read by machine. If information is missing or hard to read, the form will be manually reviewed. SEVP will attempt to fill in missing or hard-to-read information. This could cause a short delay in processing your form or could result in the form being returned to you for correction. When using a paper form, please print clearly. Your SEVIS ID number, last name (surname or family name) and date of birth are critical data elements. These are needed to match the information on your Form I-20.

Payment Options

- 1) You can pay your fee **by credit or debit card** if you are submitting your form online. If you pay by credit or debit card, you should print out a so that you do not have to wait to receive a receipt through the mail. See the section on the website on credit and debit cards for more information about the cards SEVP will accept.

- 2) You can also pay **by international money order or check** drawn on a financial institution in the United States and payable in United States currency. Checks are accepted subject to collection. If the bank on which it is drawn does not honor the check, you will be charged a \$30 fee:
 - If you fill in the Form I-901 online and choose the option to pay by check or money order, you will be able to print a payment coupon. There is a control number on the top of the coupon. Write the control number, your name and your SEVIS ID number on your check or money order and attach the coupon.
 - If you use a paper Form I-901, write your SEVIS ID number and name on your check or money order and attach the form before sending it in.
- 3) You can pay the fee locally **by the Western Union Quick Pay™ service**. This will allow Western Union to collect the fee, in local currency, along with the needed Form I-901 and electronically transmit the payment and date to SEVP. The properly completed Western Union receipt serves as immediate proof-of-payment for a visa interview at a U.S. consulate and for admission at a U.S. port of entry. The instructions along with a completed sample of the Western Union form can be found at the SEVP website – www.ice.gov/sevis.

Record of Payment

There are two records of payment:

- Electronic payment information kept in the SEVIS I-901 fee payment system
- A paper receipt

You will get a paper receipt in the mail for all payments. You can also print a paper receipt immediately if you file via the internet and pay with a credit or debit card or if you pay through Western Union.

Why do I need a receipt?:

The federal law relating to SEVIS, (8 USC §1372 (e)(5), requires that a student present proof of payment before being granted a visa or admission.

The SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt, along with the electronic record in SEVIS and the I-901 payment system, serve as proof of payment. In most cases, your payment can be verified electronically. However, SEVP recommends that you retain a copy of your receipt. Having the receipt will make it easier to prove you have paid. There are cases where your current SEVIS ID number may be different from the number you paid on. The receipt is also useful when you go to a visa interview or, if you are visa-exempt, apply for F-1 status at the POE. The receipt is also your assurance that your payment and fee information were properly processed and posted.

What do I need to take to the embassy or consulate to prove I paid my SEVIS I-901 fee?

We highly recommend bringing your SEVIS I-901 fee receipt. While the embassy or consulate should be able to electronically verify your payment, having the receipt with you proves that the payment was processed correctly and speeds the verification process.

If you paid the SEVIS I-901 fee using a Form I-20 from a different school than the one you will attend, bring the Form I-20 you used when paying the fee, in addition to the form for the school you will actually be attending. If there is no fee differential, the SEVIS I-901 fee you paid will be accepted.

When do I need a receipt?

Only those who are required to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee will need a receipt. If you are required to pay the fee, you need to do so **before** your visa interview or filing an application for reinstatement, change of status, etc.

Keep your receipts along with other records pertaining to your nonimmigrant status. It will help to have a copy when:

- Applying for subsequent visas while continuing at the same school
- Applying for any work-related benefits

- Entering the United States
- Filing a petition or application with CIS

How long will it take for me to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee and get a receipt?

The length of time it takes to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee and get a receipt depends on how long it takes for:

- You to get your Form I-901 information and payment to SEVP
- SEVP to process the payment
- SEVP to deliver the receipt to the address you provided

Transferring a SEVIS I-901 payment from one SEVIS ID # to another:

What are the basic rules for applying a SEVIS I-901 fee payment from one SEVIS ID number to another?

The basic rules for moving a SEVIS I-901 fee payment between SEVIS ID numbers are:

- The SEVIS I-901 fee must be moved between SEVIS ID numbers **for the same individual**
- An additional SEVIS I-901 fee is **not** required (For more information, see the website)
- The SEVIS I-901 fee amount for the new school or program must be less than or equal to the SEVIS I-901 fee already paid
- Only the student may request the move

Follow the directions for requesting that SEVP move your fee payment.

What do I do if I paid on one SEVIS ID number and now want to go to a different school?

If you have not received a visa or if you are visa exempt and have not applied for nonimmigrant status at the port of entry (POE), you can apply the SEVIS I-901 fee that you already paid to another Form I-20 if you meet the basic rules for reapplying fees.

How do I ask SEVP to transfer the SEVIS I-901 fee payment information from one SEVIS ID number to another?

If you want to transfer the SEVIS I-901 fee payment information from one SEVIS ID number to another, you need to mail or e-mail SEVP. SEVP will consider your request and determine if the fee can be transferred. See the section of the website on the basic rules for transferring fees.

Put *Fee Transfer* in the subject line of your request. Give us your name, date of birth, the SEVIS ID number that you originally paid on and the SEVIS ID number you want to transfer the payment to. Explain why the fee needs to be transferred. It will help speed your request if you include a copy of your original receipt or your receipt number. Include information on how to contact you if there are any questions.

SEVP will review your request and determine if the fee can be transferred. However, SEVP is currently developing an automated process for transferring fee payment information and recording the transfers in SEVIS. In the meantime, we will review requests and maintain a manual record of the transfers.

In the interim, keep a copy of your SEVIS I-901 fee receipt, the original Form I-20 used to pay it and your fee transfer request. When you apply for any benefit where the SEVIS I-901 fee will be verified, we suggest you provide a copy of this documentation.

If you have questions regarding this process please visit <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/>, or contact:

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