

Increased SEVIS Fee for Certain F-1 Students & J-1 Exchange Visitors

Effective October 27, 2008, certain nonimmigrants will be subject to an increased fee for the Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). **The fee will increase from \$100 to \$200 for F-1 students and from \$100 to \$180 for J-1 Exchange Visitors.** According to the United States Customs & Immigration Enforcement (ICE), the SEVIS fee was mandated by Congress "to support the program office and the automated system that keeps track of students and exchange visitors and ensures that they maintain their status while in the United States."

The \$200 F-1 SEVIS fee and the \$180 J-1 SEVIS fee is required for the following individuals:

1. Those who are seeking an initial F-1 or J-1 visa from an Embassy/Consulate overseas who have an initial I-20/DS-2019 issued on or after September 1, 2004.
2. Those who are exempt from visa requirements and are seeking to enter the U.S. to begin an initial program with an initial attendance I-20/DS-2019 which was issued on or after September 1, 2004. (This includes citizens of Canada and Bermuda, Bahamian nationals, and British subjects in the Bahamian, Cayman, Turks or Caicos Islands.)
3. Those who are returning to the United States/Regent for Residency programs with a new I-20 will need to pay the fee prior to each and every residency.
4. Those who are seeking a change of status to F-1 or J-1 status in the United States.
5. Those in F-1 status who are applying for reinstatement after being out of status for 5 months or more.
6. Those in F-1 status who have been out of the U.S. for more than 5 months, have not been working towards degree completion in approved overseas study, and wish to reenter the U.S. for a new program of study.
7. A J-1 Exchange Visitor who was initially enrolled in a fee exempt program who changed to a non-fee exempt J-1 program.
8. Those in J-1 status who are applying for a change of category from within the United States.
9. Those in J-1 status who are applying for reinstatement after a substantive violation or who have been out of status between 121 and 269 days during their current program.

(Over)

The \$200 F-1 SEVIS fee and the \$180 J-1 SEVIS fee is NOT required for the following individuals:

1. Continuing F or J nonimmigrants who maintain their status and whose initial I-20 or DS-2019 was issued prior to September 1, 2004.
2. Those who already paid the fee and are reapplying for an F-1 or J-1 visa within 12 months after a visa denial.
3. F-2 and J-2 dependents.
4. F-1 students who are changing levels (from masters to PhD, etc.), transferring between schools, applying for post-completion OPT, or program extensions.
5. J-1 participants who are sponsored by the U.S. government. If your program sponsor's program ID number on the DS-2019 begins with G1, G2, or G3, you are exempt from paying the fee as long as you are a participant of that program. (Regent University's program does not qualify for this exception.)
6. J-1 visitors who are transferring between programs in the same Exchange Visitor category where no differential fees exist.

Fee Payment Methods:

The SEVIS fee can be paid by one of two methods described below:

1. By mail with Form I-901 with a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and payable in U.S. currency, **OR**
2. Electronically by completing I-901 through the Internet and using a Visa, Master Card or American Express credit card.

Visit this fee payment website for important details and instructions:

<http://www.fmjfee.com>

Important Fee Details:

Nonimmigrants who require an F-1 or J-1 visa **MUST** present proof of payment (receipt) **prior to the Embassy or Consulate issuing the visa**. Students/Visitors who do not require a visa **MUST** present proof of payment **prior to their application for entry at the U.S. port of entry**. (This includes citizens from Canada, Bermuda, Bahamian nationals, and British subject residents in the Bahamian, Cayman, Turks or Caicos Islands.) The fee cannot be paid at the U.S. port of entry and **MUST** be processed at least 3 days before arriving for admission at the U.S. port of entry. Those paying through the Internet will be able to print a receipt at the time of payment. Those paying by mail should allow at least 3 business days to receive a receipt. Third party payments will be accepted, so a friend or relative may make the payment on your behalf. Those who pay the fee but are denied a visa will not have to pay the fee again if they reapply within 12 months for the same visa classification. It is strongly recommended that you have your payment receipt in hand for your visa application and at the U.S. port of entry.

Additional Information:

For important details regarding SEVIS, and the SEVIS fee and payment methods, please visit the websites below.

► **For General SEVIS Information:** <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/index.htm>

► **For SEVIS Fee & Payment Information:** <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm>