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## **The SEVIS Fee For F-1 and J-1 Students**

### **What is the SEVIS Fee?**

The SEVIS Fee is required of all foreign nationals who come to the United States for the purpose of pursuing a full course of study. The fee is paid one time for each continuous, uninterrupted period of F-1 or J-1 status. SEVIS Fee payments will be used by the United States Department of Homeland Security to fund the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information system).

### **Who must pay the SEVIS Fee and when?**

You will need to pay the SEVIS Fee if you have been issued an I-20 or DS-2019 form AND one of the following conditions applies:

- 1) You are seeking an F-1 or J-1 student visa from a United States Embassy or Consulate to begin a new program of study. In this case, the SEVIS fee must be paid BEFORE visa issuance.
- 2) You hold a valid F-1 or J-1 visa, but have been absent from the US for a period of more than 5 months (not working on your studies during this time with the prior approval of your school or returning from a leave of absence), and will re-enter the US with a new "Initial Attendance" or "Begin a new program" document. In this case, the SEVIS Fee must be paid BEFORE re-entry to the US.
- 3) As a citizen of Canada, or certain adjacent islands, you are exempt from the visa requirement and will apply for admission at a port of entry to begin your studies at a US school. In this case, the SEVIS Fee must be paid BEFORE application for entry at the US border.
- 4) You are a non-immigrant holding another status in the US, and you will apply for a change of status or reinstatement through the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). In this case, you will need to pay the fee before submitting the change of status application to the USCIS.

F-2 and J-2 visa holders, the spouse and dependents of the F-1 and J-1 students, are not required to pay the SEVIS Fee. See the section "Processing Times and Payment Verification" for further important fee payment information.

### **Who is exempt from the Fee?**

- Most current, continuing F-1 and J-1 students including those transferring from another school in the US (unless the student has failed to maintain F-1 or J-1 status)
- F-2 or J-2 dependents (spouse and/or children) of the F-1 or J-1 student
- J-1 exchange visitors participating in federally-sponsored programs (G-1, G-2, or G-3)

### **How much is the SEVIS Fee and how do I pay it?**

The SEVIS fee is \$200 USD for F-1 students and \$180 USD for J-1 students. You must have a current, valid I-20 for F-1 visa or DS-2019 for J-1 visa from the school you plan to attend before you can pay the fee. The SEVIS Fee is separate from and in addition to the visa application fee or fees payable to USCIS for an application to request a change of status or a reinstatement. The SEVIS Fee can be paid online or by mail. It can be paid by you, or by a third party such as a friend, family member, or other interested party. However if someone pays the fee for you, they will need information from your I-20 or DS-2019 to complete the fee payment form.

#### Pay Online

1. Access Form I-901 at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).
2. Complete the form online and supply the necessary credit card information.
3. Using the I-20 or DS-2019 form, write your name exactly as it appears on the document (which should match the name as it appears in your passport) and use the SEVIS number from the upper right hand corner.
4. F School Code = PHI214F10187000 and J Program number = P-1-00292.
5. Print a copy of the online receipt.
6. Make a copy of your receipt, and keep it with other important immigration documents.

*Updated 10/2008*

*Source: NAFSA: Association of International Educators*

### Pay By Mail

1. Access Form I-901 “Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants.”  
Download form from [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com).
2. Complete the Form I-901.
3. Using the I-20 or DS-2019 form, write your name exactly as it appears on the document (which should match the name as it appears in your passport), use the SEVIS number from the upper right hand corner.
4. F School Code = PHI214F10187000 and J Program number = P-1-00292.
5. Prepare a check/foreign draft or international money order, drawn on US banks only<sup>1</sup>, in the appropriate amount made payable to “I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee”.
6. **Mail** the Form I-901 and payment to:  
I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee  
P.O. Box 970020  
St. Louis, MO 63197-0020
- Courier** the Form I-901 and payment to:  
I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee  
1005 Convention Plaza  
St. Louis, MO 63101
7. A Form I-797 receipt notice should be mailed within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make a copy of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

### **Processing Times and Payment Verification**

If you pay the SEVIS Fee online, your payment is processed immediately; at the time you make payment, you can print a receipt directly from your computer. This computer-generated receipt can be used to verify you have paid the fee at an Embassy, Consular post, or port of entry. On the other hand, *mailing* the SEVIS fee does not constitute payment. The fee is processed when it is received by DHS. If you mail your payment rather than pay online, it can take a considerable amount of time for payment to be received and for you to receive a receipt by return mail. OIE recommends online payment, if possible.

Whether you choose to pay the fee online or by mail, a paper receipt will be mailed to the address you provide on Form I-901. You may choose to have this receipt sent to you either by regular mail or, at an additional charge, by express delivery.

A paper receipt is not required in order for you to be issued a visa, be admitted at the port of entry, or apply for a change of status or reinstatement. Embassies and Consular posts, ports of entry and USCIS offices *should* be able to verify your fee payment without a receipt in most circumstances. However, OIE recommends that you carry a copy with you when you travel or submit a copy with any application (visa, change of status, reinstatement). Electronic payments must be submitted at least 3 business days in advance of the interview if you will rely on electronic fee verification at the Consulate (or at the port of entry, if exempt from the visa requirement). Mailed payments must be sent in a manner that assures arrival at the DHS address listed on the I-901 at least 3 business days before the scheduled interview.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*I applied to more than one school, and have more than one I-20 form. What if I paid the SEVIS Fee for one school and then I change my mind? Is my paid SEVIS Fee transferable?*

Yes. There is a formal application procedure. Follow the instructions on the USICE web site.  
[www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq7.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq7.htm)

*Is the SEVIS fee refundable if I am denied a visa, change of status or reinstatement?*

No. Once paid, the SEVIS Fee is non-refundable, unless paid by mistake, even if your visa application is denied or, subsequent to issuance of the visa, you choose not to come to the United States.

If you applied for an F-1 or J-1 visa and paid the SEVIS Fee within the last year but were denied a visa, you do not pay the SEVIS Fee again if you re-apply for the same kind of program within 12 months of the visa denial.

For answers to other “frequently asked questions,” consult [www.fmjfee.com/help.jhtml](http://www.fmjfee.com/help.jhtml).

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<sup>1</sup> Many foreign banks are able to issue checks or money orders drawn on a US bank. You may therefore obtain a check from: 1) a bank chartered or operated in the United States; 2) a foreign subsidiary of a US bank, or 3) a foreign bank that has an arrangement with a US bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a US bank.