



SEVP Ask the Experts Webinar: Behind the Scenes of the Form I-20

Glossary

Thursday, Oct. 5, 2017

Designated school official (DSO): a regularly-employed member of the school administration designated by the head of a Student and Exchange Visitor Program-certified school to provide recommendations to F and/or M students enrolled at the school regarding maintenance of nonimmigrant status, and to support timely and complete record keeping and reporting to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student:" the form of a petition submitted and maintained by school officials electronically in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program certification of the school to enroll F and/or M students.

Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status:" the form issued to an F or M nonimmigrant, used as authorization for admission in and maintenance of nonimmigrant status for the duration of their visit in the United States.

Form I-539, "Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status:" a form filed by nonimmigrants with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to extend their stay in the United States, change their nonimmigrant status or reinstate their status.

Form I-94, "Arrival/Departure Record:" A U.S. Department of Homeland Security document issued to nonimmigrant aliens at the time of lawful entry into the United States at an air or sea port of entry. The form is evidence of a nonimmigrant's legal term of admission and used to document legal status in the United States, including length of stay and departure.

I-901 SEVIS Fee: a fee all F-1 and M-1 students, and most J-1 exchange visitors, must pay prior to gaining F, M or J status to support the administrative expenses of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, and the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.

Optional practical training (OPT): training that is not an integral part of the established curriculum. OPT does not fulfill requirements of an F-1 student's program of study and successful program completion is not contingent on participation in OPT. OPT may include the following:

- Pre-completion OPT
- Post-completion OPT
- 24-month extension of post-completion OPT
- H-1B cap gap



Principal designated school official (PDSO): the school official who is the primary point of contact for a Student and Exchange Visitor Program-certified school. A school's PDSO has additional responsibilities from other designated school officials, such as submitting certification and recertification packages.

SEVP Response Center (SRC): the primary contact at the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) for nonimmigrant students, academic institutions, government users of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), and the general public requesting guidance, data corrections and information on how to use SEVIS. Stakeholders can contact SRC by phone at 703-603-3400 or 800-892-4829, or via email at SEVP@ice.dhs.gov for general questions and SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov for technical questions. SRC is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except federal holidays.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM): science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs, which are important to innovation and job creation in the United States.

Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS): an internet-based application that facilitates timely electronic reporting and monitoring of international students and exchange visitors, as well as their dependents, in the United States. This application enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of State throughout a student's or exchange visitor's program in the United States.

Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP): a part of the National Security Investigations Division and acts as a bridge for government organizations that have an interest in information on nonimmigrants whose primary reason for coming to the United States is to be students. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, SEVP manages schools, nonimmigrant students in the F and M visa classifications and their dependents.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): an agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that authorizes benefits for students and exchange visitors. Students can request benefits such as employment, an extension of their stay or a change of status from USCIS.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP): a U.S. Department of Homeland Security agency that secures the borders of the United States, including airports, land borders and seaports. When entering the country, F and M students go through inspections with CBP officers and must present proper documentation.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS): a federal agency whose missions include preventing terrorism and enhancing security, managing U.S. borders, administering immigration laws, securing cyberspace and ensuring disaster resilience. Through Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, DHS secures the student visa system.