



SEVIS 6.22 Post-Release and Roadmap Webinar FAQs

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Addresses 1

 Address Doctor..... 2

 Batch-related Address Problems 2

Optional Practical Training (OPT)..... 3

 Unemployment-Related Alert Lists 6

 OPT and Batch 6

F/M Student Telephone and Email Address 6

J Exchange Visitor Telephone 7

Form I-17 Workflow 7

Exchange Visitor Questions..... 7

Form I-20 Changes 8

Miscellaneous 8

 Batch Miscellaneous 9

Addresses

Q: When SEVIS does not recognize a campus address, should we use “physical address” as the override reason? We have cases where the school address is recognized, but not the dormitory address.

A: You have two options:

- You can use the override for physical address.
- You can also put the school address in the Street Address field (address line one) and the dormitory address in the Other field (address line two). This latter option does not require an override.

Q: Why is the same address valid for one nonimmigrant record, but invalid for another?

A: Send details about this to SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov, so we can research this. Send screenshots and the address you used, if possible. It may have to do with the timing of when these addresses were submitted – was Address Doctor running at the time or not.



Q: If we cannot correct the addresses for all of our students, will we be able to register our students?

A: Yes. During registration, SEVIS looks only to see if there is a value in the U.S. Address field for students. It does not look to see what the validation status of that address is.

Address Doctor

Q: When was Address Doctor last updated? Does it include the August [2015] update that Informatica, the company that owns Address Doctor, itself released?

A: SEVIS' Address Doctor was updated in mid-September 2015. We will continue to update Address Doctor monthly.

Q: Is it possible for SEVIS to remember a campus address that is used frequently, so DSOs do not always have to enter it and possibly use the override function every time?

A: This would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to do for all schools. There are other priorities at this time. We will continue to see if we can improve Address Doctor functionality.

Q: If the address is simply not recognized by Address Doctor, should we use "Other" as the override reason.

A: Yes. This is why we have "Other" in the drop-down list of override reasons.

Q: If Address Doctor is down when we submit an address, will we have to validate them later? Will they show up on an alert list that we will have to check once the functionality is restored?

A: The address will show up on an alert list, once functionality is restored. We will not be doing anything immediately from an enforcement perspective. Address Doctor does not work properly at this time; so it is not fair to have you validate addresses right away. We will ask you to validate the addresses as you touch records.

Also, once we have Address Doctor working well, we will run a simple job to have SEVIS validate the unvalidated records.

Batch-related Address Problems

Q: Since Address Doctor has been problematic, can that functionality be turned off until those problems are resolved?

A: We are turning it off in the evening when SEVIS processes batches until the November release. Most Address Doctor problems are batch-related. Some minor problems have been reported in RTI, but those can usually be handled with an override. SEVIS is displaying some information incorrectly; for example, indicating that a building is a high rise when it is a single family home. However, none of those keeps us from validating the majority of the addresses.

Q: When is Address Doctor turned off each night?

A: Address doctor is turned off between 9 PM and 6 AM.



Q: Since Address Doctor will be turned off between 9 PM and 6 AM, should we wait to submit our batches during this timeframe.

A: No. Process your batches as you normally would. Submitted batch files queue up during the day. SEVIS does not start to process them until after 9 PM, because the system is not as busy.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Q: What should we do if we do not know the employment end date? Should we make one up?

A: No. Do not make up an end date. Leave the field blank if the end date is unknown. We expect the student to update you when the job ends. DSOs can add the end date when it is known.

Q: DSOs must now explain how the job is related to the student's major course of study. This was not required before. It was the student's responsibility to determine how it is related. What kind of help text or guidance will be available for this field?

A: We will work with our Policy branch to give guidance. The regulations require the job to relate to the student's major course of study. The student is responsible for providing the explanation to you.

Q: Can the International Student Office be added as an OPT employer?

A: If the International Student Office actually is the employer, it can be entered as the employer. Do not use the international office as a placeholder.

Q: Prior to the November 2015 Release, must DSOs provide employer information for students currently on post-completion OPT?

A: DSOs will have at least 60 days after the release to get employer information from students on OPT.

Q: What will happen to employer information for students already on approved post-completion OPT?

A: We will take the following actions on student records that have existing OPT employers:

- SEVIS will move the existing employer name and address, and retain them in those fields.
- SEVIS will populate the Start Date with the Actual OPT Start Date.
- SEVIS will populate the End Date with the Actual OPT End Date.

We know this is not accurate, but it the best we could do to convert the existing information. You may want to edit the information, but you are not required to do so.

Q: Will the *OPT Employment* page allow for multiple employers?

A: Yes. DSOs can enter information on multiple employers. It does not matter if the employment is concurrent or sequential.



Q: When will we get information on how to advise students on STEM extensions, in light of the WashTech decision?

A: DHS is aware of the court's ruling, and we are working on a draft rulemaking. We are working aggressively to meet the court's deadlines.

Q: Will the changes to reporting OPT employer information apply to students when we request OPT, or only after OPT is approved?

A: Both. The November 2015 Release separates the request for OPT authorization from the entry of employer information. DSOs can enter employer information immediately after submitting the OPT recommendation in SEVIS, if the employer is known at the time. The DSO can also enter employer information at any time after the OPT recommendation has been submitted.

Q: Are there plans to terminate F/M students after 90 days of unemployment?

A: Yes. With the November 2015 release, SEVIS will have the ability to terminate records for 90 consecutive days of unemployment. We will not turn this functionality on until sometime in early 2016.

Q: Where can DSOs provide feedback on having SEVIS terminate records for periods of unemployment?

A: Email either SEVP@ice.dhs.gov or SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov. We will forward the feedback to the appropriate decision makers.

Q: Why would a DSO delete an employer? Would there be an employment history?

A: There will be an employment history. A DSO would delete an employer for a variety of reasons, including:

- Employer withdrew the job offer before the student began work.
- Student never worked for the employer.
- Job was entered twice.

Q: Why is the employment End Date not required at the time of entry?

A: The employment End Date might not be known at the time the employment is entered. We assume that a student is still working for the same employer if there is no End Date for the employment.

Q: If the student is approved for post-completion OPT but never reports employer information, can they get the STEM extension; or will SEVIS start terminating these students?

A: Once the termination functionality is turned on, SEVIS will start terminating these students. They will not be able to obtain STEM extensions.

Q: Is there a distinction between the employment being related to course work versus major? Many students have taken coursework in a variety of areas that are not necessarily their major.



A: This is a question we must defer to our Policy Unit. The regulations state the employment must be related to the student's major course of study.

Q: When entering the Start Date for the employer, can a DSO enter a retroactive Start Date?

A: Yes. The DSO can enter a Start Date in the past, when entering information about a student's job.

Note: The employer Start Date cannot be before the Actual OPT Start Date.

Q: DSOs advise students to avoid 90 days of aggregate unemployment. With SEVIS terminating records for 90 consecutive days, do DSOs need to change how they advise students?

A: No. DSOs should not change how they advise students. The regulations only allow for 90 total days of unemployment. SEVIS is not able to calculate total days of unemployment; therefore, the system will terminate for 90 consecutive days of unemployment. However, SEVP can still manually terminate students for exceeding the 90 total days of unemployment.

Q: Will there ever be a way to verify OPT employers by their E-Verify number or name in RTI?

A: No. SEVIS does not receive E-Verify numbers.

Q: What should a DSO do, if the DSO enters employer information at the time OPT is requested, but the OPT is not approved until after the DSO-recommended OPT Start Date?

A: If the Actual OPT Start Date is after the Start Date for the employer, the DSO should edit the employer information, so the Start Date is on or after the Actual OPT Start Date. The student cannot legally begin work for the employer until OPT authorization has been approved.

Q: Does the 90-day unemployment rule apply to students who applied late for OPT and only have 8 months left?

A: Yes. The 90-day limit on unemployment applies to any student approved for post-completion OPT. The unemployment count begins on the Actual OPT Start Date. Time spent waiting for USCIS adjudication does not count towards the total days of unemployment.

Q: If a student changes employer, how do I enter that in SEVIS? In the past, I simply deleted the old employer's information and typed in the new employer's information.

A: You would edit the information for the old employer by entering the end date for that old employer. Save the change for that employer record, and then add a record for the new employer.



Unemployment-Related Alert Lists

Q: How will schools and students be notified if a student is terminated for exceeding 90 days of unemployment?

A: There will also be an alert for students terminated, who exceeded the maximum number of days of unemployment. We have no plans to contact students.

Q: Will there be an alert list for students on post-completion OPT, who approach the 90-day limit for unemployment?

A: Yes. There will be an alert list for DSOs titled, “Students who have Approved OPT without Current Employer Information.” SEVIS is not sophisticated enough to be able to provide a list of students with 90 days of cumulative days of unemployment.

OPT and Batch

Q: Will schools be able to update employer information via batch?

A: Yes. Schools will be able to add and update employer information via batch. However, they will not be able to delete employers via batch.

Q: Why can't we delete employers in batch?

A: Deleting an employer can only be done via RTI, because of certain confirmations the DSO must make when deleting an employer.

Q: Will the ability to add an employer in batch represent a change to the schema?

A: Yes. The schema for this has already been posted on our website.

F/M Student Telephone and Email Address

Q: If we enter an international phone number, is there a character limit?

A: Yes. There is a character limit of 4 digits for the country code field and 20 digits for the rest of the telephone number.

Q: When will DSOs be required to enter student email and telephone numbers for F/M students?

A: SEVP is phasing this in:

- November 2015 Release: DSOs will be required to provide the student's email address and phone number, when updating personal information.
- June 2016 Release: The student's email address and phone number will be required at the time of continuing registration, although you can enter it earlier.

Q: When entering a student's email address, must it be the school-provided email or can it be the student's personal email address?

A: It can be either one.

Q: Is the student's email address required in both RTI and batch?

A: Yes.



Q: Will the regulations be updated to reflect that the student's email address and telephone number are required.

A: No. Our lawyers inform us that the current regulatory language covers this, when it requires DSOs to provide student contact information.

Q: Will an email address and telephone number be required an F-2?

A: No.

J Exchange Visitor Telephone

Q: What is the Department of State's preference when entering telephone numbers for validating exchange visitors?

A: We prefer the exchange visitor's personal U.S. telephone number whether that is a landline or a mobile phone. If they do not have their own U.S. telephone number, give us the telephone for their primary site of activity.

Form I-17 Workflow

Q: When the Form I-17 workflow is improved, will SEVP address problems with school certification understaffing?

A: SEVP is currently addressing the understaffing of the School Certification Unit. The changes we plan to make to SEVIS should not add to the kinds of adjudication that need to be done. We are trying to improve the workflow, so that it is easier to request needed updates.

The changes will clarify information already being requested. They will not require the entry of new information.

Q: When the Form I-17 workflow is improved, will the space to enter information about program names be increased?

A: Email this request to SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov. Provide any suggestions for improving the Form I-17 and any reasons for it.

Q: How does SEVP plan to limit the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes available for certain programs of study?

A: If you have English language programs, we will limit you to the CIP codes for English Language. If you are a K-12 school, we will limit the CIP codes accordingly. Those are the primary CIP limits we will be putting on schools at this time.

Exchange Visitor Questions

Q: In the past, there have been follow-up sessions to address how upcoming functionality will affect Exchange Visitor programs. Are any follow-up webinars planned?



A: The Department of State is considering a few, small changes for the June 2016 Release, but it is too premature to discuss them publicly. We are still working out details with our Policy Unit. We will give you ample time to learn about the new functionalities before the release.

Q: Will we receive guidance on how to report the death of an Exchange Visitor? In the past, we were told to use the “End Program” option.

A: After the November 2015 Release, the End Program functionality will be removed and the Shorten Program functionality will remain with updated reasons. One of the reasons will be Death of the Exchange Visitor.

Form I-20 Changes

Q: Can the sections of the Form I-20 be numbered? It makes it easier to refer to them.

A: No. The current design does not work well with numbered sections.

Q: Is it possible to put “Designated School Official” instead of “School Official” in the travel signature portion of the Form I-20? We are concerned that student might ask any school official to sign the form.

A: We will add that to our list of enhancements for the Form I-20.

Q: The Form I-20 is changing again in June 2016. Should DSOs wait to issue new Forms I-20 to students until after the June 2016 Release?

A: No. The changes in June 2016 will be minor. We will not require a reprint of the forms for everyone because of the changes made in the June 2016 Release. Students are still required to have a new version of the form (whether the June 2015 version or the June 2016 version) by July 1, 2016.

Miscellaneous

Q: On the *Listing of Schools* page, why does SEVIS not retain the DSO’s school and campus selection from a prior session when a DSO exits and logs back in?

A: Generally, websites store cookies on your computer to remember things about your use of that site. The government is prohibited from storing cookies on your computer. For us to achieve this, we would need to significantly change the database. For now, we can only store your preferences within a session, and not from one session to another.

Q: Can you clarify that SEVIS will now print the name of the program, when “Other” is selected as the education level?

A: Yes. The information the DSO types to describe the “Other” level of education will print on the Form I-20 in the Remarks field.

Q: Only 35% of our requested Mass Reprint forms are useable. The others are corrupt. What is being done to address this problem?



A: The Emergency Release (SEVIS Release 6.22.1) on September 18, 2015 addressed this problem. Email SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov, if you are still having problems with it.

Q: Does SEVP plan to restore the ability for DSOs to search for students by area of study? This was a useful feature for us, since we are a multi-campus school.

A: SEVP does not have any immediate plans to restore the DSOs' ability to search for students by area of study. We do plan to restore this functionality eventually, but it has not yet been scheduled in our development plan.

Q: Now that the 500-record limit has been removed, how do I retrieve the full report of students or exchange visitors, whose names were changed as a result of the SEVIS name conversion?

A: You should be able to retrieve it from the *SEVIS Downloads* page. The updated report should be there.

Q: Would it be possible to note in SEVIS, if the student is enrolled out of the country, and not just for study or research abroad? They are two different things.

A: Email SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov to explain the distinction, as it is not clear to the government how they differ.

Q: Will the *Curricular Practical Training (CPT)* page be changed to mirror what is happening with OPT?

A: No. There will be no changes to CPT.

Batch Miscellaneous

Q: Since the SEVIS 6.22 Release, some of our download batches come back as “uploaded,” instead of being imported into our batch system, PeopleSoft. Has something gone wrong with batch processing?

A: This is a problem with PeopleSoft's software. Check with your vendor. They should have guidance regarding this problem.