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General Information

Some F-1 students may extend their F-1 status beyond the end of their academic program or any authorized Optional Practical Training (OPT), if:

- An employer filed a timely Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker, with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) requesting a change of status to H-1B status.
Note: A petition asking for consular notification is not eligible for a cap gap extension.
- The H-1B petition asks for an October 1 start date.
- The student's status, including any applicable grace period ends between April 1 and September 30.

H-1B status is for workers in specialty occupations. Employers must petition USCIS for H-1B status on behalf of the worker. USCIS can only grant a limited number of H-1B statuses each year. This is known as the "H-1B cap." New H-1Bs become available each year on October 1. Employers can file an H-1B petition with USCIS up to six months before H-1B status is to start. April 1st is the first day an employer can file an H-1B petition for an October 1 start date.

If approved for a change to H-1B status that cannot take effect until October 1, students whose F-1 status ends between April 1 and September 30 face a potential gap in their ability to stay and/or work legally in the United States. The cap gap extension allows them to:



- Stay legally in the country (with any F-2 dependents).
- Extend work authorization for any approved, post-completion OPT or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) extension OPT that extends to or beyond April 1.



- [8 CFR 214.2\(f\)\(5\)\(vi\)](#)
- [8 CFR 274a.12\(b\)\(6\)\(v\)](#)
- [8 CFR 214.2\(h\)](#)
- INA 101(a)(15)(H), (codified in [8 U.S.C. 1101\(a\)\(15\)\(H\)](#))
- [SEVP Policy Guidance on OPT](#)
- [USCIS Guidance on Cap-Gap Extensions](#)

When SEVIS gets data about an H-1B petition from USCIS, SEVIS updates the record to show the cap gap extension. However, if the record is not updated by an automated interface, the DSO can request a cap gap extension for H-1B petitions that have been filed with, waitlisted by, or rejected by USCIS.

Significant Dates in SEVIS for Cap Gap Extensions

Date	Significance
Before April 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap gap functionality is not available in SEVIS.
April 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap gap season begins. • First date cap gap functionality can display in SEVIS.
Between April 1 and September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEVIS displays link for cap gap extension on individual student records, if the Program Start Date is today or in the past.
September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap gap season ends. • Last date of cap gap extension is available in SEVIS.
October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's new fiscal year begins. • Change of status to H-1B takes effect, if October 1 date was requested. • Cap gap functionality no longer available in SEVIS.

Cap Gap Indicators in SEVIS

When a cap gap extension is added to the record, SEVIS:



- Displays a cap gap indicator at the top of the *Student Information* page and a comment at the bottom.

Student Information

Actions:
[Authorize To Drop Below Full Course](#) [Cap-Gap Extension](#) [Change Education Level](#) [Complete Program](#)

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Personal Information	Program Information
SEVIS ID: N0004705869	Cap Gap until 06/02/2016
Surname/Primary Name: CarolynTwo	Status: ACTIVE
Given Name: Jay	Date of Last Event: 02/24/2016
Suffix: I	

Comment:
 F-1 status for this student has been automatically extended to 06/02/2016. The student is authorized to remain in the United States. This is pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iv) and 8 CFR 274a.12(b)(6)(iv), as updated April 8, 2008 in a rule published in the Federal Register (73 FR 18944). Additional information about the automatic extension can be found on the Student and Exchange Visitor Program Website at www.ice.gov/sevis.



If the student is in a period of active post-completion or STEM OPT, the indicator will read **Active Cap Gap OPT**.

- Displays a comment in the **Cap Gap Extension** section of the *Request/Authorization Details* page.

Current Request/Authorization Details

F-1 Student
CarolynTwo IV, Jay
 SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies - SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies
 Start Date: 04/24/2015 End Date: 02/24/2016

Status: **ACTIVE**
 SEVIS ID: **N0004705869**

CPT Employment: + **No Current CPT Employment**

Cap-Gap Extension:
 Petition Status: **WAITLISTED**
 Date of Request: **04/14/2016**
 Comment: **F-1 status for this student has been automatically extended to 07/28/2016. The student is authorized to remain in the United States. This is pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iv) and 8 CFR 274a.12(b)(6)(iv), as updated April 8, 2008 in a rule published in the Federal Register (73 FR 18944). Additional information about the automatic extension can be found on the Student and Exchange Visitor Program Website at www.ice.gov/sevis.**

Change of Status: **No Pending Change of Status Request**

- Prints a comment on Page 2 of the Form I-20.



CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION			
REQUESTED VISA TYPE	REQUEST/PETITION STATUS	RECEIPT NUMBER	BENEFIT START DATE/REQUEST DATE
H1-B	FILED		14 APRIL 2016
COMMENT			
F-1 status for this student has been automatically extended to 06/02/2016. The student is authorized to remain in the United States. This is pursuant to 8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iv) and 8 CFR 274a.12(b)(6)(iv), as updated April 8, 2008 in a rule published in the Federal Register (73 FR 18944). Additional information about the automatic extension can be found on the Student and Exchange Visitor Program Website at www.ice.gov/sevis .			

Eligibility for a Cap Gap Extension

To be eligible for a cap gap extension:

- An employer must file an H-1B petition with USCIS to change the student’s status to H-1B.
Note: A petition asking for consular-pick up is not eligible for a cap gap extension.
- The H-1B petition must request an October 1 start date.
- The student’s Program End Date or Post-Completion/STEM Optional Practical Training End Date is between April 1 and September 30.
- The student’s Program End Date is today or in the past.



Not all employers are subject to the cap on H-1Bs. The following employers are exempt from the cap:

- Institutions of higher education
- Nonprofit research organizations
- Government research organizations

Cap-exempt employers can file for H-1Bs at any time, even if the cap has been reached.

Effect of H-1B Petition on F-1 Status during Cap Gap

A cap gap-eligible student’s status is affected by one of the following statuses in an H-1B petition:

Status of H-1B Petition	Program or OPT End Date
Approved (Entered only through USCIS interface or SEVP data fix)	SEVIS extends the F-1 status and any authorized OPT until September 30.
Canceled	SEVIS reverts F-1 status or any authorized OPT end date to the original end date and removes comments about the cap gap extension from the <i>Student</i>



Status of H-1B Petition	Program or OPT End Date
	<i>Information page and from the Form I-20.</i>
Filed	SEVIS extends F-1 status and any authorized OPT until June 1.
Pending (Entered only through USCIS interface or SEVP data fix)	SEVIS extends the F-1 status and any authorized OPT until September 30.
Rejected	SEVIS shortens F-1 status and any authorized OPT to the date of the rejection letter.
Waitlisted	SEVIS extends the F-1 status and any authorized OPT until July 28.

Add, Update, or Cancel Cap Gap Extension to Reflect H-1B Petition Status

When a DSO learns that an employer has filed a cap gap-eligible H-1B petition for an F-1 student, the DSO can update the student’s record to:

- Add the cap gap to the record.
- Update the status of any cap gap extension on the record.
- Cancel any cap gap extension on the record.

To add, update, or cancel a cap gap extension:

1. Navigate to the *Student Information* page.

Student Information

Actions: [Authorize To Drop Below Full Course](#) [Cap-Gap Extension](#) [Change Education Level](#) [Complete Program](#) [Disciplinary Action](#) [Registration](#) [Shorten Program](#)

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Personal Information	Program Information
SEVIS ID: N0004708499	Active Post-Completion OPT
Surname/Primary Name: Griffin	Status: ACTIVE
Given Name: Melody	Date of Last Event: 01/11/2016
Suffix:	Termination Reason:
Passport Name:	Visa Type: F-1
Preferred Name: Melody Griffin	School Name: SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies
SEVIS Legacy Name:	School Code: BAL214F4444000
Country of Birth: BAHAMAS, THE	Campus: Advanced
Date of Birth: 08/20/1980	

2. Click the **Cap Gap Extension** link. The *Cap Gap Extension* page opens.



Cap-Gap Extension

Required fields are marked with an asterisk (*).

F-1 Student
Griffin, Melody
SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies - SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies
Start Date: 06/24/2015 End Date: 09/30/2015

Status: **ACTIVE**
SEVIS ID: **N0004708499**

1. * Status of H1-B Petition:

2. * Date of Notice: (MM/DD/YYYY)

3. Select the status of the H-1B petition from the drop-down list.

- **Filed:** Select this option if an employer submitted a cap gap-eligible petition to USCIS. The **Date of Notice** is not required if this option is selected.
- **Rejected:** Select this option if USCIS rejected the petition. The **Date of Notice** is required if this option is selected.
- **Waitlisted:** Select this option if USCIS has received the petition, but is not yet sure that it falls within the quota. The **Date of Notice** is not required if this option is selected.
- **Canceled:** Select this option if a cap gap extension was added in error or if the H-1B petition was not eligible for the cap gap extension. This option appears only if the record already has a cap gap extension in Filed or Waitlisted status.

Note: When the status is changed to Canceled, the OPT End Date reverts to its original date, and the comments no longer display in any location.

Note: The student must be able to provide proof that the petition has been filed or waitlisted.

4. Click either **Extend Status** or **Cancel**.

- **Extend Status:** Submits the extension or any update. It also extends or modifies any associated post-completion/STEM OPT. A message requests you confirm the action. Click either **Yes** or **No**.
 - **Yes:** Extends the student's status. A success message indicates the record was updated.
 - **No:** Cancels the action and returns the user to the *Student Information* page.
- **Cancel:** Returns the user to the *Student Information* page without making a change.



5. Click **Print I-20** to print an updated copy of the Form I-20. Sign the form, and then give the printed copy to the student for his/her records.
6. Click **Return to View Record** to view the student's SEVIS record.

Correcting Cap Gap Information in SEVIS to Reflect H-1B Petition Status

DSOs can use the **Cap Gap Extension** link in SEVIS to [update the status of cap gap information](#). SEVIS should be updated if the DSO learns that the status of the H-1B petition has changed. If the link is missing or if other changes are needed, the DSO must call the SEVIS Help Desk (1-800-892-4829) for a data fix.

Icon Guide

See the [SEVIS Help Icons](#) on the SEVIS Help Hub for a quick-reference of the icons used in this user guide.

Document Revision History

Date	Revision Summary
March 4, 2016	Initial Release