

A GUIDE FOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS AND ALTERNATE RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS



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Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Exchange Visitor Program (J-Visa)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of State (DoS) designates U.S. government, academic and private sector organizations to conduct educational and cultural exchange programs under a broad grant of authority provided by the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961. These entities, known as sponsors, assist the Department of State in promoting its public diplomacy mission. Responsible officers (ROs) and alternate responsible officers (AROs) are the employees or officers of sponsors who administer their J-1 exchange program.

As those who work with international education and cultural exchanges know, exchange programs and institutional partnerships help create dialogue, friendship and understanding between Americans and people of different cultures and faiths throughout the world. These programs establish long-lasting ties between the United States and other countries, resulting in a better understanding of American values and institutions. Each exchange visitor who comes to the United States on an exchange visitor (J-visa) program has the right to expect a well-administered program.

The purpose of this Guide is to assist ROs and AROs in carrying out their responsibilities by providing helpful reminders about the Exchange Visitor Program regulations and the use of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), and answering some commonly asked questions. First and foremost, ROs and AROs must know the regulations (Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 62 [22 CFR 62]). Secondly, they must understand what they are obligated to do with the SEVIS records and immigration documents of their exchange visitors in order to keep them in compliance with the law. Thirdly, they must know where to turn for assistance when they do not know the answer.

This Guide is broken down into the following sections:

- Introduction
- Exchange Visitor Program Regulations [22 CFR 62]
- SEVIS
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Resources (Appendix A)

2. EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM REGULATIONS

This section provides a summary of the regulations governing the Exchange Visitor Program, which are found in Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 62. Part 62 is divided into subparts. Subpart A outlines general program requirements, obligations of sponsors, rules on program administration, the duties of responsible officers (RO), and related requirements. These Regulations also apply to the alternate responsible officers, who assist the RO in the administration of the sponsor’s exchange visitor program. The RO is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the program is administered and implemented in accordance with the Department’s Regulations within the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), and is required to train and supervise all AROs. A periodic review of the regulations will help remind ROs and AROs of their responsibilities.

Updates to the Exchange Visitor Program Regulations

The CFR is published once a year, so updates are necessary. The government uses the *Federal Register* as the official daily publication for proposed rules, rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. It is updated daily by 6 a.m. and is published Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. When a proposed rule is printed in the *Federal Register*, there is a public comment period identified. Rules are effective upon implementation date, and may be temporary or interim, or final.

The *Federal Register* is found at the following website:

<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/index.html>

In addition, recent *Federal Register* Notices relating to the Exchange Visitor Program may be found under “New Regulations in Effect” on the Exchange Visitor Program website:

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/>

The sections of the regulations that serve as a useful guide to RO and ARO responsibilities are listed below.

- Designation [22 CFR 62.6]
- Redesignation [22 CFR 62.7]
- General program requirements [22 CFR 62.8]
- General obligations of sponsors [22 CFR 62.9]
- Program Administration [22 CFR 62.10]
- Duties of Responsible Officers [22 CFR 62.11]
- Control of Forms DS-2019 [22 CFR 62.12]
- Notification Requirements [22 CFR 62.13]
- Insurance [22 CFR 62.14]

- Annual Reports [22 CFR 62.15]
- Employment [22 CFR 62.16]

The following sections contain summary information for the Regulations.

Designation [22 CFR 62.6]

Designation means the written authorization given by the Department to an exchange visitor program applicant to conduct an exchange visitor program as a sponsor. Any U.S. public or private entity meeting the eligibility requirements may apply to the Department for designation as an exchange visitor program sponsor. In order to receive authorization from the Department, such entities must satisfactorily demonstrate the ability to comply with all provisions of the Exchange Visitor Program regulations (22 CFR 62) and meet at all times its financial obligations and responsibilities attendant to a successful exchange program.

An application for designation must be filed electronically through SEVIS. The Department of State website links to the [User Manual for Temporary Users of SEVIS](#), which provides detailed instructions for completing and filing an Exchange Visitor Program application using the electronic Form DS-3036. To download a copy of the manual, see <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/about/sevis.htm>.

Once designated, organizations are automatically enrolled in SEVIS. They are provided a Letter of Designation and given access to Form DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status*. A SEVIS user ID will be provided by email to the designated officials, who then must create a SEVIS password. The designated officials will also receive an email that contains instructions for creating a password.

The Form DS-2019 is the basic document required to support an application for an exchange visitor visa (J-1/J-2), as well as for monitoring exchange visitor status. Officials who manage exchange visitor programs are called Responsible Officers (ROs). Sponsors may appoint Alternate Responsible Officers (AROs) to assist with the operation of their exchange visitor program via SEVIS. ROs and AROs must be citizens of the United States or legal permanent residents (see 22 CFR 62.2 *Citizen of the United States*), and an employee or officer of the sponsor. The Department of State may limit the number of AROs appointed by a sponsor.

Redesignation [22 CFR 62.7]

Prior to the expiration of a given designation term (1 or 2 years, unless restricted by the Department), a sponsor must seek redesignation for another term. In order to apply for redesignation, the sponsor must file an application through SEVIS. Redesignation requests are evaluated based upon the criteria established in 22 CFR 62.6, and take into account the sponsor's annual reports and other documentation reflecting its record as an exchange visitor program sponsor.

An application for redesignation must be filed electronically through SEVIS. The Department of State website links to the [User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users \(RO/ARO\)](#)

of SEVIS Volume I, which provides detailed instructions for completing and filing a request for redesignation using the electronic Form DS-3036. To download a copy of the manual, see <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/about/sevis.htm>.

General Program Requirements [22 CFR 62.8]

The RO must ensure that the following requirements are followed:

- Size of program—Sponsors, other than Federal government agencies, must have no less than five exchange visitors per calendar year.
- Duration of program for other than Federal government agencies—The minimum period of program participation in an exchange visitor program is 3 weeks, with the exception of the category of Short-term Scholar and Secondary School Student.
- Reciprocity—Sponsors must make a good faith effort toward reciprocal exchange, with Americans going abroad.
- Cross-cultural activities—Sponsors must make cross-cultural programs or activities available to their exchange visitors in order to expose them to American society, culture and institutions.

General Obligations of Sponsors [22 CFR 62.9]

All sponsors designated by the Department of State are required to:

- Provide adequate staffing and support services to administer their exchange visitor program;
- Ensure that all employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of the exchange program are adequately qualified, appropriately trained and comply with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations;
- Adhere to the Exchange Visitor Program regulations;
- Maintain the same legal status they held when initially designated to operate an exchange visitor program. If a sponsor's legal status changes, they are required to submit a new or amended designation application in SEVIS and forward supporting documentation to the Department, as appropriate (e.g., partnership to corporation, non-profit to for-profit, change in ownership or control, loss of licensure or accreditation);
- Represent themselves appropriately to the public and to prospective exchange visitors, inform all participants as to the full nature of their exchange visitor program through informational materials that explain the activities, costs, conditions, restrictions, etc;
- Provide accurate and complete information, to the extent lawfully permitted, to the Department of State regarding their exchange visitor program and exchange visitors;
- Maintain, at all times, the capability of meeting the financial obligations and responsibilities of administering a successful exchange visitor program;
- Remain in compliance with all local, state, federal and professional
- requirements necessary to administer the exchange visitor program for which they were designated, including, if applicable, accreditation and licensure;

- Refrain from using the Department of State program number assigned at the time of designation on advertising and/or publications for public circulation;
- Refrain from declaring that any program the sponsor operates is endorsed, sponsored or supported by the Department of State; however, sponsors may state that they are designated by the Department as the sponsor of an exchange visitor program.

Program Administration [22 CFR 62.10]

Selection of participants—Sponsors must ensure that a logical and equitable system is in place for selecting participants for their exchange visitor program. Sponsors must ensure:

- The program is well suited to the exchange visitor’s background, education, needs, experience or training—will the program objectives be met?
- If applicable, admission to an educational program (secondary school student or college/university student)—has the exchange visitor met all requirements for enrollment into the program?
- Proficiency in the English language—does the exchange visitor possess adequate English language skills to enable him/her to successfully participate in the program and function independently in the community?

Pre-arrival information—All participants must be given information that will assist them in preparing for their stay in the United States. The following information must be provided:

- The purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program;
- Information on the two-year home residency requirement (Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act);
- Travel information, to help the exchange visitor know what documents to carry when he/she travels, and what to expect at the U. S. port of entry;
- Arrival information to help the exchange visitor know what to do and where to go upon arrival in the United States, including contact information for the sponsor (RO/ARO) and other points of contact;
- Housing— Unless housing is provided, an explanation of housing options in the community, with approximate costs;
- Fees payable to the sponsor and fees likely to be incurred by a participant—An explanation of all fees and costs the exchange visitor may be required to pay, including the SEVIS and visa fees;
- Living expense estimate—A breakdown of the costs of housing, transportation, food, supplies, and miscellaneous expenses so the exchange visitor will know what to expect;
- Health care and health insurance policy information, including detailed information on the mandatory requirement that all exchange visitors (and any dependents) hold health insurance (refer to 22 CFR 62.14 for more information);
- Other information, such as sponsor contact information and other information that will assist the exchange visitors in their preparations.

Orientation—All exchange visitors and any accompanying family members (spouse and/or unmarried, minor children) must be provided information to assist them in settling into the local community. Orientation must include, but is not limited to:

- Life and customs in the United States;
- Local community resources (e.g., public transportation, medical centers, schools, libraries, recreation centers and banks);
- Available health care, emergency assistance;
- Insurance plans that meet the requirements of the Exchange Visitor Program (J-Visa), including medical evacuation and repatriation;
- A description of the program in which the exchange visitor is participating;
- Rules that the exchange visitor is expected to follow under the sponsor's program;
- Address of the sponsor and the name and telephone number of the RO/ARO;
- Address and telephone number of the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State;
- A copy of the Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure (available on our website, <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/>)

Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status (Form DS-2019)—Sponsors must ensure that only the RO/AROs issue Forms DS-2019 and have access to SEVIS.

NOTE: Sponsors for whom ROs or AROs have been found to have shared with anyone, either on a transitory or permanent basis, their SEVIS logon IDs and passwords, will be subject to sanctions as set forth in 22 CFR 62.50.

Monitoring exchange visitors—Sponsors must take responsibility for their exchange visitors and monitor their progress and welfare, ensuring that they arrive at their destination and engage in the activity listed on their Forms DS-2019. It is the DoS-designated sponsor, not any agents or third parties providing services, that holds ultimate responsibility for their exchange visitor program and the exchange visitors whom they sponsor.

- **SEVIS:** Sponsors must ensure that the information contained in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is accurate and current. SEVIS records biographic and program information about each exchange visitor, the exchange visitor's actual and current U.S. address (local residence) ("Current U.S. Address" fields in SEVIS) and physical location where the activity is to be performed ("Site of Activity" fields in SEVIS). **NOTE:** Sponsors shall report a Post Office Box address in those limited circumstances where mail cannot be delivered to the actual and current U.S. address and, in addition, shall maintain a record of the actual and current address, e.g., dorm, building and room number, for the exchange visitor.
- The sponsor must require the exchange visitor to report any changes of address within 10 days of a move, and the RO/ARO must update SEVIS within 21 days of being notified by the exchange visitor. A sponsor's failure to update the actual and current U.S. address information with 21 days may be grounds for revocation of their Exchange Visitor Program status. **NOTE:** Sponsors with exchange visitor programs of short duration (less

than 30 days) must carefully monitor these exchange visitors, validating their SEVIS records immediately to ensure that SEVIS will reflect Active status (instead of No Show or Invalid) and will go into Inactive status upon program completion;

- Though not a regulatory requirement, sponsors should have a plan in place for contacting and providing safety information to exchange visitor participants and their dependents in the event of a natural disaster or national emergency. Sponsors should enter into SEVIS the foreign address of potential exchange visitors waiting to enter the United States so that they may also be contacted in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

Inquiries and investigations—sponsors must cooperate with any inquiry or investigation undertaken by DoS, consulting with legal counsel if needed. The Department of State has the right to request information, reports, documents, books, files, and other records related to their exchange visitor program. [22 CFR 62.10(f)]

Retention of records—sponsors must retain all records related to their exchange visitors (and dependents, if any) for a minimum of three years following the completion of the exchange visitor’s (J-1) program. [22 CFR 62.10(h)]

Duties of Responsible Officers [22 CFR 62.11]

Responsible officers (RO) are responsible for the training and supervision of the alternate responsible officer(s) (AROs). All ROs and AROs must:

1. Be thoroughly familiar with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations and policies;
2. Ensure that the SEVIS sponsor information is updated to reflect any changes in address, telephone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses, and names of new RO and ARO(s) before the official leaves;
3. Validate in SEVIS the arrival and participation of each exchange visitor in their program activity as soon as possible but within thirty days of the program start date, updating the current U.S. address of each participant. **NOTE:** Sponsors with exchange visitor programs of short duration (less than 30 days) must carefully monitor these exchange visitors, validating their SEVIS records immediately to ensure that SEVIS will reflect Active status (instead of No Show or Invalid) and that the record will go into Inactive status upon program completion;
4. Require and verify that all exchange visitors have health/accident insurance in place for themselves, their spouse, and any dependents. [See 22 CFR 62.14.]

Control of Forms DS-2019 [22 CFR 62.12]

Responsible officers (ROs) and alternate responsible officers (AROs) must ensure that Forms DS-2019 are issued responsibly. As stated in the Regulations, “The responsible officers and alternate responsible officers shall act as custodian for the control, issuance, and distribution of Forms DS-2019....” [22 CFR 62.11(d)]. Forms DS-2019 may only be completed, printed, signed and issued by an RO or ARO who is physically present in the United States or a U.S. territory at the time of the Form’s production [22 CFR 62.71(a)], and they may only be sent to the exchange visitor “either directly or via an employee, officer, or agent of the sponsor, or to an individual designated by the exchange visitor” [22 CFR 62.12(d)].

The “program start date” entered in SEVIS and printed on the Form DS-2019 must be the actual start date of the exchange visitor’s program. Forms DS-2019 must be signed in **blue** ink to indicate an original document.

Allotments of Forms DS-2019 must be requested through SEVIS. The general rule on Form allotments is that the Department will release to the sponsor the same amount of Forms annually to maintain the current program size. If a sponsor wishes to increase the number of participants in their program, they must submit a written request, with justification for the growth in size.

Notification Requirements [22 CFR 62.13]

Changes of circumstance—Sponsors must promptly notify the Department in writing of any change in the composition of the organization or change in ownership, litigation involving the sponsor, change in contact information (telephone/fax number, address, etc.), or change in responsible officer or alternate officers. Several of these notification actions are handled in SEVIS (see Section 3, SEVIS, for additional information).

Serious problem or controversy - Sponsors must promptly notify the Department of any unusual or exceptional incidents that may bring the Department or the sponsor’s exchange visitor program into notoriety or disrepute. Serious problems or controversies relating to exchange visitors that must be reported to the Department include, but are not limited to, serious accident or death, lawsuits, criminal action, actual or alleged sexual assault of minors, and the like.

Program status of exchange visitor—Through SEVIS, sponsors must promptly notify the Department when an exchange visitor has withdrawn or completed a program 30 or more days prior to the program end date on the Form DS-2019, or has been terminated from the program.

Insurance [22 CFR 62.14]

Sponsors must require all exchange visitors and their accompanying family members (i.e., spouse and unmarried, minor children entering the United States on a J-2 visa) to have insurance in effect for the full duration of the program, beginning with the program start date and carrying through to the program end date listed on the Form DS-2019. [Sponsors are not precluded from offering insurance that covers the exchange participants and their families “portal-to-portal.”] Exchange visitors who willfully fail to maintain the required insurance shall be terminated from their program (see 22 CFR 62.40(4)). - Sponsors may choose to provide mandatory health insurance to program participants, or establish procedures to track compliance with this requirement.

Annual Reports [22 CFR 62.15]

Sponsors must submit an annual report to the Department of State. Upon generation of the annual report via SEVIS, the report must be signed before being mailed to DoS. The due date for the annual report varies depending on the type of program—academic year, calendar year, or fiscal year—and is noted on the original designation letter and on subsequent letters of redesignation.

The schedules are as follows:

- **Academic year (July 1 – June 30):** due at DoS by July 31st
- **Fiscal year (Oct. 2 – Sept. 30):** due at DoS by October 31st
- **Calendar year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31):** due at DoS by January 31st

The annual report is prepared in SEVIS (see Section 3, SEVIS, for details) and includes a statistical summary of Forms DS-2019 usage, a numerical count of exchange visitor participation, and a written evaluation of the program, including new initiatives, effectiveness, reciprocity, activities, cross-cultural programs, etc. If the written evaluation is longer than the space the SEVIS window allows, a separate document may be attached. Once printed, the annual report must be signed by the RO certifying compliance with insurance coverage covered in 22 CFR 62.14, and mailed to DoS.

Several exchange visitor program categories require the filing of additional reports in the administration of an exchange visitor program. For example, Secondary School Student sponsors must file Placement Reports twice annually, on August 31st and January 15th. See regulations specific to designated categories [Subpart B—Specific Program Provisions 22 CFR 62.20—62.32.]

Employment [22 CFR 62.16]

Exchange visitors may receive compensation by the sponsor (or designee) for employment when it is part of the exchange visitor's program activity. Some categories of exchange visitor (e.g., Secondary School Student and International Visitor) may not be employed on either a full- or part-time basis. Any exchange visitor who engages in unauthorized employment shall be deemed to be in violation of program status and is subject to program termination [22 CFR 62.40(b)].

The accompanying spouse and minor, unmarried children (J-2s) may apply for an "Employment Authorization Document" (EAD) with the Department of Homeland Security while in the United States. This authorization is not guaranteed. The J-2 spouse and/or dependents may not work until they receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. They may work part-time or full-time as long as their EAD is valid. Work permission is typically granted for a period of one year (or to the end of the J-1's program, whichever is less.)

Sanctions [22 CFR 62.50]

The Department of State may, upon a determination by the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, impose sanctions against a sponsor that has violated one or more provisions of the Exchange Visitor Program Regulations.

3. SEVIS

The following sections provide information about the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

What is SEVIS

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is an Internet-based information management system intended for use in maintaining accurate and current information on nonimmigrant students (F and M visas) and exchange visitors (J visa) and their dependents (F-2, M-2, J-2) in the United States. SEVIS enables schools and sponsors to transmit mandatory information to the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security throughout the participants' stay in the United States.

Who Has Access to SEVIS?

SEVIS is a secure database administered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). For the Exchange Visitor Program, only ROs and AROs are given access to the system. SEVIS user IDs and passwords are not to be shared with anyone - either on a transitory or permanent basis. Sponsors for whom the RO or ARO are found to have wilfully or negligently violated 22 CFR 62.71 will be subject to sanctions.

With access to SEVIS, ROs and AROs are able to update sponsor information, submit updates to the Department that require approval, create and update J-1 exchange visitor participant records and records of accompanying dependents, as applicable.

NOTE: Logging into SEVIS regularly is critical for the following reasons -

1. ROs and AROs must log into SEVIS a minimum of once every 90 days to keep their SEVIS password active.
2. The Department of State and DHS post important messages on the SEVIS Message Board. If any messages are available, the Message Board is the first screen that displays after logging into SEVIS.

Help Information

Who can I contact for help with SEVIS questions? There are various sources you can turn to for help.

SEVIS User Manuals

User Manuals are available to help ROs and AROs navigate SEVIS. These manuals are available on the Exchange Visitor Program website (use the link below to access the website). The manuals are designed to explain in step-by-step detail how to perform procedures in SEVIS. To download a copy of the manuals, see:

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/about/sevis.htm>

- [User Manual for Temporary Users of SEVIS](#) (How to Complete and Submit the Form DS-3036, Exchange Visitor Program Application)—This manual is written as a resource

for users who wish to complete the DoS Form DS-3036, Exchange Visitor Program Application, in order to apply to the Department for designation as a new program sponsor.

- User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users (RO/ARO) of SEVIS Version 5.7: Volume I Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037—This manual contains instructions for accessing SEVIS with a permanent user ID and password; creating and processing Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 to perform program updates, viewing alerts, and viewing and printing a variety of reports.
- User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users (RO/ARO) of SEVIS Version 5.7: Volume II Form DS-2019—This manual addresses procedures for creating, issuing, and modifying Forms DS-2019 for exchange visitors and dependents.

SEVIS Online Help

The online help contains the same information available in the user manuals. To obtain online help, click the Help link on any SEVIS screen.

SEVIS Help Desk

To obtain help with SEVIS technical issues only (e.g., batch processing, password resets, system operation), contact the SEVIS Help Desk at 800-892-4829 between 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

Department of State

To obtain help with questions related to administering your exchange visitor program, interpreting the Regulations and policies, or to discuss specific exchange visitor or programmatic issues, contact the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State. The Office has three divisions:

- Academic and Government Programs Division (AG)
- Private Sector Programs Division (PS)
- Compliance Unit

When communicating in writing with the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, please include your program name and number (for example, P-1-01234), and category at the top of all correspondence. This will aid the office in quickly referring your correspondence to the appropriate officer or channel.

To facilitate service, be sure your mail is addressed to the appropriate Division. See Attachment A, Resources, or refer to the Exchange Visitor Program website for contact information:

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/contact.htm>.

SEVIS Responsibilities

The Form DS-2019-All exchange visitor applicants must have a SEVIS-generated Form DS-2019, issued by a Department of State designated sponsor, in order to apply for an exchange visitor visa (J-1). The DS-2019 is a legal immigration document used to facilitate the entry of a nonimmigrant to the United States. The consular officer will verify the DS-2019 record electronically using SEVIS in order to process the exchange visitor visa application.

NOTE: Unless otherwise exempt, participants whose Form DS-2019 was issued on or after September 1, 2004 must pay a SEVIS I-901 Fee to the Department of Homeland Security for each individual program. The fee may be paid either through a special web site, via Western Union, or by mail. (See Section 4, Frequently Asked Questions, for detailed information on the SEVIS I-901 Fee.)

The SEVIS Record-To create the record (Form DS-2019) in SEVIS, the RO/ARO must have complete and accurate biographical data about the exchange visitor, including city of birth; spelling of name, which matches the spelling used in the individual's passport or national ID card; correct date of birth, etc. **NOTE:** Errors in the creation of SEVIS records may affect the exchange visitor's ability to obtain a visa and gain admission to the United States.

SEVIS STATUSES

The exchange visitor record reflects a status assigned in SEVIS. All ROs/AROs must understand the definition and meaning of each of these SEVIS statuses and the impact that these statuses may have upon the exchange visitors' valid participation in the sponsors' program.

- Initial
- Active
- Inactive
- Invalid
- Transferred
- No Show
- Terminated

INITIAL STATUS

Initial status indicates that the exchange visitor and/or dependent records have been created and submitted (saved to the SEVIS database), but the exchange visitor has not entered the United States or has not reported to the sponsor. The exchange visitor has not had their participation in the program activity validated in SEVIS by the RO or ARO.

Validation is the process of updating the SEVIS record to indicate that the exchange visitor has actually arrived at the site of activity in the United States identified by the sponsor and is participating in his/her program. Validation changes the SEVIS status of a record from Initial to Active. BEFORE validating an exchange visitor's program participation in SEVIS, do the following three checks:

1. Verify the Program Begin Date

The “program begin date” reflects the date the exchange visitor is expected to begin participation in his/her program. The date listed on the SEVIS record after validation will be the date used to count-down the maximum duration of participation for the category in which the exchange visitor is engaged (e.g., Secondary School Student, Au Pair, Research Scholar, Government Visitor, etc.).

NOTE: If you learn that an exchange visitor will be arriving later than the program begin date listed in SEVIS, amend the program to enter the correct begin date. This will keep the record in Initial status until the exchange visitor arrives in the United States. If an exchange visitor arrives after his/her begin date be sure to amend the program begin date before Validation.

2. Verify that the **Current U.S. Address** is current and correct.

Sponsors are required to enter the actual and current U.S. address (local residence) of all participants into SEVIS. When data are first entered for an exchange visitor applicant who has not yet entered the country, the “current U.S. address” will be the address where he/she expects to reside, if known. Otherwise, it can be the address of the sponsor. When the exchange visitor enters the country and his/her SEVIS record is validated, however, the U.S. address where the exchange visitor will reside **must** be verified and updated, if different from the address originally used.

NOTE: When entering data for Secondary School Students (high school students), enter the host family name in the **Address 1** field in SEVIS and enter the street address for the residence in the **Address 2** field.

3. Verify that the **primary site of activity** is current and correct.

The “site of activity” is the physical location where an exchange visitor will participate in his/her program (there can be more than one site of activity.) The address that prints in the U.S. Address field on the Form DS-2019 is the primary site of activity address.

NOTE: The site of activity for a Secondary School Student would be the high school that he/she is attending. For an Au Pair, it is the host family’s address.

ACTIVE STATUS

Active status means that the sponsor has validated the exchange visitor’s SEVIS record indicating participation of the exchange visitor in his/her program activity.

INACTIVE STATUS

SEVIS assigns the status of Inactive (indicating the exchange visitor is out of valid program status) for one of the following reasons:

- The exchange visitor completes his/her program as scheduled when the Form DS-2019 expires.
- An RO/ARO ends the program of an exchange visitor. For example, the exchange visitor completes his/her program early, or withdraws from the program.
- Dependents (J-2): The status of the exchange visitor’s dependents will be set to Inactive on the effective date of completion entered into SEVIS by an RO/ARO or by SEVIS. The status of the dependents and/or spouse may be inactivated early. For example, if there is a divorce, an RO/ARO can change the spouse’s status to Inactive. A dependent

child's status is automatically ended in SEVIS on the day the dependent turns 21 years of age.

INVALID STATUS

Invalid status indicates that:

- The exchange visitor did not enter the United States through a port of entry (POE) within 30 days of the program start date identified in SEVIS, or
- The exchange visitor's record was not validated by the RO/ARO within 30 days of program start date, or
- An RO/ARO set the exchange visitor's record to Invalid status by cancelling their record/participation.

See SEVIS Corrections, p.21, for guidance on how to correct records of qualified participants.

TRANSFERRED STATUS

Transfers are not permitted in all categories of exchange (e.g., Secondary School Student, Au Pair, Teacher, Summer Work/Travel, and Trainee.) An eligible exchange visitor can transfer to another program or can be transferred into a program on the effective date of transfer entered by the releasing program sponsor. In the case of an exchange visitor transferring in, the status of the exchange visitor and dependents will change from Transferred to Active when the exchange visitor's participation in the new program has been validated, which must take place no later than 30 days after the effective date of transfer. Failure to validate the exchange visitor's participation within 30 days will cause the status of the SEVIS record(s) to change to No Show.

NO SHOW STATUS

The No Show status indicates that the exchange visitor has entered the United States and has not reported to the sponsor. When an exchange visitor's status is No Show, the exchange visitor has violated the Exchange Visitor Program regulations. This has an **adverse**, or **negative**, affect on the exchange visitor's record, and on the SEVIS record of each dependent of the exchange visitor. Exchange visitors with a SEVIS status of No Show will receive no benefits (for example, extension, change of category, or reinstatement).

If a sponsor receives information that a potential exchange visitor participant has entered the United States and has not reported for participation, an RO/ARO can set the exchange visitor's status to No Show. The No Show option is only available for an exchange visitor when his or her SEVIS record is in Initial status. **DO NOT** use the No Show option to cancel a duplicate record or a record that has been issued in error (use the Cancel EV option in SEVIS instead.)

An exchange visitor and dependents, if any, will attain the status of No Show for the following reasons:

- It is 30 days after the program start date listed in SEVIS and the exchange visitor has entered the United States through a port of entry but has not reported to the sponsor, or the person's program participation has not been validated in SEVIS;
- In a transfer situation, the exchange visitor's record has not been validated in SEVIS 30 days after the effective date of transfer identified in SEVIS;

- An RO or ARO changed the exchange visitor's SEVIS status from Initial to No Show;
- Dependent records are automatically set to No Show when the exchange visitor's record is set to No Show.

See SEVIS Corrections, p.21, for guidance on how to correct records of valid participants.

TERMINATED STATUS

Termination has an **adverse**, or **negative**, affect on the exchange visitor's record and on the record of each dependent of the exchange visitor. Exchange visitors who have had their program terminated are not entitled to any benefits afforded to exchange visitors who are maintaining "valid program status." For example, they cannot apply for an extension, reinstatement, or change of category.

SEVIS REQUESTS

An RO/ARO can perform certain tasks in SEVIS that do not require supporting documentation, such as submitting a request for an allotment of Forms DS-2019 (with no increase.) These requests are reviewed by program officers at the Department and processed with no further action required by the RO/ARO unless contacted by an official from the Department of State.

Other requests submitted to the Department through SEVIS require supporting documentation and, in some cases, a fee. Following the submission of a request in SEVIS, you must print the document (Form DS-3036, "Update of Information on Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor" or Form DS-3037, "Application for Redesignation and/or Amendment") and follow the procedures identified in the SEVIS User Manual. When received, an officer will review the supporting documentation and approve or deny the request, or ask for additional information. If approved, the SEVIS record is updated. All requests should include the sponsor's program name and number (for example, P-1-01234) and category to help the Department identify which officer it belongs to.

NOTE: The Form DS-3036 or 3037 and fee, if applicable, and any required supporting documentation, must be received in the Department within 30 calendar days of submission in SEVIS or the request will be deleted from the system.

Payment of Fee:

Required fees must be paid through Pay.gov (www.pay.gov), an online fee remittance program used by the Federal government. A copy of the Pay.gov confirmation page, showing that the fee has been paid, must be sent to the Department along with the request.

NOTE: You are responsible for ensuring that the information on your program profile (e.g., email addresses, telephone numbers, spelling of names) is correct. This information must be accurate in order for the Department to contact you.

MAJOR SEVIS PROCEDURES

The User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users (RO/ARO) of SEVIS Version 5.7: Volume I Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 contains detailed instructions on the following procedures:

- Amendment

- Change Program Sponsor Name
- Redesignation
- Allotment of Forms DS-2019
- Increase in Allotment (Program Expansion)
- Add/Update Officials
- Generate a Report

The User Manual for Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor Users (RO/ARO) of SEVIS Version 5.7: Volume I Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 contains detailed instructions on the following procedures:

- Creating an Exchange Visitor Form DS-2019
- Amend Program
- Cancel Exchange Visitor
- No Show
- Validate Program Participation
- Actions for Exchange Visitors in Active Status
- Transfer Out
- Actions for Exchange Visitors in Inactive Status
- Transfer In
- SEVIS Corrections

The following sections provide a brief explanation of each procedure.

SEVIS User Manual Volume I

The following sections provide brief explanations of some of the procedures available in SEVIS.

AMEND A SPONSOR'S DESIGNATION

If permitted by the Exchange Visitor Program regulations, a sponsor may submit a request to add more categories to its initial designation using the Amendment process in SEVIS. The process is similar to the initial designation process. A completed application (Form DS-3036) must be submitted in SEVIS and a copy sent to the Department along with full supporting documentation. No fee is required. If approved, the program will be updated to include the additional category. See Section 2.3.1.1, Amendment, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

CHANGE PROGRAM SPONSOR NAME

If a sponsor changes its name, a request to change the name of the sponsor organization must be submitted in SEVIS. A signed and notarized Form DS-3037 must be sent to the Department, along with new Articles of Incorporation. (If there is a change of ownership, a new Application for Designation must be submitted, as designation is not transferable.) See Section 2.3.1.3, Change Program Sponsor Name, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

REDESIGNATION

Six months before a program approval expires, SEVIS will provide an alert indicating that the expiration date is nearing. Another alert will display 3 months prior to the date of expiration. SEVIS does not send email notification for redesignation.

The RO/ARO must submit a request for redesignation in SEVIS, and then must print a copy of the Form DS-3036. This Form must be signed, notarized, and mailed to the Department. See Attachment A, Resources, for the appropriate mailing address.

A sponsor who has submitted a redesignation request, including supporting documentation, may continue to operate the program until notified by the Department of a decision to authorize or terminate its designation. Designations are generally reviewed close to the expiration date. Programs are redesignated for one or two years. See Section 2.3.1.5, Redesignation, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

ALLOTMENT OF FORMS DS-2019

The Department allots a specific number of Forms DS-2019 to each exchange visitor program sponsor annually. The annual allotment is based on the number of participants that entered the United States on the program the previous year. There is no fee for requesting an allotment of Forms.

NOTE: When an exchange visitor's Form is made Invalid by the sponsor, SEVIS will automatically increase the allotment of Forms DS-2019 available to the program sponsor by one. Forms for J-2 dependents are created under the record of the J-1 participant, therefore they do not count toward the annual allotment.

The Department of State has the discretion to determine the number of Forms to provide to the sponsor. In determining this number, the Department considers current program size, projected expansion of program size, and the current administration of the specific program. Requesting an increase in the number of program participants requires the submission of an allotment request through SEVIS and written justification. See Section 2.3.1.7, Request Allotment of Forms DS-2019, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

INCREASE IN ALLOTMENT OF FORMS (PROGRAM EXPANSION)

When making a request for an increase in the number of Forms DS-2019, information that demonstrates the ability to select, place, and supervise additional exchange visitors must be submitted to the Department. The request must be prepared on the sponsor's letterhead, and mailed or faxed to the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation for processing. The written justification must address the following:

1. The reason for the program expansion
2. Staff increases relevant to the anticipated program increase, including before and after staffing patterns/personnel structures
3. Confirmation/assurance that the new employees/representatives have been adequately trained in order to assume their respective duties and responsibilities associated with this program expansion

4. Current financial information (including year-end financial statements/reports and a proposed business plan), and
5. Any other information on how this program growth will be absorbed.

See Section 2.3.2, Request an Increase in the Number of Program Participants, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

ADD/UPDATE OFFICIAL'S DATA

To add new or existing officials (ARO), or to replace an RO, you must submit a request in SEVIS. The *Official Information* screen is used to add/update officials. Each sponsor must have one RO and may have up to 10 AROs (at least one is highly recommended). See Section 2.3.3.1, Add/Update Officials, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

GENERATE A REPORT FROM SEVIS

Reports are snapshots of the current data in SEVIS, and may be viewed in HTML or text format. They can also be printed and/or copied and pasted into an Excel spreadsheet. See Section 2.7, Reports, in Volume I of the user manual for detailed instructions.

SEVIS User Manual Volume II

The following sections provide brief explanations of some of the procedures available in SEVIS for maintaining accurate and up-to-date information on exchange visitors and dependents, if any.

CREATE AN EXCHANGE VISITOR FORM DS-2019

An RO/ARO of designated sponsors may create, maintain, and print records (Form DS-2019) for exchange visitors and dependents, and may update previously created records. One RO/ARO can begin and save a Form DS-2019 in SEVIS, and another RO/ARO may access the record, complete and submit it. The name of the official who prints the record will print on the DS-2019 Form. See Section 2.5, Creating an Exchange Visitor Form DS-2019, in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

AMEND PROGRAM

This function is used to update an exchange visitor's program begin date and/or end date at any time prior to validation of the record in SEVIS. For example, if an exchange visitor will be arriving after the program begin date, the actual date the program starts must be changed in SEVIS before validating the exchange visitor's program participation in SEVIS. See Section 2.6.1.1, Amend Program (EV in Initial Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

CANCEL EXCHANGE VISITOR RECORD

This function may be used only when the exchange visitor's record is in Initial status. This is used to delete a duplicate record in SEVIS, or to delete the record of an exchange visitor who is no longer coming to the program. See Section 2.6.1.2, Cancel Exchange Visitor (EV in Initial Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

NO SHOW

No Show indicates that the exchange visitor entered the United States but did not report to his/her sponsor, or that the participant reported to his/her sponsor but the sponsor's RO or ARO failed to validate his or her SEVIS record within 30-days after the program begin date. See Section 2.6.1.3, Set EV's Status to No Show (EV in Initial Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

VALIDATE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Exchange Visitor Program regulations require sponsors to validate the SEVIS record of every exchange visitor when he/she arrives to begin his/her program. Failure to validate the record within 30 days of the program start date listed in SEVIS will result in automatic cancellation of the record. **NOTE:** Once validated, the program begin date cannot be changed, so if an exchange visitor arrives after the original program begin date was identified, this date should be amended before validating. See Section 2.6.1.5, Validate Program Participation (EV in Initial Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

ACTIONS FOR EXCHANGE VISITORS IN ACTIVE STATUS (2.7.1)

- **CORRECT MINOR AND TECHNICAL INFRACTION**—This action allows the RO/ARO to make a correction that is considered minor or technical (not a major infraction). The exchange visitor must be pursuing his or her original program activity. See Section 2.7.1.3, Correct Minor or Technical Infraction (EV in Active Status), in Volume II of the user manual.
- **END PROGRAM**—This action ends the exchange visitor's program for non-adverse reasons such as completion of program 30 days or more prior to program end date, inability to continue program, early withdrawal from program, or death. See Section 2.7.1.4, End Program for Exchange Visitor (EV in Active Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.
- **EXTENSION BEYOND MAXIMUM DURATION OF PROGRAM**— In some categories a request to extend an exchange visitor's program beyond the maximum duration of program participation may be submitted to the Department for review. The exchange visitor must have a status of Active, and the request must be submitted to the Department as early as possible so that it can be reviewed and approved prior to the exchange visitor's program end date. The request will not be reviewed until the Department receives the required fee and all supporting documentation. **NOTE:** Requests are not routinely approved - the situation must be unique and exceptional. There are no extensions for Summer Work/Travel, Secondary School Student, Short Term Scholar, Specialist, Government Visitor, International Visitor, or Camp Counselor participants. See Section 2.7.1.5, Extension Beyond the Maximum Duration of

Participation Request (EV in Active Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

- **REINSTATEMENT**—If the exchange visitor’s status has been **Inactive** for less than 121 days, regulatory requirements are met, and the exchange visitor is actively participating in his/her program activity, a RO/ARO may use the Correct a Minor or Technical Infraction process to change an exchange visitor’s SEVIS status from Inactive to Active.

To request reinstatement for an exchange visitor whose status has been Inactive for more than 120 days but less than 271 days, the request must be submitted via SEVIS and then followed up with supporting documentation that must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Copies of all of the exchange visitor’s Forms DS-2019 issued to date
- Evidence that the SEVIS I-901 Fee has been paid;
- A written statement and documentary information supporting the statement, declaring that the exchange visitor is pursuing or has at all times intended to pursue the original Exchange Visitor Program activity for which he/she was admitted to the United States;
- A written statement declaring that the exchange visitor failed to maintain valid program status due to circumstances beyond the control of the exchange visitor, or from administrative delay or oversight, unintentional, or excusable neglect on the RO’s/ARO’s part or the exchange visitor’s part **or** a written statement declaring that it would be an unusual hardship to the exchange visitor if the Department does not grant the reinstatement request and return the exchange visitor to valid program status.

See Section 2.8.2., Reinstatement Request (EV in Inactive Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

- **SHORTEN PROGRAM**—This is used to reduce the length of the exchange visitor’s program by changing the end date. See Section 2.7.1.11, Shorten Program for Exchange Visitor (EV in Active Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.
- **TERMINATE EXCHANGE VISITOR**—This is used for serious reasons such as conviction of a crime, disciplinary action, unauthorized employment, failure to pursue program activities, failure to submit address changes within 10 days, failure to maintain a full course of study, failure to maintain health insurance, involuntary suspension, violation of sponsor rules, violation of Exchange Visitor Program regulations. Termination has an **adverse**, or **negative**, affect on the exchange visitor’s record. Terminated exchange visitors must leave the United States immediately. See Section 2.7.1.12, Terminate Exchange Visitor (EV in Active or Inactive Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.
- **TRANSFER OUT**—This is used to transfer an exchange visitor from one program to another active SEVIS program in the same category. Transfers are permitted only in certain academic categories of exchange. There are no transfers for Summer Work/Travel, Secondary School Student, Short Term Scholar, Specialist, Government Visitor, International Visitor, Camp Counselor, Teacher, Trainee or Intern participants. See Section 2.7.3, Transfer Menu—EV in Active Status, in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

ACTIONS FOR EXCHANGE VISITORS IN INACTIVE STATUS

- **CORRECT MINOR OR TECHNICAL INFRACTION**—This option allows the RO/ARO to correct a minor or technical infraction of the regulations within the first 120 days of the infraction. The exchange visitor must be currently and actively participating in his or her program activity. This is not available if the exchange visitor has already reached the maximum duration of participation for his/her program. See Section 2.8.1, Correct Minor or Technical Infraction (EV in Inactive Status), in Volume II of the user manual.
- **REINSTATEMENT**—This process should be used when an exchange visitor is in Inactive status and should be changed to Active status. When more than 120 but less than 271 days have passed since the exchange visitor's status changed to Inactive, and all regulatory requirements have been met, a request for reinstatement may be submitted to the Department for review. Reinstatement cannot be requested when the current date is greater than 270 days after the status changed to Inactive. See Section 2.8.2, Reinstatement Request (EV in Inactive Status), in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

TRANSFER IN

When an exchange visitor transfers into your program, his/her record must be updated and validated no later than 30 days after the effective date of transfer listed in SEVIS. Failure to do so will result in SEVIS changing the exchange visitor's status to No Show. See Section 2.9, Transfer Procedures for Receiving Program, in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

SEVIS CORRECTIONS

- **30-DAY CORRECT SEVIS STATUS**—SEVIS automatically changes the status of a SEVIS record that has not been validated within the first 30 days after the program begin date listed in SEVIS to Invalid or No Show. If this is noted and no more than 30 days has passed since the automatic change occurred, the RO/ARO may use the 30-Day Correct SEVIS Status option to change the exchange visitor's status to what it should be (e.g., Active to Initial, Invalid to Initial, Invalid to Active, No Show to Active.) The exchange visitor's SEVIS record will change immediately when using this function. The RO/ARO can do this without contacting the Department. There is no fee for this correction to the record of an exchange visitor or dependent. See Section 2.10.1, 30-Day Correction Period for SEVIS Status, and Section Section 2.10.2, 30-Day Correction Period for SEVIS Status for Dependent, in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.
- **REINSTATEMENT-UPDATE SEVIS STATUS**—If it has been over 60 days but less than 271 days since the SEVIS status changed, this option may be used. This function submits a request to the Department for a correction and update to the status of an exchange visitor's SEVIS record that was not properly validated (and was therefore automatically set to Invalid or No Show by SEVIS). It is used to correct records that are 60 days past the program start date, but less than 271 days. A Reinstatement—Update SEVIS Status request must be submitted to the Department to change the status from Active to Initial, Invalid to Initial, Invalid to Active, or No Show to Active. A fee is

required for this type of request. The Department will not process the request until a copy of the Pay.gov confirmation page showing payment of the required fee and supporting documentation have been received.

The Reinstatement—Update SEVIS Status option will also be available to enable the RO/ARO to submit a request to the Department to change an exchange visitor’s SEVIS status from Terminated to Active. This option will immediately become available when the exchange visitor’s SEVIS status is changed to Terminated. The option will remain available for up to 270 days following the date the exchange visitor’s status changed to Terminated. A change in the status of a SEVIS record from Terminated to Active will always require the approval of the Department and therefore, must be processed as a Reinstatement—Update SEVIS Status request. See Section 2.10.3, Reinstatement – Update SEVIS Status Request, in Volume II of the user manual for detailed instructions.

HOW SEVIS CAN HELP YOU

SEVIS has several built-in features to assist you in performing your SEVIS-related tasks. They are explained in the following sections.

MESSAGE BOARD

The SEVIS Message Board has been developed to provide important and timely information from DoS and DHS to exchange visitor program sponsors. Messages are posted on the first screen after logging into SEVIS (“Message Board” screen), if any exist. The subject line of the message will include the categories the message applies to, so that sponsors know which messages they should read and which are intended for other program categories. These messages can be printed for easy reference. The messages have an expiration date, at which time they will be removed from the Message Board. See Section 2.13, Message Board, in Volume II of the user manual for additional information.

ALERTS

Alerts are notices to users indicating tasks that need to be completed in SEVIS, or a deadline that is approaching. For example, SEVIS automatically displays an alert on the Listing of Programs screen 30 days prior to the annual report due date. The alert will display for 30 days beginning on the second day of the month that the report is due to the Department. The alert will display for the entire 30 days, even if the annual report has been submitted to the Department.

The Alerts link (* [Alerts](#)) will display on the Listing Programs screen when an alert becomes available. See Section 2.5, Alerts, in Volume I or Section 2.11, Alerts, in Volume II of the user manual for additional information.

REPORTS

Reports are snapshots of SEVIS data. SEVIS enables sponsors to generate and print various types of reports. These reports can also be copied and pasted into an Excel spreadsheet. See Section 2.7, Reports, in Volume I of the user manual for additional information.

4. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Required Visa Fees?

Each applicant for a visa must pay a nonrefundable \$100 (U.S. currency) nonimmigrant visa application-processing fee. If the visa is issued, there may be an additional visa issuance reciprocity fee for citizens of certain countries.

Do All Exchange Visitors have to pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee?

Most J-1 exchange visitors are required to pay a one-time SEVIS fee of \$100 (U.S. currency). For the Summer Work/Travel, Au Pair, and Camp Counselor programs, the fee is \$35 (U.S. currency). All those applying for a J-1 visa for initial participation in a program must pay this fee. In addition, those already in the United States applying for a change of status to J-1 must pay the fee, as does an exchange visitor applying for a change of category. **Exceptions:** Government sponsored exchange visitors who are participating in programs with a program number that begins with G-1, G-2, G-3, or G-7 do not need to pay the fee.

Continuing exchange visitors **do not** pay the SEVIS I-901 fee when they:

- Reenter the United States to continue participation in an exchange visitor program or program of study as long as nonimmigrant status was maintained
- Already paid the SEVIS fee but the visa was denied within the last 12 months, and they are applying again for a visa in the same exchange visitor category
- Transfer between programs in the same exchange visitor category, unless the new program requires a higher fee
- Apply to extend their stay in order to complete the current program within the maximum duration of participation of the category in which they are participating

There are no fee waivers available for the SEVIS I-901 fee. For more information see: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/>.

What Is the Visa Interview Like?

Once the exchange visitor receives the Form DS-2019 from the sponsor, they must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee and make a visa appointment at the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest their home. At the visa appointment, the consular officer will determine whether the potential exchange visitor qualifies for the visa. Applicants must demonstrate that they properly meet the requirements to be issued an exchange visitor visa, including the following:

- That they plan to remain in the United States for a temporary, specific, limited period;
- Evidence of funds to cover expenses in the United States;
- Evidence of compelling social and economic ties to their home country.

Which Documents Are Most Important for the Exchange Visitor?

The critical documents that each exchange visitor must protect for the duration of their stay in the United States are:

- All Forms DS-2019 issued
- Passport
- Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record (small white card stapled in passport by the Immigration Officer at the port of entry)

It is the responsibility of the RO/ARO to make sure the exchange visitor understands what each of these documents signifies. Exchange visitors should be advised to keep a copy of their Form DS-2019 even beyond the end of their program in case it is needed at some future point.

What is the “Grace Period” for Exchange Visitors (J-1)?

The grace period for exchange visitors who have completed their program is thirty (30) days and is linked to the period of admission specified on the Form DS-2019. If an exchange visitor decides to go home early and does not complete the terms of his/her program, he/she is expected to depart immediately and is not afforded the benefit of the 30-day grace period for departure.

The Immigration and Nationality Act states that any nonimmigrant visa holder in the United States who fails to maintain the nonimmigrant status in which they were admitted is deportable [INA 237(a)(1)(C)(i).] Any exchange visitor who ceases to pursue their program falls out of status and could be found to be unlawfully present.

How does an exchange visitor “Maintain Program Status”?

Exchange Visitors are admitted to the United States for a specific period of time to engage in a particular program (activity), as described on their Form DS-2019. Exchange visitors must take care during their stay to maintain lawful (J-1) program status, as failure to do so can have serious long-term consequences.

Key Reminders:

- Exchange visitors must know the expiration date of their program (the end date in section 3 of the DS-2019 Form) and the expected departure date. If regulations permit and the Exchange visitors J-1 program is extended, the sponsor must use SEVIS to change the end date on the Form DS-2019 prior to the expiration date of the original Form, reprint the Form, sign it in blue ink and give it to the exchange visitor.
- When traveling outside the United States, exchange visitors must first obtain a “travel signature” on the Form DS-2019 to facilitate re-entry. Exchange visitors should be reminded to retain all copies of Form DS-2019 with their immigration papers.
- Exchange visitors must never accept unauthorized employment.
- Exchange visitors must comply with the Department of State's health insurance requirements for J-1 visa holders and their families. Willful disregard of this requirement will result in termination of the J-1 program.

- Exchange visitors must keep their passports valid. Passports can be renewed by foreign embassies in Washington D.C. and foreign consulates in other cities. For information about embassies, see <http://www.embassy.org>.

What Does the Notation “D/S” on the I-94 Card Mean?

Exchange visitors (J-1) are admitted to the United States for the period of time necessary to complete their program, and are given the notation “D/S” (Duration of Status) on their I-94 Arrival/Departure Record at the port of entry. They are permitted to stay to the end date listed on the Form DS-2019, plus the 30-day grace period, as long as they have participated actively in their program. For nonimmigrants admitted with duration of status, unlawful presence begins to accrue on the date U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services finds a status violation while adjudicating a request for an immigration benefit (for example, a request for a change of status), or when an immigration judge finds a status violation during proceedings. For nonimmigrants admitted with a date certain (as opposed to D/S), unlawful presence begins to accrue on the date the Form I-94 expires.

What Are My Responsibilities Toward my Exchange Participants in the Event of a National Emergency or Natural Disaster?

Though not a regulatory requirement, sponsors should have a plan in place for contacting and providing safety information and instructions to exchange visitor participants and their dependents, as well as prospective exchange visitors, in the event of a natural disaster or national emergency.

What Do I Do if the Form DS-2019 of an Exchange Visitor is Lost or Stolen?

Forms DS-2019 can be reprinted in SEVIS when necessary, with an appropriate explanation entered in the exchange visitor’s record.

What Do I Do if One of My Exchange Visitors Loses Their Passport?

A foreign visitor in the United State who loses their passport must immediately contact their embassy or consulate to report the loss and find out how to replace it. The following website provides information on each of the embassies in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>

What Do I Do When a Dependent Turns 21?

An accompanying family member who turns 21 years of age is no longer eligible to be in the United States as a dependent in J-2 status, and must depart the country or apply for a change to another type of nonimmigrant status.

What Are Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 Used for?

Following the submission of a request in SEVIS, you must print, complete, and sign the appropriate form and mail it to the Department of State in order for the request to be reviewed. Form DS-3036, “Update of Information on Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor” has 2 pages - page 1 contains instructions and the Citizenship Certification form, and page 2 is the Request Form/Information to be Updated. Form DS-3037, “Application for Redesignation and/or Amendment” has 3 pages – several pages are left intentionally blank, and the application prints on page 3. The hard copy of Form DS-3036 or DS-3037, fee (if applicable), and any additional

supporting documentation must be received in the Department within 30 calendar days of submission in SEVIS or the request will be deleted from the system

Where Can I Find Useful Travel Tips?

<http://usembassy.state.gov/>

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm>

Where Can I Find Information About Visas?

<http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov/visapolicy/faq.html>

http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html

ATTACHMENT A: RESOURCES

The following are additional resources to assist with the administration of your U.S. Department of State designated exchange visitor program:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

- **Exchange Visitor Program (J Visa):**

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/>

Academic and Government Programs Division (AG)

United States Department of State
Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
ECA/EC/AG - SA-44, Room 820
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547
Telephone: 202-203-5029
Fax: 202-453-8640

The Academic and Government Programs Division is responsible for the administration and oversight of the following categories: Government Visitor, International Visitor, Professor, Research Scholar, Short-Term Scholar, Specialist, Student (College/University)

Private Sector Programs Division (PS)

United States Department of State
Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
ECA/EC/PS - SA-44, Room 734
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547
Telephone: 202-203-5096
Fax: 202-203-5087

The Private Sector Programs Division is responsible for the administration and oversight of the following categories: Alien Physician, Au Pair, Camp Counselor, Intern, Student (Secondary/High School), Summer Work/Travel, Teacher, Trainee.

Compliance Unit (CU)

United States Department of State
Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
ECA/EC/CU - SA-44, Room 732
301 4th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20547
E-mail: jvisas@state.gov
Fax: (202) 203-5087

- **Main Page:**
<http://www.state.gov/>
- **Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs:**
<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/>

- **Bureau of Consular Affairs:**
<http://www.travel.state.gov/>
- **Visa Services, Public Inquiries Division:**
Telephone: 202-663-1225
Fax: 202-663-3899
- **Internet Visa Information Sources:**
Bureau of Consular Affairs (Visas):
http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html
Visa Services (Destination USA Overview):
<http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov>
- **Visa Waiver information:**
http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_1296.html
- **National Visa Center (NVC):**
Provides general information on immigrant visa processing and case-specific information based on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services receipt number or NVC case number:
Telephone: 603-334-0700
Email: NVCINQUIRY@state.gov

STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM

- **SEVIS Security Concerns:** For system security and data integrity issues, contact the DHS Help Desk at 888-347-7762, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **SEVIS Technical Issues:** For system functionality issues, contact the SEVIS Help Desk at 800-892-4829, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. The SEVIS Help Desk is available to address SEVIS concerns or questions other than security.
- **SEVP Web Site:**
<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/index.htm/>. It is recommended that you visit this site often to stay informed regarding events affecting SEVIS.
- **SEVIS I-901 Fee Web Site:** <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/index.htm>
- **Online Help** is available by clicking the **Help** link on the navigation bar when logged into the SEVIS application.
- **User Manuals** are available on the Department of State website:
<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/jexchanges/about/sevis.htm>

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

- **Main page:**
Social Security OnLine: <http://www.ssa.gov/>
- **Employer Reporting & Instruction Information:**

- **Employer Responsibilities When Hiring Foreign Exchange Workers:**

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

- **Main page:**
<http://www.dhs.gov>
- **U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement:**
<http://www.ice.gov/index.htm>
- **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:**
<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>
- **U.S. Customs and Border Protection:**
<http://www.cbp.gov>
- **US-VISIT (U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology Program):**
http://www.dhs.gov/xtrvlsec/programs/content_multi_image_0006.shtm