

Things to know about SEVIS Fees

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal SEVIS Fee took effect on September 1, 2004. The fee of \$200.00 is generally a one-time fee. It is required of those who are applying for an F-1 or J-1 visa based on an I-20 issued for "initial attendance" or a DS-2019 issued to "begin a new program" with an issue date of September 1, 2004 or later. Proof of fee payment must be presented at the visa interview. Most currently enrolled students are not subject to the SEVIS fee if your initial I-20 or DS-2019 was issued before September 1, 2004. However, there are some exceptions.

SUNY Poly F-1 and J-1 Students Who Must Pay the SEVIS Fee

- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are applying for a change of non-immigrant status to F-1 or J-1. The fee must be paid before you submit your change of status application.
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are an F-1 student who has violated the terms of your non-immigrant status and will be applying for reinstatement, and you have been out of status for more than five months. The fee must be paid before you submit your reinstatement application.
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are an F-1 student who has violated the terms of your non-immigrant status and will seek reinstatement by traveling abroad and re-entering the United States, *even if you have an unexpired F-1 visa in your passport.*
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you were previously a F-1 student at SUNY Polytechnic Institute, departed the United States and have not maintained your registration for more than five months, and now plan to return to resume your studies, *even if you have an unexpired F-1 visa in your passport.*
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are a J-1 student who wishes to transfer from a U.S. government-sponsored J-1 program (the program code starts with G-1, G-2 or G-3) to a program where the SEVIS fee is required.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute F-1 and J-1 Students Who Do NOT Need to Pay the SEVIS Fee

- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you are a continuing student and plan to travel abroad, even if that travel includes applying for a new U.S. F-1 or J-1 visa
- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you are a continuing student who is requesting a new I-20 or DS-2019 that is for continued attendance.
- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you are a continuing student applying for an extension of stay, change in level of study, change in field of study, or if

you are applying for reinstatement if you have been out of status for less than five months

- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you are a continuing student applying for employment authorization, including Optional Practical Training.
- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you are transferring your F-1 status from one U.S. school to another
- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if you were in valid F-1 or J-1 status, departed the United States and are returning after being absent for less than five months, even if you need to apply for a new visa.
- Applicants for *F-2 or J-2 dependent visas* are **NOT** required to pay the SEVIS fee.

SEVIS Fee Rules

If you are required to pay the SEVIS fee and will be applying for a visa abroad, or will be re-entering the United States on an unexpired visa, the SEVIS fee must be processed at least three business days before the visa interview or re-entry, unless you have a printed receipt from an Internet payment.

The SEVIS fee *cannot* be paid at the embassy or consulate, or at the U.S. Border.

If you are required to pay the SEVIS fee, a visa will not be issued unless the visa officer can verify that the SEVIS fee payment has been made. However, you may schedule your visa interview prior to paying the SEVIS fee. The SEVIS fee is not refundable. If your visa application is denied, and you decide to re-apply for the same type of visa at a later date, you will not be asked to make a second SEVIS fee payment as long as your visa application is made within 12 months of the initial denial.

How to Pay the SEVIS Fee

Currently, there are three payment methods:

- payment in U.S. dollars by credit card over the Internet, OR
- payment in U.S. dollars by check, money order or bank draft, drawn on a U.S. bank, and mailed to an address in the United States.
- payment in any country's currency through an agent of Western Union "Quick Pay." There are agents in more than 130 countries worldwide.

Payment of the SEVIS fee may be made by you or by any other individual, either in the United States or abroad, including family or friends. However, anyone paying the fee on your behalf will need to have a copy of your I-20 or DS-2019, or a completed copy of Form I-901.

Procedure for Paying the SEVIS Fee

1. Obtain form I-20 or DS-2019 from SUNY Polytechnic Institute
2. Access form I-901 on the internet at <http://www.fmjfee.com> OR use the form I-901 included with your I-20 or DS-2019
3. Complete form I-901, answering all questions (you must have an I-20 or DS-2019 from SUNY Poly in order to complete form I-901). Be sure that you enter your personal information *exactly* as it appears on the I-20 or DS-2019
4. Pay the \$200 SEVIS fee according to one of the methods described below.

Note: to complete form I-901, you must enter the SUNY Polytechnic Institute School Code of BUF(214F)10259000 if you have been sent an I-20. You must also enter your SEVIS ID number, which is printed at the top right of the I-20 or DS-2019, above the bar code. It starts with the letter "N."

Paying on the Internet

Once you have received your I-20 or DS-2019, you can make the fee payment by submitting form I-901 on-line using a credit card. The web address is <http://www.fmjfee.com>

MasterCard, Visa, or American Express debit or credit cards are accepted. It does not matter if the card was issued in the United States or overseas. Follow the on-line instructions, include the required credit card information, and print out the payment screen to verify your payment. The printed receipt should be presented at the visa interview or at the U.S. port of entry as proof of payment. ***Thus, when paying the fee on the Internet, it is essential that your printer be ready before starting the payment process. Do not exit the receipt page until you have successfully printed the receipt. You will not be able to return to the receipt page.***

Paying by Mail:

To pay by mail, you must download and print form I-901 from <http://www.fmjfee.com> or use the paper copy provided with your I-20 or DS-2019, fill out the form and mail it with your payment to the address below.

Your payment must be in U.S. dollars by check, money order or bank draft, drawn on a U.S. bank. Your check, bank draft or money order should be made payable to: "I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee."

Also, be sure to print your name and SEVIS ID number in the lower left-hand corner of the check, money order or bank draft.

The need for a check, bank draft or money order in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank does not mean that only a U.S. bank can issue the document. Many foreign banks are able

to issue checks or money orders drawn on a U.S. bank, because they are chartered in the United States, or because they are foreign subsidiaries of a U.S. bank, or because they have arrangements with a U.S. bank to issue a check, money order, or foreign draft that is drawn on a U.S. bank.

Mail the payment and form I-901 to:

*I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Visa Processing Fee
P.O. Box 970020
St. Louis, MO 63197-0020 USA*

To send by courier, use the following address:

*I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Processing Fee
1005 Convention Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63101
United States
Phone Number: 1-314-418-8833 (United States Country Code 011)*

Once the form and fee are processed, a paper receipt will be mailed to you. Return courier service is available for an additional \$30.

Payment by mail is not the recommended process for fee payment from abroad, as it can take as long as four weeks from the day you mail in the fee to the day that you receive the required receipt in the mail if you are applying from outside the United States, unless you pay for courier service.

Paying by Western Union "Quick Pay"

Agents who accept Western Union "Quick Pay" are located in 130 countries worldwide. For detailed instructions on this payment method and to locate an agent near you, visit : http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/wu_instr.htm

Showing Proof of SEVIS Fee Payment at the Visa Interview and/or the U.S. Port of Entry

You must be able to prove that the fee has been paid when you appear for your visa interview, and when you enter the United States. This is done by presenting a printed receipt, either from the Internet if you made an on-line payment, or a mailed receipt if you paid by mail.

Visa officers and U.S. port-of entry inspectors should be able to verify SEVIS fee payment electronically three business days after payment is processed, but in case of problems, having a printed receipt is the best evidence of fee payment. If you lose or did not receive a receipt for fee payment, the U.S. government does retain an electronic record that the fee has been paid.

A visa will not be issued unless verification of the SEVIS fee payment can be made.

For detailed information on the SEVIS fee payment process, and for a list of frequently asked questions, visit: <http://www.ice.gov/graphics/sevis/i901/index.htm>

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