

## *Payment of SEVIS Fee*

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal SEVIS Fee took effect on September 1, 2004. The fee of \$200.00 for F-1 students or \$180 for J-1 Visiting Scholars is generally a one-time fee (see exceptions, below) and is required of those who are applying for an F-1, J-1 or M-1 visa based on an I-20 issued for "initial attendance" or a DS-2019 issued to "begin a new program."

Proof of fee payment must be presented at the visa interview.

### Who needs to pay the new Federal SEVIS fee

- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are seeking an *initial F-1 or J-1 visa* from an embassy or consulate abroad for initial attendance or initial participation in an exchange visitor program.
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if *you have previously been enrolled at a U.S. school*, but you are no longer enrolled and you have been outside the United States for more than five months, *even if you have an unexpired F-1 visa in your passport*.
- You must pay the SEVIS Fee if you are a *Canadian citizen*, and are therefore exempt from the U.S. visa requirement, before you can enter the United States.
- You must pay the SEVIS fee if you are already in the United States prior to submitting a *change of non-immigrant status application to F-1 or J-1*.
- You do **NOT** need to pay the SEVIS fee if *item 3 on your Cortland I-20 reads "transfer pending from <name of school>"*, even if you will be applying for a new F-1 visa.
- Applicants for *F-2 or J-2 dependent visas* are **NOT** required to pay the SEVIS fee.

### SEVIS Fee Rules

The SEVIS fee must be processed *at least three business days* before the visa interview, 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.

*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 two 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 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**

- Obtain form I-20 from SUNY Cortland or DS-2019 from SUNY Buffalo
- 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
- Complete form I-901, answering all questions (you must have an I-20 from SUNY Cortland or DS-2019 from SUNY Buffalo 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
- Pay the \$100 SEVIS fee according to one of the methods described below.

**Note: to complete form I-901, you must enter the Cortland School Code of BUF(214F)00274000 if you have been sent an I-20, OR the Buffalo Program Number of P104839 if you have been sent a DS-2019. 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:	To send by courier, use the following address:
I-901 Student/Exchange Visitor Visa Processing Fee P.O. Box 970020 St. Louis, MO 63197-0020 USA	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.***

#### **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>