The SEVIS Fee For J-1 Exchange Visitors

What is the SEVIS fee?
This SEVIS fee is required of all foreign nationals who come to the United States for the purpose of J-1 Exchange Visitor status. It is payable one time for each single program in which a J-1 visitor participates, extending from the time the student is granted J-1 status to the time the student falls out of status, changes status, or departs the U.S. for an extended period of time. SEVIS fee payments will be used by the United States Department of Homeland Security to fund the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System).

Who must pay the SEVIS fee and when?
You will need to pay the SEVIS fee if you were issued a DS-2019 form AND one of the following conditions applies:
1. You are seeking a J-1 visa from a United States embassy or consulate to begin a new J-1 visit. In this case, the SEVIS fee must be paid BEFORE visa issuance.
2. As a citizen of Canada, or certain adjacent islands, you are exempt from the visa requirement and will apply for admission at a port of entry to begin your internship. In this case, the SEVIS Fee must be paid BEFORE application for entry at the U.S. border.

J-2 visa holders, the spouse and dependents of the J-1 visa holder, are not required to pay the SEVIS fee. See the “Processing Times and Payment Verification” section for further important fee payment considerations.

Who is exempt from the fee?
- Most current, continuing J-1 visitors (unless in rare situations the legal status is compromised by failure to adhere to the law related to maintenance of J-1 status)
- J-2 dependents (spouse and/or children) of the J-1 visitor

How much is the SEVIS fee and how do I pay it?
The SEVIS fee is $180 USD for J-1 visitors. You must have a current DS-2019 for J-1 visa from the institution you plan on doing internship. The SEVIS Fee is separate from and in addition to the visa application fee or fees payable to USCIS for an application to request a change of status or a reinstatement. The SEVIS Fee can be paid online. It can be paid by you, or by a third party such as a friend, family member, or other interested party. However, if someone pays the fee for you, they will need information from your DS-2019 to complete the fee payment form.

Pay Online
2. Complete the form online and supply the necessary credit card information.
3. Using the DS-2019 form, enter your name exactly as it appears on the document (which should match the name as it appears in your passport) and use the SEVIS number from the upper right hand corner.
4. J Program number = P-1-00292
5. Print a copy of the online receipt and keep it with other important immigration documents.

Processing Times and Payment Verification
If you pay the SEVIS Fee online using a credit or debit card, your payment is processed immediately; at the time you make payment, you can print a receipt directly from your computer. This computer-generated receipt can be used to verify you have paid the fee at an Embassy, Consular post, or port of entry. On the other hand, mailing the SEVIS fee does not constitute payment. The fee is processed when it is received by DHS. If you mail your payment rather than pay online, it can take a considerable amount of time for payment to be received and for you to receive a receipt by return mail. OIE recommends online payment, if possible.

A paper receipt is not required in order for you to be issued a visa, be admitted at the port of entry, or apply for a change of status or reinstatement. Embassies and Consular posts, ports of entry and USCIS offices should be able to verify your fee payment without a receipt in most circumstances. However, OIE recommends that you carry a copy with you when you travel or submit a copy with any application (visa, change of status, reinstatement). Electronic payments must be submitted at least 3 business days in advance of the interview if you will rely on electronic fee verification at the Consulate (or at the port of entry, if exempt from the visa requirement). Mailed payments must be sent in a manner that assures arrival at the DHS address listed on the I-901 at least 3 business days before the scheduled interview.

Frequently Asked Questions:
For answers to other “frequently asked questions,” consult the USCIS website.

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