

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

## Alert #13

**Title: SEVM/SEVIS Reporting on International Students and Exchange Visitors**

**Prepared: July 2002**

**Type: New legislation / proposed regulations**

### Summary

Recently enacted laws and regulations on immigration reform, border security, and the threat of terrorism require educational institutions to record and report more information about international students and exchange visitors. The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is a joint venture of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Department of State, and the Department of Education to improve tracking and reporting of "non-immigrant" students (F-1 and M-1 visas) and exchange visitors (J-1 visas).

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is the Web-based system for collecting information about these persons and issuing the appropriate documents (I-20, IAP-66, etc.) The password-protected online SEVIS database will allow for more rapid collection of information about "non-immigrant" students and exchange visitors, and eliminate some current paper and mail systems.

### Current Status

Required by law. Optional SEVIS participation began July 1, 2002, with compulsory participation by institutions scheduled to begin on January 30, 2003. SEVIS supercedes and replaces the Coordinated Interagency Partnership Regulating International Students (CIPRIS) program, which was the pilot test of the system. The INS issued proposed rules for SEVIS on May 16, 2002. If the final regulations change reporting requirements significantly, a follow-up AIR Alert will be issued.

Required data collection. Institutions are required to record and/or report on the following:

- I-20/IAP-66 form information
- Name, place and date of birth, country of citizenship, current address

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

- Status (full-time or part-time)
- Date of commencement of studies
- Number of credits completed each year
- Degree and program of study
- Practical training (begin/end dates)
- Termination date and reason, if known
- Date of issuance of visa and classification
- Current academic and program status of alien
- Any disciplinary actions taken against the alien because of criminal conviction
- Information on the date of entry and the port of entry

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

## **Implications for Institutions**

In order to continue to enroll international students with F-1 visas (regular students), M-1 visas (vocational programs), or J-1 visas (exchange visitors), institutions will have to apply for and be certified to participate in the online SEVIS program by the INS, even if they already issue such visas. As part of the certification process, INS must conduct an on-site review of each participant by May 2004. Proposed regulations, issued May 16, 2002, require institutions to designate a Principal Designated School Official (PDSO), who is the primary institutional contact for SEVIS, and up to four other Designated School Officials (DSOs) who are authorized to maintain information in SEVIS. Up to five Administrative School Officials (ASOs) may be appointed to assist with record maintenance.

Failure to register, or failure to comply with SEVIS rules may mean that the institution could have its privileges to enroll international students and visitors suspended.

Record keeping and reporting requirements will require close coordination and cooperation among a variety of offices, such as admissions, the registrar, student affairs, international student office, housing, institutional research, information services, human resources, and financial aid. New systems and procedures for timely communication between offices may need to be developed.

Institutions are required to provide periodic reports each term, and to notify SEVIS much sooner when certain changes in status occur. Periodic reports on academic status, enrollment, and address information must be reported "each term or session and no later than 30 days after the deadline for registering for classes." Institutions must notify the INS within 30 days if an alien fails to enroll or start participation in their program. Many other changes in address or enrollment status must be reported in SEVIS within 21 days of the change. Visa holders should be aware that they must inform a DSO of any change in address within 10 days. According to the INS proposed SEVIS rules, the address provided by the student or dependent must be the actual physical location where the student or dependent resides." Other rules clarify and restrict the "grace periods" when visa holders may be in the country before and after their program of studies.

When SEVIS opened on July 1, 2002, the only means of participation was to manually key in records for visa holders at the SEVIS Web site. Institutions may currently submit data by this method without charge. The INS has the option of requiring a user fee for SEVIS participants, but the fee is currently deferred. However, to avoid redundant data entry on SEVIS and local administrative systems, many institutions will incur expenses to develop or purchase systems that will allow upload or batch entry of data into SEVIS. Major administrative software vendors

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

(SCT Banner, PeopleSoft, and Datatel), the National Student Clearinghouse, and other vendors (such as Windstar Technologies, Inc.) are developing SEVIS interfaces for planned release in the fall of 2002.

During the optional reporting period, institutions may opt to use SEVIS only for newly-enrolled students, but they may choose to report for all visa holders. (Some states have added additional reporting requirements during the optional reporting period, so institutions may wish to check with their state higher education offices.) In the next academic cycle after SEVIS reporting becomes mandatory, all new and continuing visa holders will have to be entered into the system.

## **Timeline**

September 30, 1996 - Illegal Immigrant Reform Act and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) enacted, requiring certain reporting about visa holders by educational institutions. (P.L. 104-208. See IIRIRA 641 (C).)

October 26, 2002 - USA Patriot Act enacted, mandating national SEVIS implementation by January 2003. (P.L. 107-56. See section 416 (B).)

May 15, 2002 - Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002 signed into law. (P.L. 107-173. See Sec. 501. Foreign Student Monitoring Program.)

May 16, 2002 - Immigration and Naturalization Service issues proposed rules on SEVIS (Federal Register, Vol. 67, No. 95, 8 CFR Parts 103 and 214).

July 1, 2002 - SEVIS opens for optional participation.

Fall 2002 - Various vendors release batch-entry/upload software for SEVIS participation.

January 30, 2003 - Deadline for compulsory reporting in SEVIS of all international students and exchange visitors with F-1, M-1, or J-1 visas.

## **Additional Resources**

- Immigration and Naturalization Service. Student and Exchange Visitor Program home page: <http://www.ins.gov/graphics/services/tempbenefits/sevp.htm> (This page is also a good starting point to find out detailed information about visa types, related laws, and a glossary of immigration terms.)

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

- Immigration and Naturalization Service. Student and Exchange Visitor Program: (Introductory slide presentation about SEVP/SEVIS):  
<http://www.ins.gov/graphics/services/tempbenefits/sevp121801.pdf>
- Federal Register, 8 CFR Parts 103 and 214; INS proposed rules on SEVIS implementation, May 16, 2002:  
<http://www.nafsa.org/content/ProfessionalandEducationalResources/ImmigrationAdvisingResources/sevpproSEVISruleins.pdf>
- SEVIS log-in and registration page: <https://egov.ins.usdoj.gov/sevis/>
- Immigration and Naturalization Service. SEVIS Help Desk: 1-800-892-4829
- NAFSA (Association of International Educators). SEVIS Information Page:  
<http://www.nafsa.org/content/ProfessionalandEducationalResources/ImmigrationAdvisingResources/sevpindex.htm> (The NAFSA page is an excellent source of information about other non-SEVIS-related proposals which affect international students.)
- American Council on Education (ACE). June 14, 2002, letter from ACE President David Ward. Contains ACE's comments on the INS proposed rules for SEVIS, on behalf of more than 30 educational organizations:  
<http://www.acenet.edu/washington/letters/2002/06june/ins.sevis.cfm>

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  
(Alert archived November 2011)**

- Nicole Rivard, "USA Patriot Act: How to Be Response Ready," University Business, May 2002. (An excellent general overview of recent anti-terrorism rules and proposals, suitable for sharing with senior administrators.):  
<http://www.universitybusiness.com/issues/story.asp?txtFilename=d:\webs\matrix\archive\s\may2002\patriot.htm>

**Author: James C. Ferguson**

Coordinated by the Higher Education Data Policy Committee. All opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Association for Institutional Research.

Information No Longer Current