



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

December 19, 2003

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEVIS-AUTHORIZED SCHOOL AND EXCHANGE VISITOR
PROGRAM SPONSORS

FROM: Jill Drury/s/
Director,
Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)

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Director, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
U.S. Department of State (DOS)

SUBJECT: Information for Students and Exchange Visitors (F-1, M-1 & J-1
visa categories) pursuing employment in the United States

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Department of State (DOS) request that all SEVIS-authorized school and exchange visitor program sponsors provide a copy of the attached "Fact Sheet" to students and exchange visitors *prior to their arrival* in the United States if they will be pursuing employment.

DHS and DOS, along with the Social Security Administration (SSA), have coordinated several actions in order to ensure that students and exchange visitors can be given Social Security Numbers (SSN). Some of these actions to facilitate SSN issuance involve the cooperation of the student or exchange visitor. These actions are presented in the Fact Sheet.

- 1 As soon as possible after arrival at a U.S. port of entry, students/exchange visitors who are eligible to work in the United States need to report to their school or to their exchange visitor program. This should be done prior to applying for an SSN.
2. Once students have reported, Designated School Officials (DSOs) must register them in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), which updates their record to "active."

Once Exchange Visitors have reported, Responsible Officers (ROs) must validate them in SEVIS, which updates their record to "active."

3. If there are no other conflicts with the requirements of the SSA and the status of the student or exchange visitor in SEVIS is "active," students/exchange visitors will receive SSNs.

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If the SSA cannot assign an SSN, they will mail a notice of explanation to the applicant. The notice instructs students to contact their DSO and request that their SEVIS information be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate. Exchange visitors will likewise contact their RO and request that their SEVIS information be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate. Note that corrections made in SEVIS are accessible to the SSA within 48 hours. Once SEVIS has been updated, students may reapply for a SSN after 48 hours have elapsed.

If a student or exchange visitor is not issued an SSN and the DSO or RO believes he/she is authorized for employment, DSOs/ROs should first verify that SEVIS reflects the current status of the student or exchange visitor (e.g. active, inactive, etc.) If DSOs/ROs are unable to determine the cause of the difficulty, they can contact the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) at (202) 305-2346, ext. 0.