

# ICE

# Student and Exchange Visitor Program

## Recertification Primer for Certified Schools

### Spring 2009



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## Agenda

- **SEVP philosophy towards recertification and its goals**
- **The process**
- **Passing recertification practice tips**
- **Examples**



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## *Philosophy and Goals*



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Philosophy

& Goals

# Philosophy

**Our ability to successfully balance national security and cultural exchange depends on the maintenance of a transparent partnership between SEVP and the academic community**



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## Goals

- **Clearly inform schools what we expect**
- **SEVIS Review**



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Philosophy

& Goals

## When and Why Recertification?

- ***When?***
  - The notification phase has been delayed. No notices will be sent until a new start date is determined.
- ***Why?***
  - Regulation and SEVIS II Preparation



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## *The Process*



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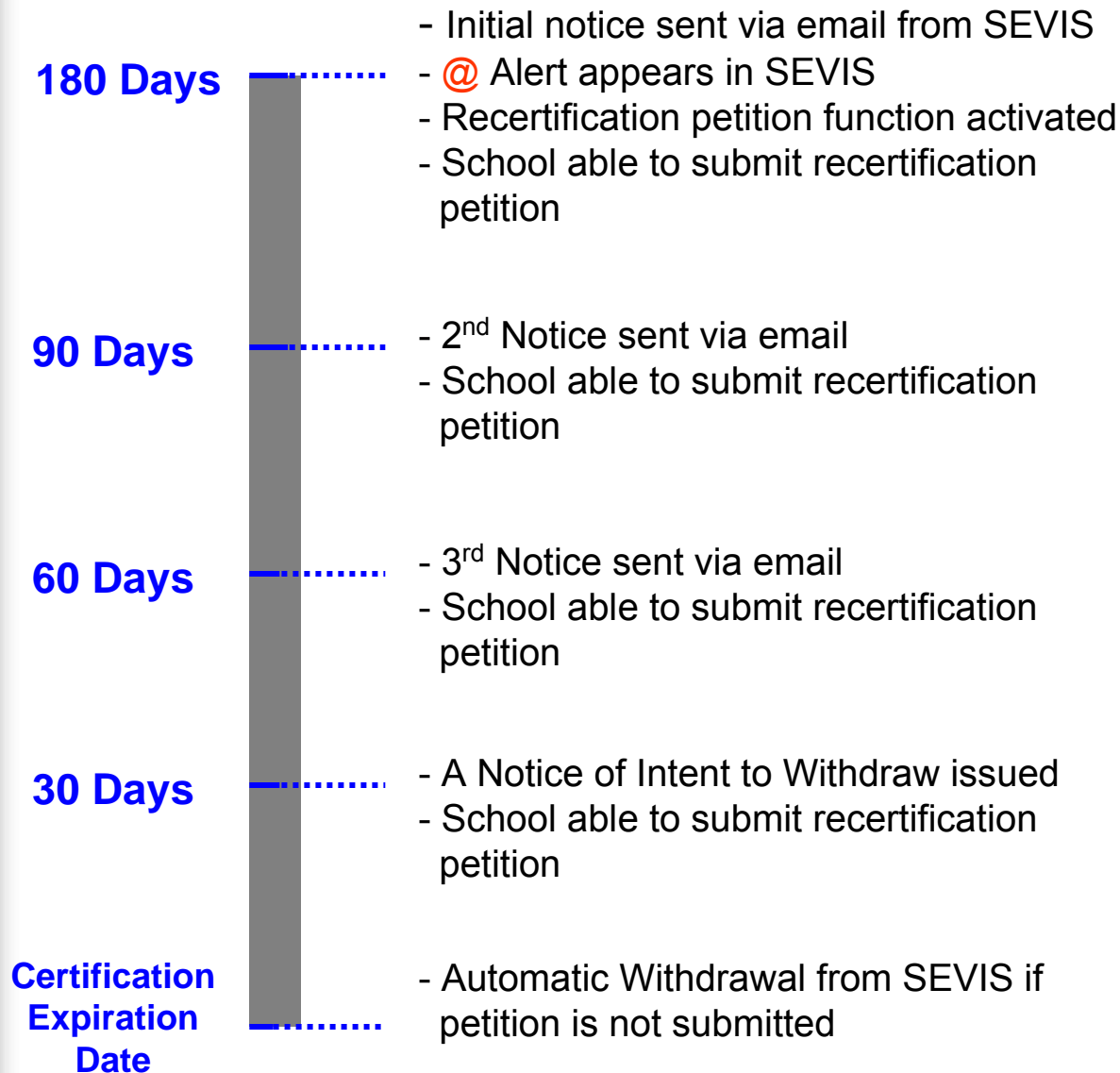
# Before Recertification

- All DSO listings should be up to date
- All DSO contact information, especially email addresses, should be current and verified
- Ensure that any and all firewalls will not block email from SEVP
- Verify that the school mailing address in SEVIS is accurate
- Audit student records for accuracy
- Watch for broadcast messages





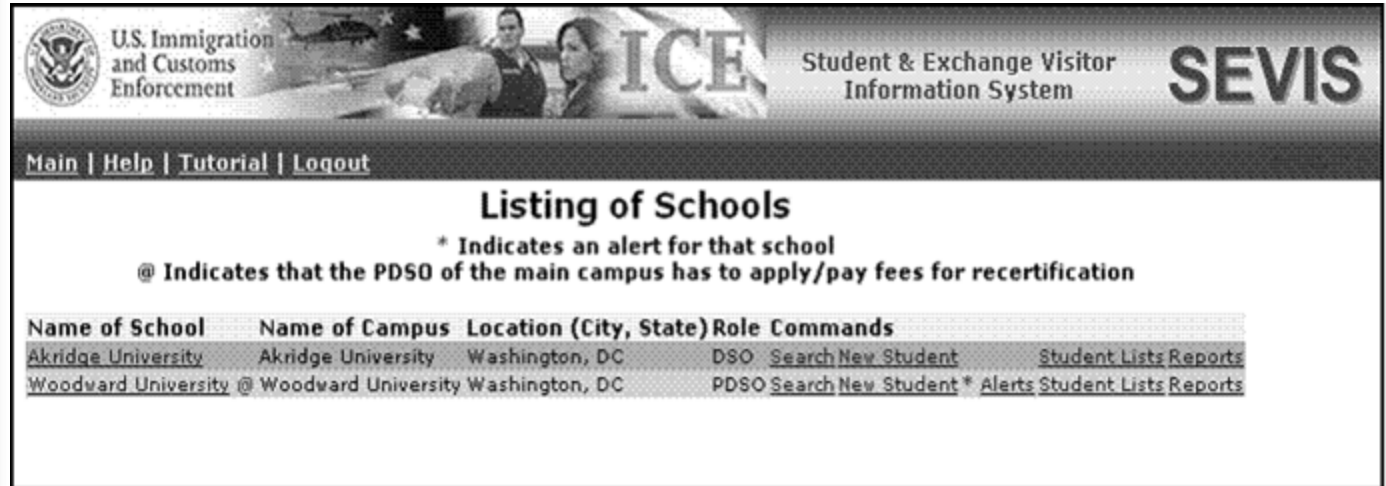
# Recertification Timeline



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The Process

# SEVIS Recertification Notices



The screenshot shows the SEVIS (Student & Exchange Visitor Information System) interface. At the top, there is a header with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement logo, the ICE logo, and the text 'Student & Exchange Visitor Information System' and 'SEVIS'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Main', 'Help', 'Tutorial', and 'Logout'. The main content area is titled 'Listing of Schools' and includes a legend: '\* Indicates an alert for that school' and '@ Indicates that the PDSO of the main campus has to apply/pay fees for recertification'. A table lists two schools: Akridge University and Woodward University. Woodward University is marked with an '@' symbol, indicating that its PDSO must apply for recertification.

Name of School	Name of Campus	Location (City, State)	Role	Commands
<a href="#">Akridge University</a>	Akridge University	Washington, DC	DSO	<a href="#">Search New Student</a> <a href="#">Student Lists Reports</a>
<a href="#">Woodward University</a>	@ Woodward University	Washington, DC	PDSO	<a href="#">Search New Student</a> * <a href="#">Alerts</a> <a href="#">Student Lists Reports</a>

@ Indicates the PDSO of the main campus has to apply for recertification

School Name @ Campus Name Location



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# How Will Recertification Work?

- 6 months (180 days) to complete all recertification package requirements, *plan accordingly!*
- Clear requirements so schools can respond completely and effectively
- SEVP will:
  - Use a “scorecard”
  - Give specialized explanations of requirements
  - Issue a Request For Evidence (RFE) only for clarification
  - Provide resources



# Certification Expiration Date (CED)

- The date when a school's certification will expire
- Certification in the program will be automatically withdrawn if the school has not filed for recertification by failing to submit *complete package*
  - If the complete package is not received by the Close of Business the school will lose access to SEVIS at 11:59 pm that day
  - Automatic Withdrawals for abandonment have no appeal rights
  - CED establishes the two year timeline for future recertification cycles



# What is a Complete Package?

- Electronic submission of Form I-17 in SEVIS
- Signed Form I-17 and all supporting evidence mailed/faxed\* to SEVP
- Any applicable fee requirements paid
  - Change of ownership -\$1700
  - Change of location - \$650
  - Campus addition -\$650 per
- All supporting evidence submitted to SEVP at one time
- The *complete package* must be received by SEVP prior to the Certification Expiration Date



# Change of Ownership

- A change of ownership requires the filing of a new petition within 60 days of the change in ownership.
- SEVP requires the new petition fee of \$1700 and an update to all applicable fields in SEVIS.
- SEVP policy currently recognizes the date of a change in ownership as the date a new EIN is issued by the IRS.



# Campus Additions

- An instructional site should be added to a school's Form I-17 when the instructional site either
  - Meets the U.S. Department of Education definition of a branch campus:
    - Is permanent
    - Offer courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential
    - Has faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and
    - Has budgetary and hiring authority



# Campus Additions

Or

- Meets most but not all of the branch campus requirements (e.g. All records are centrally stored) or
  - A student could complete more than 51% of their program requirements at that location
- These additional locations must have
    - A school official who can physically verify the presence of international students and assist them when necessary





# Site Visit vs. Site Review

- *Site Visit:* Used to verify eligibility during initial certification or a petition update
- Is required when:
  - Change of location occurs -\$650
  - New campus added - \$650 each
- *Site Review:* Used to gather data when an anomaly has been discovered and cannot be resolved by a desk audit
  - Does not require a fee
  - Used only for compliance
  - Notice is sent via email from SEVIS



# To File

- Only the PDSO can submit the I-17 in SEVIS
- May be submitted after the 180 day notice is sent to the DSOs
- Access to SEVIS is retained during recertification if the school complies with the petition submission requirements
- The date of service for all notices is the date of transmission from SEVIS via email
- Carefully review the evidence package to ensure it is complete
  - Incomplete submissions will result in an automatic withdrawal (for abandonment) which does not have appeal rights



# Required Evidence

- Recertification Evidence Analysis Tool will be available on the SEVP homepage
- Evidence requirements are based on:
  - Type of accreditation
  - Type of school
- After consultation with SCB, you may submit supplementary evidence or explanation for anything you are unable to provide
- Submit all evidence in one package



## SEVP Recertification Scorecard

B	D	E	G	H
<b>SEVP Recertification Scorecard (DRAFT)</b>				
<b>Applicant Name</b>				
<i>Criterion</i>		<i>Rating</i>		
<b>Section 1. Complete Appropriate Type</b>				
<b>A. Accredited</b>		<b>Yes</b>		
<b>B. Licensed (Local, State, Federal)</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
<b>C. Non-Accredited</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
6. 3 Letters from Employer (M) or Higher Education		No		
7. State/Local Approval to Operate as a School		No		
		<b>Yes</b>		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 2. Ownership</b>				
Ownership Change Reported in 60 Days?		Yes		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 3. School Reporting</b>				
Completed Updates?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Programs?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Visas?		Yes		
<b>Section 4. Student Reporting</b>				
Students have physical location address that is different from school physical address?		Yes		
Student name accurate?		Yes		
Student birth date accurate?		Yes		
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>Decision</b>		
<b>Stoplight Ratio</b>		<b>PASS</b>	-	-
Date		July 16, 2008		
Name		Joan D. Adjudicator		
		<i>Signature</i>		

Bona Fides:  
Hard Fail

Ownership:  
Hard Fail

School  
Reporting:  
Soft Pass

Student  
Reporting:  
Soft Pass



# Request For Evidence (RFE)

- Only sent to clarify information or evidence already submitted
- Adjudicators will not request documents overlooked in the submission of the complete evidence package
- 30 days to respond to the RFE
- Only one RFE will be sent
- The burden of proof of eligibility falls on the school
- If no response is received by the close of the 30 day response period the school will be automatically withdrawn



# Recertification Decision

- Approval *and* Denial Notices will be sent via email
- Approval means your school meets the *minimum* requirements for certification in SEVIS
- Recertification approval does not mean that validation studies and other types of review will not be conducted over the next period of certification
- The time needed to adjudicate a complete package will be based on the volume of petitions received and ongoing experience with that workload
- Decision date does not affect future Certification Expiration Dates



# Denial

- If a denial occurs
  - Schools will be able to appeal this decision
  - There is no fee for appeal
  - School will maintain SEVIS access until the appeal options have been exhausted
  - All denied schools are responsible for current F/M students
    - DSOs must advise and assist students
    - Instructions will be included in the Notice



# Withdrawals

- Incomplete package = *Automatic Withdrawal*
  - Considered petition abandonment
  - No appeal rights
- If the following is completed prior to the CED, the school may reapply without submitting a new initial petition in SEVIS if the following is completed prior to the CED:
  - Initial petition fee is paid - \$1700
  - *A complete package* is submitted
- *Voluntary Withdrawal*
  - May be requested at any time
  - The president, owner, head of the school, or PDSO must send SEVP a request for withdrawal on official school letterhead





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## Passing Recertification Tips



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## Passing Recertification Tips

# Quick Tips

- Review the broadcast message and policy guidance on Recertification found on our homepage
- If a change of ownership has occurred, report it before January 2, 2009
- If you have added a campus or changed location, but not reported it, do it now



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## Passing Recertification Tips

# Recertification Assistance is Available!

- Website: [www.ice.gov/sevis/recertification](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/recertification)
- [SEVIS.Source@dhs.gov](mailto:SEVIS.Source@dhs.gov) or [schoolcert.sevis@dhs.gov](mailto:schoolcert.sevis@dhs.gov)  
(*Subject: Recertification*)



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## Examples



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## Examples

Denial-  
Failure to  
Submit  
Complete  
Package

B	D	E	G	H
<b>SEVP Recertification Scorecard (DRAFT)</b>				
<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Lake Wobegon Elementary School</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>				<b>Rating</b>
<b>Section 1. Complete Appropriate Type</b>				
<b>A. Accredited</b>				<b>No</b>
<b>B. Licensed (Local, State, Federal)</b>				<b>No</b>
1. Financial Statements				No
2. Facilities				No
3. Teacher Qualifications				No
4. Attendance and Grading Policies				No
5. Course Catalogs				No
<b>C. Non-Accredited</b>				<b>No</b>
1. Financial Statements				Yes
2. Facilities				Yes
3. Teacher Qualifications				Yes
4. Attendance and Grading Policies				Yes
5. Course Catalogs				Yes
6. 3 Letters from Employer (M) or Higher Education				Yes
7. State/Local Approval to Operate as a School				No
				<b>No</b>
				<b>Deny Recertification</b>
<b>Section 2. Ownership</b>				
Ownership Change Reported in 60 Days?				Yes
				<b>Proceed</b>
<b>Section 3. School Reporting</b>				
Completed Updates?				Yes
Correct I-20 Issuance - Programs?				Yes
Correct I-20 Issuance - Visas?				Yes
<b>Section 4. Student Reporting</b>				
Students have physical location address that is different from school physical address?				Yes
Student name accurate?				Yes
Student birth date accurate?				Yes
<b>Total Score</b>				<b>Decision</b>
<b>Stoplight Rating</b>				-
				-
				<b>FAIL</b>
Date	July 16, 2008			
Name	<u>Joan D. Adjudicator</u>			
				<i>Signature</i>



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## Examples

### Denial- Failure to Report a Change in Ownership

B	D	E	G	H
<b>SEVP Recertification Scorecard (DRAFT)</b>				
<b>Applicant Name</b>		<b>Amy's School of Taxidermy</b>		
<b>Criterion</b>		<b>Rating</b>		
<b>Section 1. Complete Appropriate Type</b>				
<b>A. Accredited</b>		<b>No</b>		
<b>B. Licensed (Local, State, Federal)</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
<b>C. Non-Accredited</b>		<b>Yes</b>		
1. Financial Statements		Yes		
2. Facilities		Yes		
3. Teacher Qualifications		Yes		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		Yes		
5. Course Catalogs		Yes		
6. 3 Letters from Employer (M) or Higher Education		Yes		
7. State/Local Approval to Operate as a School		Yes		
		<b>Yes</b>		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 2. Ownership</b>				
Ownership Change Reported in 60 Days?		No		
		<b>Deny Recertification</b>		
<b>Section 3. School Reporting</b>				
Completed Updates?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Programs?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Visas?		Yes		
<b>Section 4. Student Reporting</b>				
Students have physical location address that is different from school physical address?		Yes		
Student name accurate?		Yes		
Student birth date accurate?		Yes		
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>Decision</b>		
<b>Stoplight Rating</b>		-	-	<b>FAIL</b>
Date	July 16, 2008			
Name	Joan D. Adjudicator			
	Signature			



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## Examples

Conditional

Pass-

Poor Student

Reporting

B	D	E	G	H
<b>SEVP Recertification Scorecard (DRAFT)</b>				
<b>Applicant Name</b>		Michigan University of Pennsylvania		
<b>Criterion</b>		<b>Rating</b>		
<b>Section 1. Complete Appropriate Type</b>				
<b>A. Accredited</b>		<b>Yes</b>		
<b>B. Licensed (Local, State, Federal)</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
<b>C. Non-Accredited</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
6. 3 Letters from Employer (M) or Higher Education		No		
7. State/Local Approval to Operate as a School		No		
		<b>Yes</b>		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 2. Ownership</b>				
Ownership Change Reported in 60 Days?		Yes		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 3. School Reporting</b>				
Completed Updates?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Programs?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Visas?		Yes		
<b>Section 4. Student Reporting</b>				
Students have physical location address that is different from school physical address?		No		
Student name accurate?		No		
Student birth date accurate?		No		
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>Decision</b>		
<b>Stoplight Ratio</b>		-	<b>Conditional Pass</b>	-
Date		July 16, 2008		
Name		Joan D. Adjudicator		
		<small>Signature</small>		



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## Examples

### Unconditional

### Pass

B	D	E	G	H
<b>SEVP Recertification Scorecard (DRAFT)</b>				
<b>Applicant Name</b>		<b>Academy of English Language Excellence</b>		
<i>Criterion</i>		<i>Rating</i>		
<b>Section 1. Complete Appropriate Type</b>				
<b>A. Accredited</b>		<b>No</b>		
<b>B. Licensed (Local, State, Federal)</b>		<b>No</b>		
1. Financial Statements		No		
2. Facilities		No		
3. Teacher Qualifications		No		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		No		
5. Course Catalogs		No		
<b>C. Non-Accredited</b>		<b>Yes</b>		
1. Financial Statements		Yes		
2. Facilities		Yes		
3. Teacher Qualifications		Yes		
4. Attendance and Grading Policies		Yes		
5. Course Catalogs		Yes		
6. 3 Letters from Employer (M) or Higher Education		Yes		
7. State/Local Approval to Operate as a School		Yes		
		<b>Yes</b>		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 2. Ownership</b>				
Ownership Change Reported in 60 Days?		Yes		
		<b>Proceed</b>		
<b>Section 3. School Reporting</b>				
Completed Updates?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Programs?		Yes		
Correct I-20 Issuance - Visas?		Yes		
<b>Section 4. Student Reporting</b>				
Students have physical location address that is different from school physical address?		Yes		
Student name accurate?		Yes		
Student birth date accurate?		Yes		
<b>1</b>				
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>Decision</b>		
<b>Stoplight Ratio</b>		<b>PASS</b>	-	-
Date		July 16, 2008		
Name		Joan D. Adjudicator		
		<i>Signature</i>		



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## Contact Information

- **General questions:**
  - Call the SEVP Response Center at (703) 603-3400 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., EST, M-F
  - or email [sevis.source@dhs.gov](mailto:sevis.source@dhs.gov)
- **School certification questions:**
  - Email [schoolcert.SEVIS@dhs.gov](mailto:schoolcert.SEVIS@dhs.gov)
  - or call (703) 603-3591
  - or fax at (703) 603-3598
- **Technical questions:**
  - Call the SEVIS HelpDesk at (800) 892-4829 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., EST
  - or email [SEVISHelpdesk@eds.com](mailto:SEVISHelpdesk@eds.com)
  - Urgent, technical issues: Email [Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov](mailto:Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov)
- **I-901 fee questions:**
  - Check the web or email SEVP at [fmjfee.SEVIS@dhs.gov](mailto:fmjfee.SEVIS@dhs.gov)
  - or call the hotline at (314) 418-8833 (Country code 001)

