

**From:** Sevis, SysAdmin  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 29, 2009 12:44 PM  
**To:** Sevis, SysAdmin  
**Subject:** I-901 Charge Back

PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS MESSAGE

SEVIS NOTICE – April 29, 2009

**ATTENTION DESIGNATED SCHOOL OFFICIALS AND RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS:**

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) would like to alert you on a very important issue regarding abuses of the I-901 Fee Payment System.

SEVP recently has received numerous alerts of refund requests for I-901 Fee Payments made by third party credit card holders on behalf of nonimmigrant students or exchange visitors. Many of these nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors have received their F, M or J Visa from the U.S. Department of State. While some of them have already entered the U.S. and have reported to their educational institution or program listed in SEVIS, others have not yet entered.

Any request by the cardholder for a refund of the I-901 fee payment amount made on behalf of the nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor under these circumstances is fraudulent. These fraudulent refund requests have also caused SEVP to incur unplanned expenses through the payment of processing fees to the credit card companies that range from \$50 to \$75 per refund. As a result of the increasing fraudulent refund requests, SEVP is implementing a process to recover both the I-901 Fee Payment and possibly the processing fee being charged by the credit card companies.

Moving forward, each school and program will receive a list of nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors affected by this fraud alert, for informational purposes only. You are not required to take action based on this notification. SEVP will mail a formal notice to each involved nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor to their address of record giving them 30 days to remit payment for their I-901 Fee via cashier's check, money order or Western Union transfer ONLY. The notice will include specific mailing instructions.

The fee collection process will be as follows:

- **ALL** payments must be received by SEVP within 30 days of the notice.
- **For Active Status Students and Exchange Visitors:** If the nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor does not make payment within the allowed 30 days, SEVP will TERMINATE their SEVIS record. Comments accompanying this termination will note: Fee Payment Fraud Alert. All terminated SEVIS records

are reviewed by the Compliance Enforcement Unit (CEU) to determine if further investigation is required. Students who do not remit the regulatory I-901 fee after receiving notice are subject to investigation, possible arrest, detention, deportation and being barred from future entry into the United States.

- **For Initial Status Students and Exchange Visitors:** A list of the nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors that have not yet entered the U.S. will be sent to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The student record will be marked CANCELLED and a flag will be placed on the SEVIS record to alert the Port Inspectors that the nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor has a Fraud Alert for Fee Payment. Entering nonimmigrant students will be issued an I-515A giving them 30 days to remit payment for the I-901 Fee. If payment is not received within the allotted 30 days, the CANCELED status record will then be forwarded to the Immigration and CEU for investigation and possible student removal.
- Upon receipt of payment for the student or exchange visitor, ALL flags will be removed and the SEVIS record will be updated to reflect payment confirmation.

If you have any questions or concerns please forward your inquiries to [sevis.source@dhs.gov](mailto:sevis.source@dhs.gov)

Thank you,  
Student and Exchange Visitor Program