



Frequently Asked Questions: SEVP Field Representatives

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) field representatives are a valuable resource for stakeholders, and will enhance national security by fostering an understanding of regulatory compliance and Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) data integrity. They are a key resource, serving as direct day-to-day liaisons between SEVP and certified schools. Listed below are the most frequently asked questions about the field representatives.

Q: What are the SEVP field representatives?

A: The SEVP field representatives serve as direct day-to-day liaisons between SEVP and certified schools.

Q: What is an SEVP field representative's role?

A: Field representatives serve as local customer service representatives to the academic community by meeting with designated school officials (DSOs) and primary designated school officials (PDSOs) at SEVP-certified schools in their assigned territories at least twice per year. In these meetings, field representative answer questions relating to SEVIS and the rules and regulations governing nonimmigrant students. They also train P/DSOs on SEVIS enhancements, review student SEVIS records and conduct SEVP certification site visits for both initial and updates to applications. Their role with the academic community enhances national security by improving data accuracy within SEVIS.

Q: How can P/DSOs submit questions to field representatives?

A: When a field representative is not visiting with the school, P/DSOs can submit questions to them by email or phone. Field representatives will provide P/DSOs with contact information during their introductory meeting. P/DSOs can always continue to submit questions to the SEVP Response Center (SRC) by calling 703-603-3400 or emailing sevp@ice.dhs.gov.

Q: What level of expertise can be expected from field representatives?

A: Field representatives are subject matter experts. They completed a comprehensive eight-week training program. Also, most field representatives have served as a P/DSO or directly worked for SEVP.

Q: What materials will the field representatives use to train P/DSOs and answer questions?

A: Field representatives will use SEVP governing regulations (8 CFR), guidance used by SEVP adjudicators during their decision-making process and other training materials developed by SEVP to help provide support to P/DSOs, answer questions and provide training.

Q: Why do field representatives need to review nonimmigrant student files and how often will it occur?

A: Field representatives will review student SEVIS records when requested by the P/DSO, to answer general questions that the P/DSOs may have. Field representatives may also review a school's Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," or student SEVIS records from a particular school prior to visiting that school.

Q: Are the "site visits" that are conducted during the certification process the same as "school visits." If not, how will they differ?

A: Site visits and school visits are not the same. Field representatives will only conduct site visits during the initial certification, update or recertification process, as required. Field representatives will conduct school visits on a routine basis. School visits are not compliance visits. They are customer service visits to provide support, answer questions and/or train P/DSOs on areas they would like to discuss.

Q: How will a routine school visit be arranged and conducted, and will an agenda be developed prior to the visit?

A: Normally, field representatives will make scheduled appointments with the P/DSO and not visit unannounced. Field representatives and P/DSOs will work together to develop an agenda prior to the scheduled meeting.

Q: Will field representatives have a role in law enforcement? Are there certain kinds of problems that a field representative might encounter that would involve or require referral to law enforcement?

A: Field representatives will primarily help the academic community adhere to the nonimmigrant student rules and regulations and SEVP policies and directives. However, they will report, through their chain-of-command at SEVP, any suspicious activity, fraud and/or gross negligence observed while performing their duties. Once this information is reported, it will be handled by the appropriate parties.

Q: Will P/DSOs be able to provide feedback or complaints about their interactions with field representatives?

A: Yes, field representatives will provide the senior P/DSO with a feedback form once a visit is complete. The P/DSO will use the form to evaluate the field representative's performance. Also, complaints about a field representative can be made via phone or email to the SRC by calling 703-603-3400 or emailing sevp@ice.dhs.gov.