



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Student and Exchange Visitor Program

SEVP Fact Sheet: Designated School Official Submissions

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Status: Final

Purpose/Background: This fact sheet explains the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) process for submitting new principal designated school officials (PDSOs) and designated school officials (DSOs) and changing PDSO or DSO information.

The process requires a complete PDSO or DSO submission, which includes submitting the PDSO or DSO update request and supporting evidence all at once. If documentation is missing at the time of submission, the PDSO or DSO submission will be considered incomplete and may be subject to cancellation. For more information, go to the Procedure section.

Definitions/Acronyms:

- Designated school official (DSO):** a regularly employed member of the school administration who has an office at the school and whose compensation does not come from commission for recruiting foreign students.¹
 - Must be compensated.
 - May not carry out DSO duties as a volunteer or unpaid activity.
- Lawful permanent resident (LPR):** noncitizens who are lawfully authorized to live permanently within the United States.
- Principal designated school official (PDSO):** includes all of the duties of a DSO, but with additional responsibilities mentioned in the following:
 - Updating the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to reflect the addition or deletion of any DSO to the PDSO's associated campus.
 - Applying for recertification.
 - Adding or deleting any instructional sites.
 - Serving as the point of contact with SEVP on any issues that relate to school compliance with regulations.
 - Responding to SEVP regarding SEVIS-generated system alerts, such as the Annual DSO Verification.

¹ See 8 *CFR* 214.3(l)(1) for a complete definition of DSO and 8 *CFR* 214.3(l)(1)(ii) for a complete definition of PDSO.

4. **Head of school:** an authorized senior official of a school or school system (e.g., the owner, president, chief executive officer, chancellor or superintendent) with the authority to legally commit the school or system to fulfill the regulatory requirements of SEVP certification and to submit legal actions (e.g., appeals) on behalf of the school. The head of the school system is the same person for all schools in the school system.
5. **Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS):** an internet-based application that facilitates timely electronic reporting and monitoring of international students and exchange visitors, as well as their dependents, in the United States. This application enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of State throughout a student's or exchange visitor's program in the United States.
6. **Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP):** a part of the National Security Investigations Division and acts as a bridge for government organizations that have an interest in information on nonimmigrants whose primary reason for coming to the United States is to be students. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, SEVP manages schools, nonimmigrant students in the F and M visa classifications and their dependents.
7. **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS):** a federal agency whose missions include preventing terrorism and enhancing security, managing U.S. borders, administering immigration laws, securing cyberspace and ensuring disaster resilience. Through U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, DHS secures the student visa system.

Policy:

1. **Failure to submit a complete PDSO or DSO submission.** A PDSO or DSO submission is complete if it is accompanied with all supporting evidence. According to this fact sheet, failure to submit a complete PDSO or DSO submission may result in a cancellation of the school's petition to add a new school official. Cancellation for lack of initial evidence is not a derogatory adjudication and does not limit the ability of the school to resubmit the nomination.
2. **Rejection or withdrawal of a PDSO or DSO submission.** DHS "may, at its discretion, reject the submission of any individual as a DSO or withdraw a previous submission by a school of an individual."²

² 8 CFR 214.3(l)(2)

- 3. Compliance with DHS regulations.** In submitting the Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student,” school officials certify that DSOs signing the form have read, understand and intend to comply with the following DHS regulations:

Subject	DHS Regulation
Nonimmigrant students	8 CFR 214.1, 8 CFR 214.2(f), and/or 8 CFR 214.2(m)
Change of nonimmigrant classification	8 CFR 248
School certification and recertification	8 CFR 214.3 and/or 8 CFR 214.4

- 4. Willful misstatements and submission of an unqualified DSO.** Willful misstatements and submission of an unqualified individual for approval as a DSO may constitute perjury, per 18 U.S.C. 1621. In addition, DSOs’ noncompliance with the regulations cited in 8 CFR 214.3(a)(1)(ii) through ignorance or failure to seek guidance from SEVP may constitute perjury (e.g., sharing usernames or passwords is a violation of DHS Sensitive Systems Policy Directive 4300A).³

Procedures/Requirements:

- 1. Submitting PDSO or DSO changes with other updates to the petition in SEVIS.** While schools should update the Form I-17 as changes occur (within 21 days, per 8 CFR 214.3(g)(2)(i)), schools should note that requests to add school officials are a priority and are advised that submitting a request to add PDSOs or DSOs along with other petition edits will likely delay the review process. For this reason, we encourage all PDSO or DSO updates to be made independent of any other update to the Form I-17 petition.

- 2. Unlocked SEVIS Petition (If you can make edits to the Form I-17 petition in SEVIS)**

2.1. Submit PDSO or DSO Request

- 2.1.1 Gather all supporting evidence as detailed in Section 4. Supporting Evidence.
- 2.1.2 Log into [SEVIS](#) and make any school official changes.
- 2.1.3 Click Submit on the Update School Information (Form I-17) page. The Submit page opens.
- 2.1.4 Click View Edits to verify all information is accurate.

³ [DHS Sensitive Systems Policy Directive 4300A, version 11.0, Policy ID 5.1.1.c](#)

- Ensure all supporting documentation is ready to upload. If the petition update requires a signed Form I-17, click Print Petition at the bottom of this page, and collect the required signatures.

2.1.5 Complete the PDSO Attestation and enter your SEVIS password to sign the petition update.

2.1.6 Click Continue only when the school is ready to submit the petition along with ALL required supporting evidence. The Upload Evidence: Form I-17 page opens.

2.1.7 Click Upload Evidence. The Upload Evidence modal opens.

2.1.8 Click Browse to find the evidence file to upload. Navigate to and select the file. Choose the Evidence Type from the drop-down list. Click Upload. Repeat these steps until there are no more files to upload.

2.1.9 When all supporting documents are uploaded, click Submit Petition.

3. Locked SEVIS Petition (If you cannot make edits to the Form I-17 petition in SEVIS)

3.1. Submit PDSO or DSO Request

3.1.1. Submit a PDSO or DSO request via email to FormI17SupportingEvidence@ice.dhs.gov with the school's name and SEVIS school code in the subject line of the email. Include the following information listed below under "a" and "b" in the email:

- a) A statement on the school's official letterhead signed by current PDSO (if available) or the head of school with the following information:
 - Name of PDSO or DSO(s) being added/removed/updated.
 - Position title of PDSO or DSO(s).
 - School address.
 - School code.
 - Work address of new PDSO or DSO(s).
 - Office telephone number.
 - Email addresses of new PDSO or DSO(s).
 - If known, existing SEVIS user name for new PDSO or DSO(s).
 - Reason the current PDSO is unable to submit the update(s) in SEVIS.
 - If assigning a new PDSO, will the outgoing PDSO be removed from the Form I-17 or reassigned as a DSO?
 - Role assignment (PDSO or DSO) for each campus that the school official(s) will serve, include campus address.
- b) Gather and submit the applicable evidence as detailed in Section 4. Supporting Evidence.
- c) NOTE: If you are requesting to remove a school official, no additional supporting evidence is needed except for the signed statement mentioned under "a" above.

4. Supporting Evidence

4.1. Proof of Citizenship or LPR

4.1.1 For a PDSO or DSO submission, submit one of the following as proof of U.S. citizenship or LPR:

- U.S. passport or passport card.
- U.S. birth certificate or birth certificate card.
- Alien registration card.
- Naturalization/citizenship certificate.

4.1.2 If the proof of U.S. citizenship or LPR contains names other than those listed on the Form I-17A, “Record of Designated School Officials,” a copy of the court order(s) granting the PDSO or DSO name change(s) (e.g., state issued marriage or divorce certificate) must be submitted.

Note: SEVP will not accept a driver’s license or Social Security card as evidence.

4.2 Form I-17

4.2.1 Print, sign and submit the Form I-17 petition with appropriate signatures.

- If school official updates were submitted in SEVIS, return to the school information page and click, “View Submitted Update” radio button on the left side of the page. Then click the “Print Updated I-17 Form.”
- If you cannot edit your Form I-17 petition in SEVIS due to a pending update or your school is in recertification, you can still log in, access and print your Form I-17 in SEVIS by clicking, “Print I-17 Form” on the school information page. SEVP will accept handwritten changes to the Form I-17 for school official updates.
- If your PDSO has left the school and your school does not have access to log into SEVIS, you will not be able to access the Form I-17 petition. In this case, please let SEVP know upon evidence submission.

4.2.2 Sign the Form I-17 petition with the appropriate signatures on the correct pages as detailed in the following chart.

The following chart summarizes the required supporting evidence and Form I-17 signatures for each type of PDSO or DSO request.

Action	Supporting Evidence	Form I-17 Signatures
Add DSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Form I-17 Proof of U.S. citizenship or LPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: PDSO Form I-17A**: new DSO
Add PDSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Form I-17 Proof of U.S. citizenship or LPR 	<p>If the outgoing PDSO will stay at the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: outgoing PDSO Form I-17A**, for each campus: Head of school Form I-17A**: new PDSO <p>If outgoing PDSO is leaving the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: Head of school Form I-17A**: new PDSO
Edit School Official Legal Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Form I-17 Proof of legal name change 	<p>Signatures required for name change only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: PDSO Form I-17A**: official whose name changed
Change campus role assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Form I-17 	<p>Change in DSO campus assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: PDSO Form I-17A**: DSO <p>Change in PDSO assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form I-17*: PDSO Form I-17A**: new DSO
Delete Official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed Statement (For locked SEVIS petition requests ONLY – see section 3) 	No Form I-17 submission required

***Form I-17:** This continuation page is titled, *Certification and Signature by President, Owner, or Head of Schools*. For routine DSO updates, the PDSO may sign this page.

****Form I-17A:** This is the last page of the Form I-17 and is titled, *Record of Designated School Officials*.

Resources for School Officials

- DSO Training
- Job Aid
- Form I-17 SEVIS User Manual

Contact SEVP

If you have a **locked** Form I-17 petition, you should email all school official change requests and supporting evidence to FormI17SupportingEvidence@ice.dhs.gov.

For questions about the DSO update process, please contact the SEVP Response Center at SEVP@ice.dhs.gov or call 703-603-3400.

For any technical issues with SEVIS, please contact the SEVIS Help Desk at SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov or call 1-800-892-4829.

References

1. *8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(F) and (M)*
2. *8 CFR 103.2(b)(8)(ii)*
3. *8 CFR 214.2(f) and (m)*
4. *8 CFR 214.3*
5. *8 CFR 214.3(g)(2)(i)*
6. *8 CFR 214.4*