

**To:** All SEVIS Users

**Date:** March 25, 2016

**Re:** From SEVP Director Lou Farrell: Update About Backlogs and Reducing Processing Times for Form I-17 Updates

**Number:** 1603-09

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## General Information

Stakeholders,

In a previous broadcast message sent out on Dec. 16, 2015, titled SEVIS NOTICE – Updates Regarding PDSO/DSO Adjudications, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) addressed stakeholder concerns about the delay in processing times for principal designated school official (PDSO) and designated school official (DSO) updates. The broadcast message outlined the SEVP School Certification Unit's (SCU) plan to improve internal procedures to more efficiently complete updates.

I am proud to announce that SEVP has successfully eliminated the backlog of P/DSO updates, and, as such, we are currently processing P/DSO updates submitted with complete and accurate information within two weeks.

To maintain the two-week turnaround, SEVP adjudicators are working to continually issue more timely and firm cancellation or denial decisions for updates submitted with incomplete packages. SCU will receive ongoing support from the SEVP Field Representative Unit, when necessary, to assist with adjudicating petitions. The program will also update information and key resources on [ICE.gov/SEVP](http://ICE.gov/SEVP), to include:

- 1) [SEVP Fact Sheet: Designated School Official Submissions](#)
- 2) [SEVIS Job Aid: Update School Officials](#)
- 3) [SEVIS Job Aid: Update School Officials Process Flow Sketches](#)

SEVP recently hosted an Ask the Experts webinar to discuss the new process for P/DSO updates and the program's progress with clearing the updates backlog. During the webinar, presenters also took live questions from the audience. You can view the transcript of that webinar on the Study in the States [Stakeholder Webinars](#) page.

To ensure we are able to continue processing requests in a timely fashion, please be mindful of three key considerations when submitting updates:

1. **Submit complete petition requests that include accurate supporting documentation.**  
This will reduce the need for SEVP to submit requests for evidence (RFEs).
2. **Be mindful of deadlines**, especially for RFEs.
3. **Submit PDSO and DSO updates alone in SEVIS**, separate from other Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student,” update requests.

Be sure to also use the various SEVP resources for help with correctly filing a Form I-17 update and providing requested documentation. Resources are available on the Study in the States SEVIS Help Hub [Manage School Officials](#) page. If you have submitted a P/DSO update in SEVIS or a request via email but have not received a cancellation notice, RFE or adjudication within 10 business days, please contact [FormI17SupportingEvidence@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:FormI17SupportingEvidence@ice.dhs.gov) to inquire about the status of your request.

If you have additional questions, do not hesitate to reach out to your SEVP field representative. You can also contact the SEVP Response Center at 703-603-3400 or 800-892-4829, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except holidays and Wednesdays from 12:50 to 1:20 p.m. ET.

My hope is that members of the international education community will continue to see concrete, positive results as SEVP takes the steps outlined above to address these issues. Stay tuned, as SEVP will keep stakeholders informed of the progress we are making to enhance the updates process through webinars, conferences, broadcast messages and Study in the States.

Thank you, as always, for your cooperation and partnership.

Take care,

Lou

## **Comments**

To comment on this Broadcast Message, please email [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) with “Broadcast Message 1603-09 Comment” entered in the subject line.

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