



**Homeland
Security**

Engagement Readout

The CIS Ombudsman's Webinar Series: Interagency Engagement on International Student Issues

On August 25, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CIS Ombudsman) hosted an interagency engagement on international student issues.

During the session, representatives from the Department of State, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) provided an overview of international student program requirements, shared updates, and answered questions about issues affecting international students. Topics included:

- Department of State student visa processing for international students
- [J-1 BridgeUSA program](#)
- [USCIS Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements \(SAVE\) program](#)
- Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS)
- J-1 waiver processing delays
- [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#) filing tips
- USCIS change of address requirements
- [New STEM Resources Available on the USCIS Website](#)
- [ICE Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)](#) hiring efforts
- DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List updates
- COVID-19 travel and vaccination requirements

More than 620 stakeholders joined this webinar (designated school officials (DSOs) – 63%, attorneys/legal representatives – 15%, government employees – 10%, employers – 4%, advocacy groups – 2%, and others – 6%). Participants submitted written questions and comments, and the speakers addressed as many as possible during the engagement. Below is a sample of the questions received:

- May students apply for a visa in a third country given backlogs in their country of residency?
- Will the Department of State consider allowing electronic transmission of DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status*?

- How long is processing of Form I-539, *Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status* currently taking?
- Can USCIS clarify how long it takes from a students' entry into the U.S. until their information is in SAVE and available to other agencies (i.e., the Social Security Administration and state departments of motor vehicles)?
- Is there a way to require that the DSO recommendation be included before allowing applicants to file Form I-765 online?
- If a change of address is entered in SEVIS, is a Form AR-11, *Alien's Change of Address Card* still required?
- Will USCIS and ICE provide guidance on name, image, and likeness compensation for international student athletes on F-1 visas?
- Since SEVP has already formally adopted the use of electronic signatures and transmission for Form I-20, *Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status* will CBP make permanent its temporary acceptance of these documents?

Speakers

CIS Ombudsman's Office:

- Phyllis Coven, CIS Ombudsman
- Fatimah Mateen, Acting Assistant Chief of Policy
- Rachel Ellis, Community Outreach Specialist

Department of State:

- Rebecca Wall, Visa Office, Bureau of Consular Affairs
- Jennifer Donnelly, Management and Program Analyst, Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs

USCIS:

- Michael Mayhew, Deputy Associate Director, Immigration Records and Identity Services Directorate
- Marcia Nystrom, Senior Advisor, Office of Information Technology
- Leah Stewart, Electronic Media Specialist, Digital Services Division

ICE:

- Marissa Tinsley, Team Lead, Strategic Communications and Training, Student and Exchange Visitor Program

CBP:

- Chris Candela, Branch Chief, Planning and Preparedness, Office of Field Operations
- Ka Ho Tong, Acting Branch Chief, Admissibility and Passenger Program – Enforcement Programs Division