

## **Subject: Form I-515A Information**

An F-1 or M-1 nonimmigrant student, J-1 Exchange Visitor, or nonimmigrant dependent thereof admitted to the United States with a Form I-515 or I-515A, *Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor*, is lawfully admitted to the United States for a period of 30 days. Within those 30 days, the nonimmigrant is required to send to the address indicated on the Form I-515 or I-515A:

- The completed Form I-515 or I-515A;
- An **original**, signed SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019 signed by an official from the school or program; and
- The **original** I-94 *Arrival/ Departure Record*.

If the Form I-515 or I-515A is sent to the correct address and includes the proper documentation, a DHS official will review the material and, if the individual is otherwise admissible, will return the SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019, the Form I-94 and a short letter of confirmation to the school or program sponsor as appropriate. Therefore, students and exchange visitors must obtain these documents from the school or program official.

The Form I-94 will have been amended by the DHS official to reflect the nonimmigrant's full course of study or length of program. In the case of an F-1 student, for example, the returned Form I-94 will reflect an entry that is valid for "D/S", or the duration of the student's program as reflected on the SEVIS Form I-20. **As noted above, all documentation will be sent back to the school rather than the individual student.**

At the time that a nonimmigrant student or exchange visitor is admitted with a Form I-515 or I-515A, he or she is eligible for all associated benefits, including employment authorization where applicable. The nonimmigrant also maintains status, and eligibility for related benefits, as long as the Form I-515 or I-515A is properly filed with DHS within the initial 30-day admission period. Therefore, an F-1 or J-1 nonimmigrant who is admitted with a Form I-515 or I-515A may begin authorized employment, and may maintain that employment as long as the Form I-515 or I-515A is properly filed with the DHS within the required timeframe. The SEVIS Form I-20 or DS-2019 will be processed and returned along with the Form I-94 as soon as possible, but a short delay in the return of this documentation to the nonimmigrant student should in no way impact the nonimmigrant's eligibility for otherwise authorized benefits. Failure to submit complete or original paperwork, as specified above, will result in a delayed response.

We are pleased that the DHS was able to facilitate entry so that foreign students and exchange visitors could pursue their academic or cultural programs without delay. Please work with us to inform foreign students and exchange visitors that we are making every effort to process these Forms as quickly as possible.