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## COVID-19: Guidance for SEVP Stakeholders

March 13, 2020

As follow up to the guidance issued by SEVP on Monday, March 9, 2020, concerning the COVID-19 situation, there have been inquiries concerning the proper status for students in SEVIS who may have face slightly different scenarios related to emergency procedures implemented by SEVP-certified learning institutions:

### **Scenario 1: A school completely closes and does not have online courses or other alternate learning procedures.**

Response: If a school closes temporarily without online instruction or other alternative learning procedures, the students should remain in active status in SEVIS so long as the students intend to resume their course of study when classes resume. This is similar to short-term breaks in the school calendar when classes are not in session. Schools must notify SEVP of COVID-19 procedural changes within 10 business days.

### **Scenario 2: A school temporarily stops in-person classes but implements online or other alternate learning procedures and the nonimmigrant student remains in the United States**

Response: If a school closes temporarily but offers online instruction or another alternative learning procedure, nonimmigrant students should participate in online or other alternate learning procedures and remain in active status in SEVIS. Schools must notify SEVP of COVID-19 procedural changes within 10 business days. Given the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 emergency, SEVP will allow F-1 and/or M-1 students to temporarily count online classes towards a full course of study in excess of the limits stated in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G) and 8 CFR 214.2(m)(9)(v). This temporary provision is only in effect for the duration of the emergency and in accordance with the procedural change documents filed in a timely manner to SEVP.

### **Scenario 3: A school temporarily stops in-person classes but implements online or other alternate learning procedures and the nonimmigrant student departs the United States**

Response: If a school closes temporarily but offers online instruction or another alternative learning procedure, nonimmigrant students should participate in online or other alternate learning procedures and remain in active status in SEVIS. Schools must notify SEVP of COVID-19 procedural changes within 10 business days. Given the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 emergency, SEVP will allow F-1 and/or M-1 students to temporarily count online classes towards a full course of study in excess of the limits stated in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G) and 8 CFR 214.2(m)(9)(v), even if they have left the



United States and are taking the online classes from elsewhere. This temporary provision is only in effect for the duration of the emergency and in accordance with the procedural change documents filed in a timely manner to SEVP.

**NOTE:** Due to the fluid nature of this difficult situation, this guidance may be subject to change. SEVP will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and will adjust its guidance as needed.