

**Effective Date:**

**July 16, 2018**

**Retired:**

**Revised:**

**Approved by:**



**Subject: Financial Requirements for F-1 Visa Students**

**PURPOSE:**

This policy outlines the financial requirements for prospective international students and continuing international students at Meharry Medical College.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

As an Academic Health Science Center dedicated to educating physicians, dentists, researchers, and health policy expert, Meharry Medical College welcomes students from all parts of the world.

Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel handles the administration of the F-1 visa program. Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel is located in the Lyttle Hall Administrative Building and can be contacted at (615) 327-6102.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**F1-Visa**

An **F-1 visa** is a nonimmigrant visa for those wishing to study in the U.S. at a university or college, high school, private elementary school, seminary, conservatory, language-training program, or other academic institution. You must file a Nonimmigrant Visa Application and have it approved by your local U.S. Consulate or Embassy in order to obtain an F-1 visa prior to gaining entry to begin an approved program.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) delegated the school certification process to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and ICE assigned this responsibility to its **Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)**. The SEVP is 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.

SEVP certification allows institutions to issue **Forms I-20**, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," to prospective international students after admitting them for a course of study. Prospective international students then use the Form I-20 to apply for the F-1 visa. The Form I-20 is reviewed by U.S. Customs and Border Officers when they are deciding to approve a traveling student's entry to the U.S.

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**PROCEDURE:**

International candidates accepted to Meharry Medical College must show proof of full financial support for a minimum of two (2) years of study before Meharry Medical College allows an international student to matriculate.

- No federal and state financial aid is available for international students. Loans and scholarships may be available through various private organizations.
- Tuition rates are the same for international students as they are for domestic students, and F-1 students are required to show proof that they can pay for all tuition and expenses for up to two (2) years in order to receive their Forms I-20.
- In order for Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel to issue Forms I-20, candidates must be fully admitted to a degree program at Meharry Medical College three (3) months prior to the start of the semester.
- Prior to Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel's issuance of Forms I-20, candidates must submit a complete I-20 Application and be approved for participation in the SEVP at Meharry Medical College.
- A complete I-20 Application consists of the following:
  - I-20 Application (See **Exhibit #1**)
  - Bank Statement or Line of Credit Letter from Bank on Official Bank Letterhead dated no more than one (1) month prior to submission of I-20 Application (if proof of personal funds, document must reflect international student's name; if proof of funds for private sponsor, document must reflect private sponsor's name)
  - Financial Institution Verification with Official Financial Institution Seal or Stamp dated no more than one (1) month prior to submission of I-20 Application (if proof of personal funds, document must reflect international student's name; if proof of funds for private sponsor, document must reflect private sponsor's name) (See **Exhibit #2**)
  - Guarantee of Private Financial Sponsorship, if applicable (See **Exhibit #3**)
  - Passport (for international student—must be valid)
  - Scholarship Award Letter(s) on Official Letterhead from Source, if applicable
  - Statement of Financial Resources for F-1 Visa (See **Exhibit #4**)
- Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel does not issue Forms I-20 for provisional or conditional acceptance to any program, nor does it issue Forms I-20 for certificate programs.

**Non-acceptable Proof of Funding**

Documentation not written in English or translated into English will not be accepted by Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel as proof of funding and/or sponsorship. Total of funding must be converted to the United States Dollar or will not be accepted by Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel as proof of

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funding. All letters from financial institutions should be on official letterhead prescribed by that institution. Proof of funding documentation cannot be dated more than one (1) month before the date of I-20 Application. Only the first page of bank statements should be submitted as supporting documentation. The first page should reflect the name of the international student and/or the private sponsor as well as the total amount of funds available.

**Prohibited Sponsors**

Meharry Medical College faculty and staff are prohibited from gifting a tangible or intangible item having monetary value, including but not limited to cash or any form of financial assistance for tuition, related costs and living expenses. International students are prohibited from accepting a tangible or intangible item having monetary value, including but not limited to cash or financial assistance for tuition, related costs and living expenses from Meharry Medical College faculty and staff.

**Financial Hardship**

An international student may have been able to prove adequate funding for his or her tuition and related fees during the I-20 Application process but experience financial hardship throughout his or her program.

An international student no longer able to pay tuition in full at the time of registration for an academic session must provide notice in writing of the financial hardship to Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel. Immigration Services in the Office of General Counsel shall discuss with the international student his or her options. Ramifications for failure to pay tuition and related fees includes but is not limited to termination of participation in the SEVP at Meharry Medical College.

**EXHIBITS:**

- No. 1 – I-20 Application
- No. 2 – Financial Institution Verification
- No. 3 – Guarantee of Private Financial Sponsorship
- No. 4 – Statement of Financial Resources