

## Broadcast Message: Reminder of Liability for DSOs Regarding CPT Authorization

**To:** PDSOs and DSOs at SEVP-certified schools

**Date:** August 12, 2026

**BCM Number:** 2608-01

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### General Information

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) reminds all designated school officials (DSOs) of their responsibilities regarding curricular practical training (CPT) authorization as well as increased program oversight concerning the proper use of CPT. SEVP has observed a rise in CPT authorizations that do not meet regulatory requirements, specifically those not constituting an **integral** part of an established curriculum. As a result, the program is increasing its scrutiny of CPT approvals to ensure compliance with federal regulations. Please carefully read and review the following information:

- **CPT must be integral to the curriculum:** DSOs can only authorize CPT when the training is an integral part of an established curriculum and is directly related to the student's major area of study. CPT cannot be authorized solely for the purpose of employment or for experiences that are not required or otherwise formally recognized as part of the academic program.

SEVP reserves the right to request documentation and other evidence from DSOs to identify whether CPT is indeed a core and essential part of the student's studies, without which, they would be unable to complete their degree. While SEVP recognizes that the school, not the U.S. government, defines what is and is not required to complete a degree, SEVP is also committed to identifying and investigating schools that attempt to undermine or purposely bypass federal regulations or oversight.

DSOs are reminded that F nonimmigrant students are, by their own attestation under penalty of perjury, here in the United States "*solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study.*" If SEVP suspects that school officials are abusing CPT to create work opportunities rather than academic studies, they may be subject to additional scrutiny and action from SEVP and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), to include potential withdrawal of the school's SEVP certification.

- **DSO certification and legal responsibility:** When you sign or re-sign the Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," to authorize CPT, **you are certifying under penalty of perjury** that all information is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. This includes confirming that CPT is required or otherwise integral to the student's curriculum.

**Potential liability:** Improper CPT authorization, such as for non-integral purposes, may subject both the institution and individual DSO to administrative or legal consequences. This includes withdrawal of SEVP certification and potential penalties for providing false information or

misrepresenting the nature of the training. **Actions requested:** After reviewing the above information, DSOs should:

1. Carefully review all CPT requests and your institution's current academic requirements across all fields of study.
2. Ensure that CPT is only authorized when it is truly integral to the program. Only authorize CPT if its absence would make the attainment of a degree an impossibility and if the work associated with CPT is required for *all* students pursuing that degree.
3. Maintain thorough records supporting the curricular necessity of each CPT authorization.
4. Consult with your SEVP field representative if you have questions about a specific case.

Employers, DSOs, students and members of the public can report suspected employment fraud, practical training fraud, or other instances of foreign students or certified schools abusing federal regulations directly to SEVP via email at [SEVPFraud@hsi.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVPFraud@hsi.dhs.gov).

For questions about this message, please contact the SEVP Response Center (SRC) via phone at 703-603-3400 or 1-800-892-4829 or via email at [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov). The SRC is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except for federal holidays.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued commitment to regulatory compliance.

#### **Disclaimer**

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