

The UT Dallas International Student Services Office provides this guide to UT Dallas students considering applying for an Authorized Early Withdrawal. The information is not intended as legal advice. For legal issues, please consult an immigration attorney.

WHAT IS AUTHORIZED EARLY WITHDRAWAL

Authorized Early Withdrawal is an authorization for a temporary absence outside of the United States during a long semester (fall and/or spring). This is an option for students who need to unexpectedly drop classes and leave the United States before their program completion date. Reasons to leave the United States can include family emergencies, financial issues, and personal reasons. Upon applying for AEW, **your SEVIS record will be terminated.**

The ISSO can request to **reactivate** your SEVIS record when you:

- Enroll for classes in the next available semester
- Re-enter the United States within 5 months

Reactivation is not guaranteed. Reactivation requests are adjudicated by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). SEVP has the discretion to request additional documentation for reactivation requests, including but not limited to proof of enrollment or proof of attendance. Students who request AEW after the first day of classes or who did not enroll full-time in the semester they requested AEW have a higher risk of denial. If your reactivation request is denied, you must apply for a new I-20 and F-1 visa in order to re-enter the U.S., and you must re-establish eligibility for benefits such as CPT or OPT.

HOW TO APPLY FOR AEW

Rules:

- Must be in valid F-1 status to request AEW
- Application for AEW:
 - It is recommended to apply for AEW prior to the first day of classes, if possible. Students who apply for AEW after the first day of classes face a higher risk of denial when requesting the reactivation of their F-1 record.
 - If you request AEW after the first day of classes, you must be enrolled full-time for the semester. In order to reactivate your F-1 record, SEVP may require proof of full-time enrollment and/or class attendance.
 - You must wait for the ISSO to approve your AEW request before dropping your classes.
- After submission of the request form, the ISSO will terminate your SEVIS record within 5 business days and notify you of the specific date of SEVIS termination.
- You should not be registered in classes nor live in the U.S. 15 days after the day of the termination. If you do not leave the U.S. within the stated times, you will be out of status and in the country without authorization.
 - Upon termination, all F-1 benefits, such as CPT or on-campus employment, will cease immediately.
 - SEVIS records of F-2 dependents sponsored under your F-1 status will also be terminated.

Steps and Checklist:

- Submit AEW request form to the ISSO. (<https://www.utdallas.edu/ic/forms/>)
- Submit your most current I-20 for a travel endorsement.
- Withdraw from all of your classes for the current term.
- Leave the United States (with your dependents, if any) within 15 days of the termination.
- Keep track of the SEVIS termination date, if planning to return within five-month period.

RETURNING WITHIN 5 MONTHS

Rules:

- 60 days before the next available semester start date, submit your reactivation request form and required documents.
- The ISSO will submit a request for SEVP to reactivate your record. Reactivation is not guaranteed. Reactivation requests can take 1 -2 months to be processed by SEVP, so it is important to submit your request 60 days prior to the next semester start date.

Important Note: UT Dallas closes for holidays and breaks throughout the year. You must be aware of these dates so you can request the ISSO to reactivate your SEVIS record before the university is closed. **Delaying your request to reactivate your SEVIS record could directly affect your re-entry into the U.S. and your ability to enroll in classes for the next semester.** You can find the university academic calendar here: www.utdallas.edu/academiccalendar/

Steps and Checklist:

- Submit your reactivation request to the ISSO 60 days prior to the next semester start date.
 - AEW SEVIS reactivation request form (<https://www.utdallas.edu/ic/forms/>)
 - Flight itinerary
 - Transcripts
 - Proof of enrollment for next available semester
- ISSO will email you once SEVP adjudicates the request. If the request is denied, you will then need to follow the instructions below to obtain a new I-20.
- Confirm whether your F-1 visa is still valid. If expired, you must apply for a new F-1 visa.
- Documents to carry upon your re-entry to the United States
 - A valid, unexpired passport with an expiration date at least 6 months in the future
 - A valid F-1 visa
 - Your most recent I-20 with a valid travel endorsement on page 2
 - Transcripts
 - Enrollment summary showing that you are enrolled in classes for next available semester.
 - Proof of financial support

RETURNING AFTER 5 MONTHS / RETURNING AFTER AEW REACTIVATION DENIAL

Rules:

- You will have a new SEVIS record and will be required to get a new I-20 and new F-1 visa.
- You will need to re-establish eligibility for benefits such as CPT and OPT by enrolling full-time for two long semesters (fall and spring).
- You may re-enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the program start date listed on your new I-20.

Steps and Checklist:

- Apply for a new initial I-20: <https://www.utdallas.edu/isso/i20-receive/>
- Pay the SEVIS fee
- Apply for a new F-1 visa (you may check with your local U.S. embassy or consulate to see whether you need to get a new visa: www.usembassy.gov)
- Documents to carry upon your re-entry to the U.S.
 - A valid, unexpired passport with an expiration date at least 6 months in the future
 - A valid F-1 visa
 - Your new I-20
 - Proof of financial support

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Early withdrawal from your program may have effects on your academic record. We strongly advise you to check in with the following offices:

- Academic Department: Impact of AEW on your academic record and scholarship or assistantship if any
- Bursar's Office: Deadlines for refunds and payments
- Registrar's Office: Deadlines for dropping classes
- Student Health Center: Student health insurance coverage and fees

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many times can I have AEW?

While there are no limitations on how many times a student can receive AEW, please keep in mind that frequent AEW requests may cause additional questions from the visa officers and/or port of entry officials.

Do I need to give the ISSO a specific reason why I need the AEW?

For SEVIS purposes, you will be required to submit a general reason why you are leaving the U.S.

Is AEW considered a negative termination?

No. AEW is a non-negative termination. You may request reactivation of your SEVIS record within 5 months to return to your studies in the U.S.

If my AEW reactivation is denied, does the denial negatively impact my immigration status?

No. SEVP may deny the request to reactivate your SEVIS record. A reactivation denial does not negatively impact your immigration status and does not indicate a status violation on your part. However, it does mean that you will need to obtain a new Form I-20 and F-1 visa in order to re-enter the U.S. and resume your studies.

ISSO CONTACT INFORMATION

The ISSO provides advising services in person, over the phone, and by email. For current advising times and services offered, please see the ISSO webpage: <https://www.utdallas.edu/ic/issoadvising/>