WHAT IS AUTHORIZED EARLY WITHDRAWAL (AEW)

Authorized early withdrawal is a temporary absence outside of the United States for less than five months. This is an option for students who need to unexpectedly leave the United States before their program completion date. Reasons needing to leave the United States can include family emergencies, financial issues, and personal reasons.

Upon applying for AEW, your SEVIS record is terminated and as long as you re-enter the United States within 5 months, the ISSO can reactivate your SEVIS record.

RULES AND REGULATIONS CONCERNING AEW

- After submission of the request form, the ISSO will terminate your SEVIS record within 5 business days. You must leave the United States within 15 days of the termination event, or you will be in the United States without a status.
- Upon termination, all F-1 benefits, such as employment (CPT, on campus job) will cease immediately.
- SEVIS records of F-2 dependents sponsored under your F-1 status will also be terminated and they must depart the U.S. within 15 days of the termination event, or they will be in the U.S. without a status.
- You may not use your current F-1 visa to enter the United States until your SEVIS record has been re-activated. You may contact the ISSO sixty days before the next available semester start date to request reactivation of your SEVIS record. The ISSO will request to have your SEVIS record returned to active status. Once the record has been returned to active status, you may apply for your visa and/or return to the United States.
- You must return to the United States within 5 months in order to keep your immigration status and begin classes by the next available session.
- If you do not return to the United States within 5 months, you will be required to get a new I20 and a new F-1 visa. You would also need to re-establish the yearlong (2 long semesters) requirement again for benefits such as CPT and OPT.

STEPS TO APPLY FOR AEW

Step 1. Verify your eligibility.
- Valid F-1 status at the time of application.

Step 2. Decide:
- Whether you should apply for AEW:
  - Do you intend to withdraw from all of your classes for the current term?
  - Do you intend to have a temporary absence outside of the United States for less than five months?
- When should apply for AEW:
  - You should apply for AEW either before Census Day or before you withdraw from all your classes and depart the U.S. for a given semester.
- When should you depart the United States:
  - Within 15 days of the termination date of your SEVIS record.
• When should you notify the ISSO that you plan to return to UTD:
  o 60 days before the next available semester.
• When should you schedule your visa interview and re-enter the United States:
  o After you have been notified by the ISSO that your SEVIS record has been re-activated.

Step 3. Submit your documents to the UT Dallas ISSO:
• Submit your most current I20 for a travel endorsement and the AEW request form. You can download it here: http://www.utdallas.edu/isso/docs/AEW%20Request.pdf
• Please note that once the form has been submitted, your SEVIS record will be terminated within 5 business days. You will need to leave the United States within 15 days of the termination event.

Step 4. Contact the ISSO:
• Sixty days before the next available semester start date, please contact the ISSO and submit the AEW SEVIS Reactivation request form along with your flight itinerary, transcripts and proof of enrollment for the next available semester. You can download the form here: http://www.utdallas.edu/isso/docs/AEW%20SEVIS%20Reactivation%20Request.pdf
• After the ISSO has received your AEW SEVIS Reactivation request form, your flight itinerary, transcript and proof of enrollment, a correction request will be made with SEVIS to have your record returned to active status. Correction requests can take up to 30 days to approve, so it is important you contact our office 60 days prior to the next available semester.
• Please note that UT Dallas closes for holidays and breaks throughout the year. It is important that you are aware of these dates so you can request the ISSO to reactive your SEVIS record before or after the university is closed. Delaying your request to reactivate your SEVIS record could directly affect your re-entry into the United States and ability to enroll in classes for the next semester.
• You can find the university academic calendar here: http://www.utdallas.edu/academiccalendar/. Please plan accordingly.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING AEW

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

• Academic Department – Information regarding your academic record and any type of scholarship/assistantship you may have.
• Bursars Office – Deadlines for refunds and payment.
• Registrar’s Office – Deadlines for dropping classes.
• Student Health Center – Student health insurance coverage and fees.

Additionally you may want to make arrangements regarding your housing and any other obligations you may have while living in the United States.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens if I am outside the U.S. longer than 5 months?
If you are outside the United States longer than 5 months you will need a new initial I-20 and F-1 visa to re-enter the country. You will also need to pay the SEVIS fee again. Please view our website on the specifics documents you will need for your initial I-20. You can find the information here: [http://www.utdallas.edu/issoni20-receive/](http://www.utdallas.edu/issoni20-receive/)

**What do I need to come back into the United States within 5 months?**

You will need to carry the following documents 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 3, transcripts, an enrollment summary that shows you are enrolled in classes for the next available semester, and proof of financials.

**How will I know if my SEVIS record has been reactivated?**

Once your SEVIS record has been returned to active status, the ISSO will send you an email. After your SEVIS record has been returned to active status, you will be able to enter the country and/or your book you visa appointment. Please keep in mind that the university closes throughout the year for holidays and breaks. If your SEVIS record is re-activated during a time when the university is closed, it could impact your travel plans and/or visa appointments. Please keep these dates in mind when you are considering AEW.

**How many times can I have an AEW?**

While there are no limitations to 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.

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

No, the ISSO does not need a specific reason as to why you need the AEW. As an F-1 student, you are permitted to take a leave of absence for up to 5 months if needed. We will need a general reason as to why you are leaving for SEVIS purposes, but the specific reason is not needed.

**Is AEW considered a negative termination?**

No, AEW temporarily allows the ISSO to terminate your record in a non-negative fashion. You are able to return back to the United States and resume studies as if you never left.

**How do I know the first day of the 5 month period?**

The day the ISSO terminates your record is the first day of the 5 month period. After we terminate your record, we will notify you of the specific date. It is your responsibility to request to return to the United States within the 5 month period.

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**ISSO CONTACT INFO**

Immigration advisors are available to speak with you about AEW during walk in and phone advising hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 10AM – 5PM

You can also email immigration advisors questions and your documents at ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu.