

**To:** Designated school officials and principal designated school officials

**Date:** June 21, 2018

**Re:** Emergency Preparedness: Are You and Your Students Ready?

**Number:** 1806-02

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## General Information

Are you and your school's international students prepared for an emergency?

[Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)-certified schools](#) may face emergency situations ranging from natural disasters to man-made catastrophes. These emergencies can disrupt operations and affect the safety of your faculty, staff and students. Unique conditions that apply to international students may not often be considered in a school's emergency operations plan.

Designated school officials (DSOs) need to understand their role in emergency operations and keep their [SEVP-certification responsibilities](#) in mind when planning their response to campus disruptions.

Specifically, you as a DSO should:

- Emphasize Safety First!

Advise international students on what emergency resources are available at the school and any evacuation plans. Encourage international students to stay informed by signing up for campus-wide alerts. If applicable, consider including dependents and family in emergency preparedness briefings offered to international students.

- Work with your international students to help them understand how to [maintain nonimmigrant student status during an emergency](#).
- Ensure international students have your emergency contact information, including a number where you can be reached after business hours and an email address that you regularly check. Remember that in some emergencies, cell phones may not be in service.

If students cannot reach you, the SEVP Response Center (SRC) is available to serve as the point of contact for your school and will provide emergency contact services during the disruption. You or your students can [reach SRC](#) at 703-603-3400 or 1-800-892-4829. SRC is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except federal holidays.

- Collaborate with emergency managers and other school officials to ensure that your school incorporates the unique needs of international students into its emergency

planning, including [updating and maintaining Student and Exchange Visitor Information System records](#).

Check out some of the following resources to assist with preparation:

- [ICE.gov Emergency Information](#) and [Campus Resilience at SEVP-certified Schools](#) discuss SEVP communications in emergency situations and school-specific emergency tips.
- During the [SEVP Ask the Experts Webinar](#): Campus Emergency Planning and the International Student Community, SEVP and Office of Academic Engagement representatives discussed the importance of campus emergency planning, special considerations for institutions with international students, and resources available. [Watch the recording](#) or [read the webinar transcript](#).
- Two new Study in the States blog posts: [Preparing Your School in Case of Emergency Events](#) and [Preparing Your Students in Case of Emergency Events](#).
- The [DHS Campus Resilience Program Resource Library](#) provides schools with resources, strategies, guidelines, and templates to address a variety of vulnerabilities and risks.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s [Guide on Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Institutions of Higher Education](#) helps schools develop emergency plans, including walk-throughs of different situations to outline a course of action for each objective your school aims to accomplish.

The guide includes a section called A Closer Look at Incorporating International Students into IHE Emergency Management and Planning. This section describes the unique needs of F and M students that schools should consider when planning for and responding to crises.

FEMA provides further resources for schools at FEMA [Campus Emergency Management Resources](#).

- Additional emergency preparedness resources:
  - DHS's emergency preparedness, continuity planning and training information: <https://www.Ready.gov>.
  - FEMA's Emergency Management Institute offers additional resources and training at <http://Training.FEMA.gov>.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has information and resources regarding emergency preparedness and response online at <http://Emergency.CDC.gov/>.

## Comments

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