Transfer Process: Frequently Asked Questions
For Students in J-1 Status

Overview
What is a transfer?
A transfer is when one educational institution sends a student's immigration record to a different educational institution. For J-1 students, a transfer typically happens when a student changes schools or program sponsor.

When can a transfer take place?
A transfer can occur in the middle of a degree program, after completing a degree program, or after engaging in a period of Academic Training (AT). A transfer must occur prior to the end date listed on the current DS-2019.

What are the restrictions for a J-1 student wanting to transfer?
- Must study the same major at new institution
- Must study at the same level, or higher level, as degree program at ISU
- Students in the nondegree category can only transfer to a nondegree program at new institution and within the same major

Transfer-In Process
How do I start the process to transfer my SEVIS record to Iowa State University?
The transfer-in process differs depending on a student's status at the university. New or incoming students need to work with the Office of Admissions to start the process, whereas current or continuing ISU students will need to work with an International Student Advisor.

How will I know if my request for a transfer has been approved?
ISSO will send an e-mail to the student's ISU e-mail address when processing is complete. If this e-mail is not received in 10 working days as previously noted, ISSO recommends contacting the office by e-mail at isso@iastate.edu to request the status of the application.

What if I change my mind about transferring to ISU?
Students can cancel the transfer by notifying their program sponsor prior to the SEVIS release date, the date the immigration record is transferred. If a student changes their mind after the SEVIS release date, they must work with an International Student Advisor at ISU to correct their SEVIS record.

Transfer-Out Process: Cystart Request
When should I submit the transfer request?
Students should request a transfer at least 10 working days before their current DS-2019 expires.

Do I need to meet with an International Student Advisor?
No, students are not required to meet with an International Student Advisor, but students may wish to meet with an advisor to discuss the SEVIS release date, the date the immigration record is transferred.
How do I request a transfer?
Transfer requests can be submitted through an electronic process in Cystart. Students may log in to Cystart using their ISU NetID and password. Complete and submit the Transfer from ISU request found under J-1 Student Services tab.

What must I submit with this request?
Students must submit an admission letter from the U.S. institution where they wish to be transferred.

What is the timeline for processing this request?
It will take ISSO up to 10 working days after submitting the Transfer from ISU e-form in Cystart and ISSO receives a response from academic/faculty adviser. ISSO will send an e-mail to the student's ISU e-mail address when processing is complete. If this e-mail is not received in 10 working days as previously noted, ISSO recommends contacting the office by e-mail at isso@iastate.edu to request the status of the application.

What else should I do after I decide to transfer from ISU?
- Withdraw from ISU if enrolled for the current/future semesters to avoid charges for tuition and fees
  - Process begins with academic/faculty advisor
- Notify the Department of Residence if living in a residence hall or university apartment

What if I change my mind about which educational institution I want to transfer to?
ISSO can cancel the transfer before the SEVIS release date. Students must contact ISSO at isso@iastate.edu in advance to request a cancellation. Students who wish to cancel a transfer request after the SEVIS release date will need to work with the new U.S. school and ISSO to correct the SEVIS record.

The New DS-2019
When will I get the new DS-2019 from my new school?
The new school must wait until the SEVIS record is released to issue the new DS-2019.

What if I do not complete the immigration transfer process and the new educational institution issues me a new DS-2019?
This type of DS-2019 is issued for the purpose of initial attendance. An initial DS-2019 can be problematic for students, as they must reenter the U.S. and can return to the U.S. no more than 30 days prior to the report date on the new DS-2019. Students are advised to inform the international office at the new school that they intend to transfer their SEVIS record.

Impact on Employment
How is my authorized employment (on-campus employment or Academic Training) affected by my transfer?
Students must stop all employment the day before the SEVIS release date. Policies vary between schools, so please consult with the International Student Advisor at the new school regarding the earliest on-campus employment date.

Impact on Travel
What if I want to go home before starting classes at the new school?
Students who have transferred their records must use the DS-2019 from the new school to return to the U.S.
Will I need to apply for a new J-1 visa after my SEVIS record was transferred?
Students who transfer their SEVIS record to a new school only need to apply for a new J-1 visa if their previous J-1 visa has expired and they will be traveling outside of the U.S. In that situation, a student will need to apply for a new J-1 visa before they will be able to return to the U.S.

Immigration Consequences
What are the immediate consequences if I fail to request a transfer within the timeframes noted above?

- Considered in violation of J-1 nonimmigrant status
- Not allowed to continue working on campus
- If authorized for Academic Training, it will be automatically terminated
- Lose eligibility for all other benefits of J-1 nonimmigrant status
- Lose eligibility to change status, for example from J-1 to H-1B

Disclaimer: This Frequently Asked Questions is intended for general information and guidance. Please consult with an International Student and Scholar Advisor in the International Students and Scholars Office regarding your individual request.