

## F and M Students and MAVNI

### *A Guide for Designated School Officials*

#### What is MAVNI?

Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) allows certain non-citizens who are legally present in the United States to join the U.S. military and apply immediately for U.S. citizenship using [Form N-400, "Application for Naturalization,"](#) without first obtaining lawful permanent residence. The program is only available to legal aliens holding critical skills – physicians, nurses, and experts in certain languages with associated cultural backgrounds.

#### How does MAVNI affect F and M students?

F and M students who meet the requirements may apply for MAVNI. Designated school officials (DSO) should be aware of the program to help participating students make the transition from F or M student to naturalization applicant.

#### Who can apply for MAVNI?

MAVNI is only available to legal aliens holding one of the following critical skills:

- **Physicians / Nurses** – may enlist for a minimum of three years of active duty or six years in the U.S. Army Reserve as a health care professional
- **Experts in certain languages with associated cultural backgrounds** – may enlist as a language recruit for at least four years of active duty

#### What languages qualify for the MAVNI application?

- |                       |                  |                        |           |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| • Albanian            | • Haitian-Creole | • Moro                 | • Somali  |
| • Amharic             | • Hausa          | • Nepalese             | • Swahili |
| • Arabic              | • Hindi          | • Persian <sup>1</sup> | • Tagalog |
| • Azerbaijani         | • Hungarian      | • Polish               | • Tajik   |
| • Bengali             | • Igbo           | • Portuguese           | • Tamil   |
| • Burmese             | • Indonesian     | • Punjabi              | • Thai    |
| • Cambodian-Khmer     | • Korean         | • Pushtu <sup>2</sup>  | • Turkish |
| • Cebuano             | • Kurdish        | • Russian              | • Turkmen |
| • Chinese             | • Lao            | • Serbo-Croatian       | • Urdu    |
| • Czech               | • Malay          | • Sindhi               | • Uzbek   |
| • French <sup>3</sup> | • Malayalam      | • Sinhalese            | • Yoruba  |

<sup>1</sup> Dari and Farsi

<sup>2</sup> aka Pashto

<sup>3</sup> limited to individuals possessing citizenship from an African country

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### **How does MAVNI lead to citizenship?**

Enlisted persons under MAVNI are eligible to apply for naturalization due to the wartime enlistment statute of 2002 (*8 USC 1440, INA 329*) and Executive Order 13269, without any minimum period of military service. The U.S. military requires MAVNI enlistees to apply for naturalization. However, this does not guarantee citizenship.

### **How can enlistment into MAVNI affect an F or M student's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record and status?**

F and M students will not be able to maintain their student status after beginning a tour of duty with the U.S. military. A DSO will terminate the SEVIS record of an F or M student who cannot maintain student status. The student will no longer be in F or M status.

Neither the enlistment nor the actual filing of the Form N-400 provides enlistees with any immigration status. Enlistees may remain in the United States while the citizenship application is pending, however, if they were in F or M status at the time of filing.

### **What happens if a MAVNI applicant does not pass basic training?**

USCIS will evaluate each applicant's situation individually:

- Some, such as those recruits who had planned to enter the reserves, may be able to return to their previous status.
- A person who receives a discharge for medical reasons may receive temporary B status to allow time to get personal affairs in order.
- USCIS may not grant temporary status to a recruit who leaves the military voluntarily.
- USCIS is willing to excuse a late filing for reinstatement in some circumstances. If the previous visa status is not an option, however, USCIS may consider discretionary options to give the individual some time to get personal affairs in order.

### **What reason should DSOs select in SEVIS for termination of an enlisted student's record?**

- Urge the student to apply for naturalization as soon as possible after enlistment.
- Perform the following actions in SEVIS for a student who has not yet applied for naturalization but has been maintaining student status up to the time when enlistment makes that impossible:
  - Terminate the record.
  - List "Authorized Early Withdrawal" as the reason for termination in SEVIS.
  - State in the Remarks section that the student has maintained status up to the present time and that the record termination is due to MAVNI enlistment. Include the date on which the student must report, if known.

- Perform the following actions in SEVIS for an enlisted student who has not told the DSO about the matter but has stopped maintaining student status:
  - Select the “Termination.”
  - List “Otherwise Failing to Maintain Status” as the reason for termination in SEVIS.

**What action should be taken on the SEVIS record of an F or M dependent when the F or M student enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI?**

- Dependents of a MAVNI participant do not gain any status from the MAVNI programs but must do one of the following:
  - Obtain a new status.
  - Depart the United States.
- E-mail the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) at [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov)

**What points of contact are available?**

- DSOs can contact SEVP with questions regarding the following issues:
  - Nonimmigrant enlistment in the U.S. military
  - Any other related topics
 E-mail [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) with the subject “ATTN: MAVNI”
- DSOs can contact the military branch with questions regarding the following issues:
  - Eligibility for the MAVNI program
  - Recruitment process
- DSOs can contact USCIS with questions regarding the following issues:
  - General questions about the Form N-400
  - Application process
 Call USCIS 1-800-375-5283

**What other resources are available?**

- Department of Defense [MAVNI Fact Sheet](#)
- USCIS website providing information about the [military and naturalization](#)
- USCIS website providing information about U.S. [citizenship](#)

**What does a DSO need to do when a...?**

F or M student enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	Student on optional practical training (OPT) then enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	F or M dependent enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	Dependent of an F or M student who enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to F or M student in <i>Active</i> status who informs you of enlistment in the U.S. military to determine the last day the student will be in status:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cannot not count employment in the U.S. military as OPT</li> <li>• Know that a student can continue to work on OPT or</li> </ul>	The same procedures as for a student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select “Other” and one of the two following choices for principal status:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependents of a MAVNI participant do not gain any status from the MAVNI programs but must do one of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Obtain a new status.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

F or M student enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	Student on optional practical training (OPT) then enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	F or M dependent enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI	Dependent of an F or M student who enlists in the U.S. military through MAVNI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ During authorized vacation or break</li> <li>○ While enrolled in a full course of study</li> <li>○ During practical training</li> <li>● Complete the record if the F or M student has completed the program of study. Enter language in the comments section to reflect MAVNI enlistment.</li> <li>● Terminate the student's record in SEVIS within 21 days of the date the student will stop maintaining status as described by 8 CFR 214.2(f) or (m):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A student who begins employment with the U.S. military may go through a reserve component enlistment. The date of beginning employment is the date of enlistment.</li> <li>○ Beginning employment with the U.S. military ends student status because it is not authorized student employment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ maintain studies until beginning employment with the U.S. military – usually the report date for basic training</li> <li>● Terminate the SEVIS record within 21 days of the report date for basic training.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Add the reason for “Authorized Early Withdrawal” if the student has reported the situation to the DSO.</li> <li>○ State in the Remarks section on the Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status,” in SEVIS that the student is enlisting through MAVNI and has maintained status up to that point, as applicable.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Terminated</li> <li>● Insert the MAVNI comments used for the F or M student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Depart the United States.</li> <li>● E-mail the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) at <a href="mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov">SEVP@ice.dhs.gov</a> with specific questions.</li> </ul>