

Change of Status From:

Applying to the USCIS for a Change of Nonimmigrant Visa Status

Any nonimmigrant visa holder (except those holding C, D, K, or M visa status, or visa waiver status) can apply for a change of status to F-1 if s/he has maintained lawful non-immigrant status up to the time of application. A person in J-1 status may apply for a change of status within the US **only if not subject to the 2-year home residency requirement**. F-2 to F-1 changes of status **cannot study full time** until the USCIS approves change of status request.

STEP 1: Obtain a Change of Status I-20 or DS-2019

1. Complete the Change of Status form on our website (www.ou.edu/cis/iss) under **Forms**, then click **Change of Status**.
2. We will review your documents and prepare a Change of Status I-20 or DS-2019 for you in 5 to 10 business (working) days.
3. We will email you when your I-20 or DS-2019 is ready to be picked up.
4. When you receive your I-20, sign it and include a copy of the signed original I-20 or DS-2019 with your Change of Status application.

STEP 2: Pay your SEVIS I-901 fee

Change of status applicants changing to F-1 or J-1 with an "initial attendance" I-20 or DS-2019 must pay a one-time SEVIS I-901 fee. The fee can be paid online at www.fmjfee.com after issuance of a new I-20 or DS-2019. Print 2 copies of your payment confirmation. Include one with your application and keep one for yourself.

STEP 3: Prepare your application to USCIS

1. Complete I-539 form – **filing online is faster and easier, but you can file a paper application instead**
 - In Part 1., enter the address where you would like your documents to be sent. You may use the OU ISS address if you would like your documents to be sent directly to our office.
 - Part 2. #1. Choose "b." and indicate the status you are requesting (F-1, F-2, J-1, or J-2)
 - Part 3. #1. Enter "**D/S**" for **Duration of Status**.
 - Part 4 must include a foreign address.
2. Write a letter of explanation for the USCIS, explaining why you need to change status, and why you entered the US in one status and now wish to change to a new status. Include why a denial of the status change would cause hardship. This is a required part of the application.
3. Gather the required information following the appropriate checklist on the back of this page. The application must be mailed to the appropriate USCIS Service Center for adjudication. Visit the USCIS website at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-539> for the proper mailing address. **We recommend you make a copy of your entire application to the USCIS and keep it for your records.**
5. USCIS will send a receipt notice to the address you indicated on your application. If you move while your change of status is pending:
 - Notify USCIS immediately at <https://egov.uscis.gov/coa/displayCOAForm.do>
 - Notify OU ISS
6. If the change of status is approved, you will receive a new I-94 card at the bottom of your Approval Notice from USCIS.
7. **If the USCIS sends the approval documents to your home address, you MUST bring your new documents to OU ISS within 10 days to allow us to register your change of status in SEVIS. Failure to do so will result in a termination of your new visa status.**

REMEMBER: The USCIS can take 10-14 months to process a change of status application. **OU ISS will not support change of status applications less than 3 months prior to a new program start date.**

If you wish to start a program in less than 10 months in your new status, we recommend that you do the following:

- Exit the US with the new I-20 or DS-2019, successfully complete a consular interview, and reenter the US in your new status. **For F-1 and J-1 visas, you CANNOT return to the US in your new status more than 30 days prior to your program start date.** This is a US immigration regulation.
- Plan for a later program start date.

Change of Status From:

F-2 to F-1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed I-539 form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check or money order for \$370 payable to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OR complete Form G-1450 for credit card payment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of payment of the SEVIS fee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support letter from applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of original Change of Status I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of current I-20s for both F-1 and F-2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94 and visa page for F-1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94 and visa page for F-2
<input type="checkbox"/>	admission letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of sufficient financial support in USD\$ accompanied by English translation, if applicable
<i>Important to note:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No on-campus employment until F-1 is approved. • No full time enrollment or study until F-1 is approved. 	

H-4 to F-1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed I-539 form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check or money order for \$370 payable to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OR complete Form G-1450 for credit card payment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of payment of the SEVIS fee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support letter from applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of original Change of Status I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of I-797 approval notices for both H-1B and H-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94 and visa page for H-1B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94 and visa page for H-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	admission letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of sufficient financial support in USD\$ accompanied by English translation, if applicable
<i>Important to note:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No on-campus employment until F-1 is approved. 	

H-1B to F-1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed I-539 form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check or money order for \$370 payable to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OR complete Form G-1450 for credit card payment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of payment of the SEVIS fee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support letter from applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of original Change of Status I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport and visa page for H-1B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of I-797 verifying H-1B status
<input type="checkbox"/>	admission letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of sufficient financial support in USD\$ accompanied by English translation, if applicable
<i>Important to note:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No on-campus employment until F-1 is approved. 	

F-1 to F-2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed I-539 form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check or money order for \$370 payable to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OR complete Form G-1450 for credit card payment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support letter from applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of original Change of Status I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of all current I-20 forms for both F-1s
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94 and visa page for both F-1s
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of family relationship (copies of marriage license, birth certificate/s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of sufficient financial support in USD\$ accompanied by English translation, if applicable
<i>Important to note:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No SEVIS fee required. • Must maintain full-time enrollment until change of status is approved. • On-campus employment must cease when F-2 is approved. 	

H-1B or H-4 to F-2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed I-539 form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check or money order for \$370 payable to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OR complete Form G-1450 for credit card payment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support letter from applicant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of original Change of Status I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of all current I-797 approval notices for H-1B or H-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of current F-1 I-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94, and visa page for F-1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of passport, I-94, and visa page for H-1B or H-4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of family relationship (copies of marriage license, birth certificate/s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of sufficient financial support in USD\$ accompanied by English translation, if applicable
<i>Important to note:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No SEVIS fee required. • H-1B recommended to maintain full-time employment until change of status is approved. • NO on-campus employment in any case! 	

Disclaimer: OU International Student Services is able to provide you with general guidance on maintaining your student visa status. However, any advice provided to you by our office, as well as the information in this packet, should not be construed as legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, USCIS may change its interpretation of these immigration regulations and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time. We will do our best to provide you with the most current guidance. Each case is fact-specific, and it is advised that you contact an experienced immigration attorney if any detail of your situation/application is unclear or complicated.