

**I WANT TO CHANGE MY IMMIGRATION STATUS TO F-1/F-2. HOW DO I APPLY?** Please schedule an appointment with an international student advisor to determine whether or not you are eligible to file for a change of status in the United States. Some general guidelines are listed below:

- You must be maintaining your current status in order to change to F-1/F-2.
- If you are a child dependent in H-4, E-1, E-2, L-2, etc. status, you are required to submit a change of status application to F-1 before your 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.
- If you are currently in B-1/B-2 status, you cannot attend school legally without first being approved for a change of status to F-1. Unless you have prospective student indicated on your visa or I-94 card, it is extremely difficult to change your status in the United States. We recommend that you return home and apply for F-1 status at the United States Consulate with your UCR initial attendance I-20 Form.
- If you are currently in F-2 status, you cannot attend school full time without first being approved for a change of status to F-1.
- If you are currently in J-1/J-2 status, please consult an advisor at the ISRC for further guidance.

### **HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO FILE A CHANGE OF STATUS TO F-1/F-2?**

Currently, it takes approximately 90 days for a Change of Status application to be adjudicated by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) California Service Center. The process takes longer if USCIS requests further evidence on your case after it has already been submitted. The USCIS California Service Center often requests further evidence.

### **I PAY RESIDENT TUITION FEES WITH MY CURRENT IMMIGRATION STATUS. WILL I HAVE TO PAY NON-RESIDENT TUITION FEES IF I CHANGE MY STATUS TO F-1?**

Yes, once you are approved for a change of status to F-1, you must pay non-resident tuition fees. For more information regarding fees for tuition purposes, please contact the Office of the Registrar.

### **CAN THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER ASSIST ME WITH A CHANGE OF STATUS APPLICATION?**

We can assist you in the following ways:

- Providing this information
- Issuing an I-20 Form for your change of status to F-1 upon submission of the appropriate supporting documents. Please see our Certificate of Eligibility/I-20 Request Form.
- Providing you with a list of documents required for a Change of Status application (see the next page)
- Reviewing your completed Change of Status application before you send it to USCIS. *Please note that although we are happy to review your paperwork, the final decision regarding what is sent is yours. You are responsible for the completed application and for filing the application in a timely manner. You also have the option of hiring an immigration attorney to file your change of status request.*

**WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED IN ORDER TO FILE FOR A CHANGE OF STATUS TO F-1 or F-2?** Generally, USCIS likes to see the documents listed below submitted with a change of status application. This list is not exhaustive. The immigration officer adjudicating your case reserves the right to ask for additional information.

Everyone should submit the following:

- **A completed I-539 Form or ELIS application.** The paper can be downloaded from the following website <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf>. If you wish to apply online via ELIS, you will first need to create an account at <https://elis.uscis.dhs.gov/>.
- **Paid SEVIS receipt for change of status to F-1** (Pay SEVIS fee at [www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com) ) No SEVIS fee required for dependents.
- **Fee of \$290;** Paper applications should include a check or money order made payable to “Department of Homeland Security.” ELIS users may pay via credit card or electronic check.
- **A short letter requesting the change of status.** The letter should include an overview of your time spent in the U.S. in your current status and why you wish to change your status to F-1 or F-2.
- **Copy of your form I-20** (and any previous I-20 forms if changing from F-1 to F-2 or F-2 to F-1)
- **Financial Support Documentation** (A bank letter from your bank or a letter from your department indicating your total amount of financial support). Individuals who are sponsored by parents or other individuals must also submit a Confidential Financial Statement (CFS). CFS Forms are available in our office.
- **Four (4) most recent bank statements**
- **Copy of your I-94 Card** (front and back of paper card or passport stamp and online print-out if you entered the U.S. via air or land after May 15, 2013) & **your principal's** (if applicable)
- **Copy of passport picture page with photo and passport validity dates & your principals** (if applicable)
- **Copy of visa in the passport & your principal's** (if applicable)
- **Proof of residence in your home country** (home country driver's license, property, residency cards etc.)
- **Copies of your UCR transcripts** (if you are a continuing student)

Additional information required in these circumstances:

#### Spouses & Children in F-2 Status

- Marriage certificate (for spouses only)
- Birth Certificate or equivalent (for children only)—this is sometimes requested
- Copy of principal's I-20 Form
- Proof of principal's status (good standing letter)

#### Spouses & Children in L-2, H-4, E-2 etc.

- Marriage Certificate (for spouses only)
- Proof of principal's status (Copy of principal's last three pay stubs, most recent W-2 Form and a letter from the employer confirming current employment).

#### Individuals in J-1/J-2 Status

- Please consult an advisor at the International Student Resource Center for guidance. You may schedule an appointment by calling 951.827.4113.

### **Helpful Hints**

- Provide Certified Translations of items that are not in English. The translator must certify that the translation is true and correct, and sign and date the translated document.
- If submitting a paper application:
  - Place tabs at the bottom of your paperwork and/or include a cover page listing outlining your documents so that the immigration officer adjudicating your case can easily navigate the paperwork.
  - Keep a copy of your application before you send it.
  - Mail your package using a tracking service so you may confirm the package has been delivered.

- If submitting your application via ELIS:
  - Write down your log in credentials in a safe place after creating your account. If you forget your username or password, you may have difficulty logging back in to your account.
  - Make sure to save each page before moving forward in the application. If you wait to save your application until the end, it will only save the current page you are working on and your previous information will be lost.
  - Supporting documents are submitted as scanned PDF files. Make sure to scan each document page separately and save it as an individual file. Use clear titles, such as “I-20 page 1”
  - You are only given a few categories in which to upload documents. Although your document may not “fit” exactly into one of the categories, do your best to place it in the category that seems most appropriate.
  - Order two transcripts rather than one. Ask your International Student Advisor to open one of the transcripts and stamp it for you before you scan it. Keep the other transcript sealed in case you receive a request for the original.

**WHAT DO I DO AFTER I HAVE GATHERED ALL THE INFORMATION OR ENTERED AND UPLOADED ALL DOCUMENTS INTO ELIS?**

Make an appointment for a review of your change of status application with an advisor at the ISRC. If using the paper form, bring all documents with you. If using ELIS, bring your PDF print out and list of uploaded documents with you.

If you are working with a lawyer, simply provide them with your I-20 Form. They will tell you what other documents are required.

**HOW DO I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION TO USCIS?**

At the current time, all paper I-539s are being mailed to the USCIS Dallas Lockbox. The address is:

<p><u>Certified Mail:</u>          USCIS          PO Box 660867          Dallas, TX 75266</p>	<p><u>Express Mail:</u>          USCIS          ATTN: AOS          2501 S. State Highway, 121 Business          Suite 400          Lewisville, TX 75067</p>
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It is important to verify that this is the current address of where to send your paper application, as filing addresses may frequently be updated. You may verify the address in the instructions of the I-539 application on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or by asking your International Student Advisor.

**IS THERE ANY WAY TO TRACK THE PROGRESS OF MY APPLICATION?**

Yes, once you submit an application, USCIS will send you a receipt notice confirming that they have received your application. On your receipt notice, there will be a number assigned to your case. This number is referred to as a WAC #. You can use this WAC # to track the status of your application online at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).