

ATTAINING F-1 STATUS:

How to Apply for a Change of Status

If you are currently in the U.S. on a nonimmigrant visa, you may be eligible to apply for a change of status to become an F-1 student. For the most current, accurate, and detailed information on how to apply for a change of status, visit [here](#).

STEP 1: DETERMINE IF A CHANGE OF STATUS IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Questions to consider before applying for a change of status:

1. Which nonimmigrant visa are you on?
Those in K, S, and M-1 status are not eligible to change status to F-1. J-1 nonimmigrants subject to the 2-year residence requirement are also ineligible.
2. Are you currently in lawful nonimmigrant status?
You must be lawfully maintaining your current visa status to apply for a change of status.
3. If you are in dependent status, is the principal visa holder maintaining status?
If you are in status as a dependent, the principal visa holder must also be maintaining status. For instance, if you are in H-4 status, the H-1B visa holder must be currently employed and maintaining H-1B status.
4. What is the expiration date on your I-94?
Ideally, you should apply for a change of status sufficiently in advance of the expiration date on your I-94.
5. What is your date of birth?
Child dependents can only remain in dependent status until age 21. If you will turn 21 before your change of status is approved, it is highly advisable to travel outside the U.S. to obtain F-1 status. For details on how to apply for an F-1 visa while outside the U.S., see [How to Apply for an F-1 Visa](#).
6. Are you planning to travel outside the U.S.?
If you are already planning to travel outside the U.S., you may consider applying for an F-1 visa at a U.S. consulate outside the U.S., and then reentering in F-1 status. For more details, see [How to Apply for an F-1 Visa](#).

STEP 2: APPLY TO ACC TO OBTAIN A FORM I-20

To obtain a Form I-20, you will first need to [apply to ACC as an international student](#).

A complete [application packet](#) will include:

- International Student Application
- \$75 Application Fee
- Proof of English Language Proficiency
- International Student Financial Statement
- Proof of Financial Resources
- Proof of High School (Secondary) Graduation
- Photocopy of Passport Identification Page
- Emergency Contact Information

After ACC receives a complete and acceptable application packet, you will be admitted to ACC as an international student and issued a Form I-20.

STEP 3: COMPILE YOUR CHANGE OF STATUS APPLICATION

A complete change of status application will include the following:

- [Form I-539](#)
- Form I-539 filing fee, in the form of a check or money order, payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
- Photocopy of Form I-20 signed by both student and DSO
- Proof of payment of the SEVIS I-901 fee (see [here](#) for details)
- Photocopies of financial support documents
- Photocopy of Form I-94 (both sides of cardstock I-94 or copy of electronic I-94 printout)
- Photocopy of passport biographical and expiration date information
- Proof of current immigration status including:
 - Photocopy of I-797 approval notice
 - Photocopy of visa
 - If in H-1B status, copy of employment letter and/or pay stubs
 - The above documents of the principal, if you are currently in status as a dependent
- Dependent family member documentation (if applicable)
- Letter explaining your intent to study (optional; recommended for B-1/B-2 visa holders)
- Photocopy of school admission letter or, if already enrolled, academic transcript (optional)
- [Form G-1145](#), clipped to the first page of your application packet (optional; if you would like to receive an email or a text message that your application has been received by USCIS)

STEP 4: SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO USCIS

- Have your advisor review your application for accuracy (if you want).
- Make a photocopy of your completed application to keep for your records.
- If filing by paper, mail the package to the [correct USCIS filing address](#). If in Colorado, those addresses are:

U.S. Postal Service:

USCIS California Service Center
P.O. Box 10129
Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-1012

USPS Express Mail/Courier:

USCIS California Service Center
24000 Avila Road, 2nd Floor, Room 2312
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

- Ask the post office for delivery confirmation.
- Or, if filing electronically, scan documents and submit online via [USCIS ELIS](#).

STEP 5: WAIT FOR YOUR CHANGE OF STATUS TO BE APPROVED

View current processing times for changes of status [here](#).

If you are currently in F-2 or B-1/B-2 status, you must wait to begin classes until your change of status is approved. Otherwise, you should begin classes by the program start date listed on your Form I-20, even if your change of status is still pending.

If you have additional questions, please contact your advisor.