

CHANGE OF STATUS FROM OTHER VISAS TO F-1 STATUS

OVERVIEW

A change of status is a change in a non-immigrant's primary purpose for being in the United States. A student who is admitted/enrolled at EKU or a spouse of an EKU F-1 student, who is already present in the United States in a valid non-immigration status, may apply to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a change of status to F-1 student status. To change your current immigration status to F-1 student status, you can either:

- A. Travel outside the U.S., apply at a U.S. consulate for F-1 visa type, and re-enter the U.S. in the new status or
- B. Request a change of status within the U.S. by sending an application to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

OPTION 1: TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S., APPLY FOR F-1 VISA AND RE-ENTER THE U.S.

You may obtain your F-1 status by traveling abroad, applying for a new visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate, and re-entering the U.S. with the new visa. We recommend that you apply for a visa in your home country. If you would like to apply for a visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate outside of your home country, contact that specific embassy or consulate to make sure they process third-country nationals and the required documentation.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The process is usually faster than changing your status inside the U.S. ➤ Provides you the immigration status and the F-1 visa, which allows to travel in and out of the U.S. ➤ If you re-enter in F-1 status, you are entitled to the benefits of this status immediately, including on-campus employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More expensive due to travel costs. ➤ Possibility of visa processing delays due to security checks. ➤ You cannot re-enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the program start date on your I-20. ➤ Visa denial could prevent your return to the U.S.

PROCEDURE

To use this option, follow these steps:

1. Submit "I-20 Request Form" and supporting document— from the last page of this guide. OISSS will issue an initial Form I-20 after reviewing these documents.
2. Pick up your new F-1 student Form I-20, review it, sign and date it on page 1 where indicated.
3. Travel outside the U.S.
4. Apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. embassy/consulate. Be aware application for the new visa may involve security clearance and could delay your visa issuance.
5. Re-enter the U.S. in new visa status with the new I-20. **Please note**, you may not re-enter the U.S. more than **30 days before** the program start date indicated on your I-20.
6. Report to OISSS upon your return to EKU and bring your passport, I-94 (available from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>) and I-20. Failure to do so in timely manner may result in cancellation of your SEVIS record.

OPTION 2: APPLY FOR CHANGE OF STATUS WITHIN THE U.S.

This option allows you to apply for a change of status to the USCIS while remaining in the U.S. Please apply as soon as you determine that you need to change to a different non-immigrant category. If USCIS denies your application, be prepared to leave the United States when your current status expires.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Less expensive (you have to pay \$200 SEVIS fee and \$370 application fee, but no travel cost)➤ Ability to stay in the U.S. during processing➤ You can begin or continue studying if your current status allows it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Processing can take a long time (10-14 months). As F-2 dependent you may only enroll part-time while your application is pending.➤ It only changes your status in the U.S. If you travel outside the U.S., you must apply for a new visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate before you can return.➤ You must stay in the U.S. during processing; leaving the U.S. will cancel the application.➤ Your application may be denied, which could require you to quickly depart the U.S.

ELIGIBILITY

In general, you are eligible to apply for a change of status inside the U.S. if:

- Your current non-immigrant status remains valid.
- You meet requirement to be F-1 dependent.
- Your current status does not prohibit change of status in the U.S. See restrictions below.

RESTRICTIONS TO CHANGE OF STATUS

The following individuals are ineligible to apply for change of status inside the U.S.:

- Individuals in J status who are subject to the 212 (e) two-year home-country residency requirement.
- Persons who admitted under the Visa Waiver Program (WT or WB).
- Persons who hold C, D, or K status cannot change nonimmigrant status.
- A vocational student in M status cannot change to F status.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Before you apply for a change of status, please consider the following important information:

1. **Application Processing Time:** The USCIS processing time for a change of status applications is currently 10-14 months. Therefore, EKU OISSS will not support a change of status application within the U.S. if your current immigration status is expiring in less than 10 months. We recommend that you travel abroad, apply for the new visa, and return to the U.S. in the new visa status.
2. **Maintaining Your Current Status:** USCIS expects you to be maintaining your current F-2 non-immigrant status until your change of status to F-1 is approved. Failure to maintain status could lead to denial of your change of status application.
3. **Program Start Date Deferral:** If your change of status to F-1 is not approved by the program start date on your I-20, the OISSS must defer it to a future date to avoid SEVIS automatic termination of the record.

PROCEDURE

To file for change of status within the U.S., submit to USCIS the following documents:

1. Check or money order of \$370 made payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” or completed Form G-1450 available from <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450> for credit card payment.
2. Form G-1145 available from <http://www.uscis.gov/g-1145>.
3. Form I-539 available from <http://www.uscis.gov/i-539>.
4. A letter from you, requesting the change of status and explaining why you want to change status.
5. Financial document (such as 4 months’ bank statements or scholarship letter)
6. Photocopy of your **new F-1 Student Form I-20** issued by OISSS.
7. Photocopies of your Current Immigration Documents:
 - a) Form I-797, Notice of Actions (if applicable)
 - b) Valid passport biographical page
 - c) Current visa (if any) (except for Canadians and Bermudians)
 - d) I-94 printout available from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/> or paper card (front & back)
8. Photocopies of your Spouse or Parent’s Current Immigration Documents if you are on a dependent visa:
 - a) Valid passport biographical page
 - b) Current visa (if any) (except for visa-exempt citizens of Canada and Bermuda)
 - c) I-94 printout available from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/> or paper card (front & back)
 - d) Proof of maintaining status such as a letter from employer or official transcripts
9. Evidence of financial support (such as a 3 month’s bank statements or scholarship letter, not older than 6 months) showing availability of at least \$33,706 for undergraduate or \$29,482 for graduate, plus \$4,500 for a spouse and \$3,000 for each child included on your application.

Note: *If you have dependents who are changing status with you, submit copies of their passports, visas, and I-94s.*

Make photocopies of all the documents for your record.

Mailing Address: Mail your complete application packet to one of the following USCIS mailing addresses:

U.S. Postal Service USCIS P.O. Box 660166 Dallas, TX 7526	By USPS Express Mail (and UPS, FedEx, etc.): USCIS ATTN: I-539 2501 S. State Highway 121 Business, Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067
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I-20 REQUEST FORM – FOR CHANGE OF STATUS FROM F-2 TO F-1

I am requesting I-20 for (choose one):

- Traveling outside the U.S., applying for F-1 visa and re-entering the U.S. with the new visa
- Change of status inside the U.S.

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Family Name: _____ First & Middle Name: _____

EKU ID# (if any): _____ Gender: Male Female Date of Birth: _____

Country of Birth: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____

U.S. Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

YOUR F-1 SPOUSE PERSONAL INFORMATION

Family Name: _____ First & Middle Name: _____

EKU ID#: _____ Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Country of Birth: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____

DEPENDENTS (Include only dependents that are currently under you as F-2 students)

Family Name	First & Middle Name	Date of Birth	Country of Birth	Country of Citizenship	Relationship: spouse/child

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: Please submit to the OISSS the following documents:

1. Financial documents (i.e. bank statements or scholarship letter) not older than 6 months showing you have at least \$33,706 for undergraduate or \$29,482 for graduate. Add \$4,500 for spouse and \$3,000 for each child.
2. Copies of your current immigration documents: I-20, passport ID page, I-94, F-2 visa and of any dependent.

I certify that I have read and understand all change of status regulations and policies stated above.

Signature: _____ Date: _____