

Reinstatement of Status

Regulations: If you have not maintained your student status requirements set forth by Department of Homeland security regulations (i.e. not being enrolled during a required academic term, not completing the required number of hours to be considered full-time, not satisfactorily completing your degree within the maximum allotted time, failing to extend your I-20 before the document expires), then you are required to apply for a reinstatement of your student status. This is necessary for you to regain F-1 benefits lost with violation of status, such as Curricular Practical Training or Optional Practical Training. Being in violation of status will also affect your opportunity to transfer to another school.

To be reinstated, you must establish to the satisfaction of the USCIS that either, the violation resulted from circumstances beyond your control or that failure to reinstate to lawful F-1 status will result in extreme hardship to you.

You must continue to maintain your status while your application is pending. (i.e. attending classes as scheduled etc.)

Average Processing Time: 3 months but can take much longer.

Personal Letter

A personal letter needs to include the following:

1. Name, country of residence, major, and degree that you are seeking;
2. Statement that clarifies the period of time of your violation and the circumstances contributing to your loss of status;
3. Statement which demonstrates the problem(s) contributing to your loss of status has/have been corrected;
4. Statement indicating that if your status is reinstated, you will maintain your full-time enrollment through the expected date of completion;
5. Statement indicating how a denial of status will result in extreme hardship if you are required to return to your country without completing your educational objective.

Supporting Documentation

This evidence should support your reason(s) given for violation of status as well as proof that the situation has been corrected. This can include:

1. Letter of support from your academic department (should also state your expected graduation date)
2. Plan of study from your academic advisor
3. School transcript
4. Letter from your medical doctor or health care professional (if appropriate)

Updated Financial Documentation

Provide valid financial documentation demonstrating your ability to cover tuition, fees, and basic living expenses while continuing your full-time enrollment. This can include:

1. An assistantship/fellowship offer letter valid for remainder of program,
2. Bank statement(s) dated within the last month. The statement(s) should be at least \$21,500 for *Graduate Programs*

Complete Form I-539, Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status

Find the form at www.uscis.gov/i-539.

I-539 Application Fee

\$370 check or money order made out to U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

I-901 SEVIS Fee, if applicable

Must pay \$350 SEVIS fee if you have been out of status for more than 5 months. Pay fee at <http://www.fmjfee.com> with a credit card during your appointment.

The following documents should also be brought to the appointment:

I-20

Passport (*valid 6 months from the time of appointment*)

F-1 Visa

I-94 (*Copy of original or for an electronic copy go to www.cbp.gov/i94*)

- Please note this application is a request and does not entitle you to any guarantee of benefits including legal presence, curricular practical training (CPT), or optional practical training (OPT).
- You may accumulate illegal presence: <https://www.uscis.gov/legal-resources/unlawful-presence-and-bars-admissibility>.
- If you have questions please seek the advice of a licensed immigration attorney.