

Students must complete and submit the following information with the IPS office to apply for a change of status. Once the application is completed and sent to the USCIS office, it can take 3-5 months to get approval of your change of status. There is nothing the IPS office can do to expedite the process, so while the application is pending you must continue to follow the rules of your current status. Make sure to consider the long processing time when you are making your academic plans. (USCIS does not accept any incomplete, inaccurate or false documentation, and in such cases have denied the change of visa status applications.)

**Checklist:**

- Current SEVIS I-20.
- I-539 Form (Go to <http://www.uscis.gov/>).
- I-539 Fee of \$200.
- Letter from the student requesting the change of status. The letter should include:
  - when the student came to the United States,
  - when the student applied for admission,
  - which degree program the student is pursuing,
  - who will sponsor the student,
  - a statement that the student is aware of F-1 visa rules and regulations.
- All immigration documents: I-94, valid and unexpired passport and visa.  
(If J-1, copy of DS-2019; if H-1, copy of H-1 visa approval Notice of Action I-797)
- Declaration and Certification of Finances Form, including all supporting financial documents. Bank statements, sponsor letters, and employment letters must be enclosed.
- If the student has dependents (spouse and children), the supplemental section of the I-539 should be completed with photocopies of dependents I-20 or DS-2019, passport, visa, and I-94.
- The advisor will issue an I-20 stating **Pending Change of Status**. This I-20 will be sent to USCIS along with copies or originals of other documents listed above.
- If changing to F-1, Proof of payment of [SEVIS](#) fee.

Students must maintain their health insurance while their change of status is pending. F-2 students changing to F-1 will need to purchase insurance when they enroll for classes.

While your change of status is being processed, you can not travel outside the United States. If you do, your change of status will be automatically canceled.