

Checklist for Changing to F-1 Student Status from within the U.S.

Who is eligible?

In general, you are eligible to apply for a change of status if you meet the following criteria:

1. You were lawfully admitted to the U.S. as a nonimmigrant;
2. You have lawful nonimmigrant status;
3. There is no other factor that requires you to depart the U.S.; and
4. You submit an application for a change of status before the expiration date on your I-94.

However, following are examples of individuals who are *ineligible* for a change of status from within the U.S.:

- J Exchange Visitors who are subject to the 212(e) two-year home residency requirement, with certain exceptions
- M Vocational Students
- Individuals who entered the U.S. on the Visa Waiver Program
- Individuals who are “out of status,” meaning their status has already expired or they have otherwise violated the terms of their status (e.g., working without authorization)

How to change your status

To change your visa status within the U.S., you must submit the following documents to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS):

- ✓ Form I-539 completed by the student; this form is available online at www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf
- ✓ Personal check or money order for \$290.00, made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- ✓ Photocopy of both sides of your I-94 card, as well as copies of the I-94 cards for any dependents changing status with you
- ✓ Letter, signed and dated by the student, explaining why you are requesting a change of status
- ✓ All 3 pages of the change of status I-20 from MSU Denver, signed at the bottom of page 1; enclose one additional photocopy
- ✓ Photocopies of your valid passport identity page, U.S. visa stamps, and DS2019 (if applicable); *do not* send your passport
- ✓ Financial support documentation for your continued stay; we recommend using Form I-134, Affidavit of Support, found online at <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-134.pdf>
- ✓ Receipt of payment of the I-901 SEVIS fee, payable online at www.fmjfee.com; a receipt can be printed after payment is made. (You must be issued an I-20 by MSU Denver before the I-901 payment can be made.)

Once you have all of the required documentation, make a copy of all documents for your records and then mail the complete package to one of the addresses below. We recommend that you request a “return receipt” to confirm the arrival of your documents.

For U.S. Postal Service deliveries:

USCIS
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266

For Express mail and commercial courier deliveries:

USCIS
ATTN: I-539
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business Ste 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

Important Notes

- Individuals currently on the F-2, B-1 or B-2 visa must wait until their change of status request is approved by the USCIS before beginning any studies. If your change of status is not approved before the start of the semester you would like to begin studying, please contact the International Admissions Counselor to discuss your options.
- You are not eligible for any F-1 benefits (e.g., on-campus work) until your change of status is approved.
- If you leave the U.S. while your change of status application is pending, the USCIS will consider your application abandoned and will no longer review your application.
- Note that MSU Denver advisors are assisting you with your application in an advisory role only. We cannot and do not guarantee that your application will be approved by the USCIS.