



Western Oregon University Change of Visa Status

Eligibility:

Non-immigrants in the US may apply to change their visa status to another status type if they have fully maintained their non-immigrant status and are able to maintain status throughout the duration of the application process. Exceptions to eligibility include the following status types: C, D, K, or M (and in some cases J). Individuals who entered the United States under the terms of the Visa-Waiver Pilot Program can apply for a change to F-1 status if s/he has maintained lawful non-immigrant status up to the time of application.

A person in J status may apply for a change of status only if they are not subject to the 2-year home country physical presence requirement (INA § 212(e)), or if they have successfully applied for the requirement to be waived.

A person in F-2 status (spouse or child of an F-1 student) wishing to engage in a degree program on a full-time basis must apply for a Change of Status to F-1 status and be granted the F-1 status prior to enrolling in full-time classes. F-2 spouses are permitted to engage in part-time “vocational or recreational” study only. F-2 children may attend full-time at the elementary and secondary level of schooling only.

Procedures Checklist:

1. Gather the following information and complete all required forms.
 - Letter** to USCIS explaining why you want to change your status. The letter should explain why you did not originally enter the United States in the status for which you are applying. A change of circumstances or intention must be documented or explained to make the application acceptable.
 - Completed **Form I-539**. Be sure to explain your answer to 3g in Part 4. Find Form I-539 at the USCIS Web site: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf>
Find instructions for Form I-539 at: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539instr.pdf>
 - The **new initial I-20** from the school where you will study (if you are changing to F-1 status)
 - Copies of your valid **passport** (page with photo and expiration date, page with Visa and stamps) and all previous **immigration documents** (I-20 or DS-2019).
 - Proof of having paid the **SEVIS I-901 fee**.
 - A **check or money order** in the amount of \$290 payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”.
 - Evidence of **financial support** (e.g. copy of bank statement).
 - Original **Form I-94**, Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Record.
 - J-1 students need a copy of **home residency waiver**, (See paragraph 2 above).

- Pink copy of DS-2019 and I-94 card of principal J-1 (if changing from J-1 to J-2).
 - Copies of I-20 and I-94 card of principal F-1 (if changing from F-1 to F-2).
 - Proof of family relationship to F-1 or J-1 principal (i.e. marriage license).
2. After you have gathered all materials above, set up an appointment to meet with an advisor at the International Students & Scholars Affairs office. Bring all of the materials with you AND your original passport and immigration documents.
 3. The International Student Advisor will review the materials and ask you to sign the immigration document if applicable to your change of status.
 4. Carefully review the instructions for filling PDF whenever mailing documents:
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539instr.pdf>

Most applicants may mail documents by U.S. Postal Service to:

USCIS
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266

Or, mail documents by Express services to:

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

5. If your application is complete, the USCIS office will mail you a receipt notice within 30 days. If your application is not complete, the USCIS office will mail you a request for more information. If your change of status is approved, USCIS will mail you the new immigration document and a new I-94 card indicating your new status. The entire process may take up to four months for processing so apply in a timely manner.
6. **After you receive approval, please bring your new immigration documents to the International Students & Scholars Affairs office so that we can make copies for your file.** ISSA will keep a complete copy of your application on file.