

Change of Status Guidance

To change your nonimmigrant visa type, you can either:

- a) Travel outside the U.S., apply at a U.S. consulate for the new 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 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Below, we have outlined the procedure for requesting a change of status from a B visa to an F-1 visa. However, this is only a courtesy and should not be taken as legal advice. The most up-to-date and complete change of status information is available on the [USCIS website](#). A good starting place is [this USCIS flier](#).

If you wish to pursue a change of status, it is highly recommended that you hire a lawyer. Again, the advice below is intended only as a courtesy and not as legal advice.

Change of Status from a B Visa to an F-1 Visa

To apply for a change of status from a B visitor visa to an F-1 student visa from within the U.S., these are the general steps:

1. Apply and be accepted to a U.S. university, which will then issue your Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status."
2. Complete Form I-539, "Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status." You may download the form from uscis.gov/i-539. *Be sure to complete all parts of the form that apply to changing your visa status.*
3. Pay the application fee and biometric services fee in the amounts listed at uscis.gov/i-539. You may pay with a money order, personal check, or cashier's check made payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or with a credit card using Form G-1450.
4. Gather your original I-20 (NOT a copy).
5. If applicable, gather photocopies of your spouse's immigration documents:
 - Passport ID page
 - F-1 visa
 - I-20 (all three pages; should also include the financial support offered to you as a dependent)
 - I-94 printed out from (print at i94.cbp.dhs.gov)

Once you have compiled the items listed above, you will mail the items to USCIS. This process may take approximately one to three months.

For more information, visit the [Change My Nonimmigrant Status](#) page on the USCIS website, visit uscis.gov, or call the USCIS Contact Center at 1-800-375-5283.