

Reinstatement to F-1 Status

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Definition

A student who has violated their immigration status and whose status was terminated as a result of that violation may be reinstated to lawful F-1 status at the discretion of an USCIS district director, but only under the limited conditions specified at 8 CFR 214.2(f)(16). The USCIS district director may consider reinstating an F-1 student who makes a request for reinstatement on Form I-539 accompanied by a properly completed Form I-20 indicating the Designated School Official (DSO)'s recommendation for reinstatement. The district director may consider granting the request if the student:

- Has not been out of status for more than 5 months at the time of filing the request for reinstatement (or demonstrates that the failure to file within the 5 month period was the result of exceptional circumstances and that the student filed the request for reinstatement as promptly as possible under these exceptional circumstances).
- Does not have a record of repeated or willful violations of Service regulations;
- Is currently pursuing, or intending to pursue, a full course of study in the immediate future at the school which issued the form I-20;
- Has not engaged in unauthorized employment; and
- Is not deportable on any ground other than section 237(a)(1)(B) or (C)(i) of the Act; and
- Establishes to the satisfaction of the Service by a detailed showing, either that:
 - The violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond the student's control. Such circumstances might include serious injury or illness, closure of the institution, a natural disaster; or
 - The violation related to a reduction in the student's course load that would have been within a DSO's power to authorize and that failure to approve reinstatement would result in extreme hardship to the student.

Procedures

You will need to submit the following documents to apply for reinstatement to F-1 status:

- **Copy of your entire Form I-20** issued for applying for reinstatement purpose (sign Item #11 on the form before making a copy)

- **Copy of paper or print-out of electronic [Form I-94](#) [1] (please click on the link for instructions) and copy of your dependent(s) if applicable**
- Complete USCIS Form I-539 [Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status](#) [2] and submit the appropriate fee. If you write a personal check, your address and phone number should appear on the check. You may also pay the fee with a money order or a cashier's check.
- If you have been out of status for more than 5 months, you must pay the [SEVIS fee](#) [3] and submit the fee receipt
- Copies of all of your immigration documents including valid passport, all U.S. visa stamps, and previous I-20's
- A cover letter explaining the circumstances that led to the violation and listing schools you have attended in the U.S. in chronological order
- Provide an official transcript sealed in the envelope and a letter from your department or academic advisor to verify that you are in good academic standing
- Submit documentation that demonstrates your ability to pay for your studies and support yourself while you are in the United States, such as a bank statement, or an offer letter from the department appointed as a GSI/GSRA.

Where to File

For U.S. Postal Service (including US Postal Service Express mail):

USCIS
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266

For express mail and courier deliveries (e.g., UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc):

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

We recommend that you write "Expedite I-539 Reinstatement Applications" on the outside of the envelope and make a copy of this application for your own record. You might want to consider sending your application by U.S. "certified mail with a returned receipt." Please note, if you move, USCIS mail will NOT be forwarded to your new address.

What Happens Next

- A receipt notice will be sent to you from California Service Center with a case number assigned. You may then use the case number to check the status of the application from [USCIS](#) [4] web site.
- If your application is denied, you may not appeal that decision and you must depart the U.S. immediately. The F-1 visa stamp in your passport becomes invalid immediately, even if the dates remain valid.

- If your application is approved, USCIS will send you your I-20 and Form I-797A. I-797A is your reinstatement approval notice. You may also receive either your original I-94 card back if you mailed in your original or you may receive a new I-94 card located at the bottom of Form I-797A. Please call the IC Front Desk to arrange a meeting with an international student advisor after you receive the above mentioned documents. Please make two sets of copies of the documents and bring both the original documents and the copies to your meeting with the advisor.

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/reinstate-status>

Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/i-94>

[2] <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539>

[3] <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901>

[4] <https://www.uscis.gov/>