



Change from F-1 to F-2 Status

This handout should only be used as a guide on how to apply for a change of status (COS) application from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If you have questions about applying for a change to F-2 status, we recommend that you consult with an experienced immigration attorney so s/he may review your COS application before submitting it to USCIS.

- Copy of **your new F-2 (Dependent) I-20 form** showing your spouse's name and information as the primary F-1 student
- Letter from **your spouse's school verifying** that spouse is maintaining F-1 status
- Copy of **your spouse's F-1 I-20 form**
- Copies of **your spouse's biographical passport page(s)** showing the validity date. Do not send their passport to USCIS.
- Copy of **your spouse's F-1 visa** or F-1 change of status (I-797) approval issued by USCIS
- Copy of **your spouse's I-94** record: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- Copy of **your Marriage Certificate** (must be a certified English translation)
- Letter from **your school verifying** that you are maintaining F-1 status
- Copy of **your F-1 I-20 form**
- Copies of your **biographical passport page(s)** showing the validity date. Do not send your passport to USCIS.
- Copy of **your F-1 visa** or F-1 change of status (I-797) approval notice issued by USCIS
- Copy of **your I-94 record**: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>
- Copies of **current financial documents** verifying that your spouse has adequate funds to cover his/her educational expenses as well as living expenses for both of you for at least one academic year. You may also download this form from the USCIS website linked above.
- Payment for the appropriate USCIS filing and biometric fees: www.uscis.gov/i-539
- A **completed I-539**. Complete the I-539 by mail or online. Printable forms for mailing can be found at: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539>. If you choose to file online, follow the instructions on myUSCIS (my.uscis.gov) to create accounts and complete the Form I-539. Make sure that the address you list in the application is valid for at least the next 6 months since USCIS will send their response back to the address listed on Form I-539, and when applicants move, USCIS does not forward mail.
- If completing application by mail (not online)* - money order(s) payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for the appropriate USCIS filing fee as well as the biometric fee. For the latest information, including the exact amounts, please visit USCIS link: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-539>

We advise that you apply for your COS online. You may do so here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i539online>. Talk to your ISS Advisor if you plan to apply via mail.

We recommend that you make a copy of your entire application for your own records. Expect to wait about several months or longer for a decision from USCIS. Government processing times vary depending on USCIS workload. **When you receive an answer from USCIS, please contact your ISS advisor immediately.** If approved, please provide ISS with copies of your I-797 approval notice.

USCIS requires all Form I-539 applicants and co-applicants to attend an appointment, where biometrics such as fingerprints will be collected. For more information on how to prepare for your **biometric service appointment**, please review link: <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/forms-information/preparing-your-biometric-services-appointment>. Biometrics appointments will be scheduled at USCIS Application Support Centers (ACS). To find ACS closest to you please use this link: <https://egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/asc>

If you need to travel internationally while USCIS is processing your COS application, please consult with an immigration attorney before making travel arrangements. **If you leave the U.S. before USCIS decides on your case, your COS application will be considered abandoned and USCIS could deny it on that basis.** If you travel outside of the U.S. after USCIS approves your COS application to F-2 student, you will need to obtain an F-2 visa in your passport from the U.S. Consulate abroad before you will be able to travel back to the U.S. Please consult with your ISS advisor for details.