

## Change of Immigration Status Information

The Change of Status (COS) application is an individual application which you submit directly to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The International Center can provide limited information about the process, but is unable to assist individuals with filing the change of status application or advise on complex cases. If you need more than basic information, please consult an immigration attorney. Below is information that will assist you in understanding the process. For the most updated information we recommend you go directly to the Department of Homeland Security website with information on changing to nonimmigrant student status.

In order to be eligible to change your status to F-1, you need to submit the request to USCIS before your status expires and before the start date of the term. Applicants in B-1/B-2 status cannot enroll in classes until the change of their status to F-1 is approved. As of May 29, 2015, applicants in F-2 status are allowed to enroll part-time only before the change of status to F-1 is approved.

Once in F-1 status, you must be enrolled full-time (12 credits) each semester and you cannot work without prior authorization.

Nonimmigrant visa holders in the following categories are not permitted to change to F-1 status from within the U.S. and must instead depart the U.S. and apply for the F-1 visa through Consular Processing:

- M-1 students
- C, D, and K nonimmigrants
- WT and WB visitors admitted under the Visa Waiver Program (ESTA)
- J-1 physicians admitted to receive graduate medical education or training
- J nonimmigrants subject to the 212(e) 2-year foreign residence requirement (unless you receive the Waiver)

### STEPS FOR APPLYING TO CHANGE YOUR STATUS TO F-1 WITHIN U.S.:

1. Check the USCIS website for information on the process.
2. Consult your immigration lawyer to verify if you are eligible for a change of status at this time.
3. If yes, apply and be admitted to a program at Bunker Hill Community College.
4. After you receive your I-20, pay the I-901 SEVIS fee at <https://www.fmjfee.com>.
5. Read the instructions on how to fill the Form I-539.
6. Consult your immigration lawyer regarding the completion of the I-539 form, and the list of supporting documents you should gather and submit with your application.

**International Center**  
bhcc.edu/internationalcenter  
international@bhcc.edu  
617-228-2460 | fax: 617-228-2442  
bhcc.edu

**Charlestown Campus** 250 New Rutherford Avenue, Boston, MA 02129  
617-228-2000 | TTY: 617-242-2365  
**Chelsea Campus** 70 Everett Avenue, Chelsea, MA 02150  
617-228-2101 | TTY: 617-884-3293  
**Satellite Locations** | East Boston | Malden | South End

## STEPS AFTER YOU SUBMIT YOUR CHANGE OF STATUS APPLICATION TO USCIS

1. Consult [international@bhcc.edu](mailto:international@bhcc.edu) for instructions on how to submit your Form I-797C (Receipt Notice) to the International Center.
2. Check the status of your application online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/> by entering your receipt number.
3. If you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE) notice from USCIS, indicating they want you to provide additional information, please contact your immigration lawyer for assistance so that you respond to the RFE by the deadline. Please email us to let us know you received an RFE.
4. If your application is not approved before the program start date stated on your I-20, contact the International Center to request a deferred program start date I-20, and contact your immigration lawyer for assistance.
5. When USCIS makes a decision on your application, they will post the decision online, send you a paper receipt and then a decision notice (Form I-797A, Notice of Action) by mail. Please inform the International Center immediately at [international@bhcc.edu](mailto:international@bhcc.edu). You will be provided instructions to submit your I-797A.

## IF YOU MOVE WHILE YOUR APPLICATION IS PENDING

If you change your mailing address, the postal service will not forward mail sent to you by USCIS.

Any changes to your address while your application is pending must be sent to the International Center at [international@bhcc.edu](mailto:international@bhcc.edu) and also at USCIS online at <http://www.uscis.gov/ar-11> or by mailing the Form AR-11 to the appropriate address.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about your pending application with USCIS, feel free to reach out to the USCIS Contact Center directly by dialing: 1-800-375-5283. If you have questions or concerns after you have received your I-20, please contact your immigration lawyer.

The International Center will process your application for admission to Bunker Hill Community College. Due to changes in the Change of Status processing, we are not able to assist directly with the change of status application.

We advise that you seek advice from an immigration lawyer. Please consult <http://www.ailalawyer.org> to search for an immigration attorney.

## HELPFUL LINKS

- Department of Homeland Security website: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/complete/change-of-status>
- USCIS website: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/changing-to-a-nonimmigrant-f-or-m-student-status>
- I-901 SEVIS fee payment website: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.htm>
- Form I-539 Instructions: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-539instr.pdf>
- USCIS "Checking Your Case Status Online:" <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/checking-your-case-status-online>
- AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card: <https://www.uscis.gov/ar-11>
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA): <https://www.aila.org>
- AILA Find an Immigration Lawyer Tool: <https://ailalawyer.com>