

## Change of Status: H-1B or H-4 to F-1 Student

To change your status while in the United States from an H-1B temporary specialty worker or H-4 worker dependent to an F-1 student, you will need to be admitted to a full-time academic program at a school that can issue a Form I-20. You must also be in the United States and in valid H-1B/H-4 status at the time you request this change.

### Valid Reason for Change

As an H-1B/H-4, you are able to attend school part-time or full-time, providing (for H-1Bs) it does not interfere with your primary purpose of working in the United States; therefore, you will need a valid reason for requesting the change to F-1, such as:

- An offer of a graduate student assistantship by the school you will attend
- A written request from your sponsor requesting your change to F-1
- Your H-1B/H-4 status is expiring and/or you still need to complete your current and/or a new degree, or
- You are turning 21 and can no longer remain an H-4 dependent of your H-1B parent

### Application Procedure

Your request to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for a change of status should consist of the following:

- Completed Form I-539 with the processing fee. Checks and money orders should be made payable to the Department of Homeland Security. For the most current fee information visit [uscis.gov](https://uscis.gov) and scroll down to “Forms and E-Filing” to find the appropriate fee.
- Receipt for paying SEVIS I-901 Fee. Go to [FMJfee.com](https://fmjfee.com) for full details.
- Copy of pages 1 and 2 of the Form I-20 signed and dated by you and the issuing school
- Copy of electronic I-94. Download a copy at [i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home).
- Copy of financial verification
- If in H-1B status, copies of all I-797 approval notices. If in H-4 status, copies of all of your spouse’s/parent’s I-797 approval notices for H-1B status, copies of both sides of their I-94 card (or printed copy of electronic I-94) and copies of any I-797 approval notices for H-4 status
- A letter from the employer of the H-1B confirming that the H-1B is still employed under all terms and conditions of the original H-1B petition is highly recommended
- Copies of the pages in each individual’s passport that include biographical information, passport picture and passport expiration
- Statement of why you need to change from H-1B or H-4 to F-1 status

The Office of International Affairs recommends that this application be sent by certified mail with a return receipt. Please note that the Form I-539 can no longer be filed electronically through the USCIS Electronic Immigration System (ELIS) – it must be mailed. For the most current mailing information, please visit [USCIS.gov/I-539-addresses](https://uscis.gov/I-539-addresses).

**Note:** If you have been offered an assistantship, please include and highlight in your letter: “Please grant expedite: Assistantship pending.” Also, write on the bottom left corner of the envelope “Expedite: Assistantship pending.”