



Change of Status to F-1

Changing status by leaving the U.S. and re-entering:

You can choose to return to your home country and re-enter the U.S. using a Form I-20 issued to you from Parkland. You will apply for an F-1 visa while you are in your home country. If approved, re-entry to the U.S. will change your status.

Changing status to F-1 from within the US:

You must first apply and be admitted to a **full-time program of study** and be prepared to take a full course load each fall and spring semester. Traveling outside the U.S. at any time during the application process will **cancel** your application for change of status.

Step 1: Prepare the following documents. Keep a copy of all documents for your own records.

- [Form I-539](http://www.uscis.gov/I539) (Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status) www.uscis.gov/I539
- Copies of your passport, visa, dependent I-20 if applicable, and I-94 document
- A letter to USCIS ("To Whom It May Concern") that includes:
 - Your address and telephone number; passport number and the expiration date
 - Your request to change status to F-1
 - The reason for requesting the change (your plans)
 - A statement that you will be a full-time student
 BE THOROUGH AND SPECIFIC IN YOUR LETTER TO USCIS
- A current, original bank statement showing that you have sufficient funds (U.S. dollars) available for one year of full time education at Parkland. If a sponsor will be funding your education, he/she must provide a signed [Affidavit of Support](#)
- Photocopies of any I-797 Approval Notices (previous approval for status changes or extensions)
- G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance (Include this form if you wish to receive electronic notification of the results of your petition).
- Cashier's check or money order for current [filing fee](#), payable to [Department of Homeland Security](#).

For F-2 or J-2 status: Photocopies of the *principal alien's* (your husband, wife, or parent's) *visa, passport, I-94 document, and Form I-20 or DS-2019 and a letter from the principal alien's school, detailing current enrollment status and date of completion.*

Step 2: Make an appointment to meet with an International Admissions Advisor (U238). Bring all documents and photocopies to the meeting. The Advisor will review your application materials and will issue a new Form I-20: Change of Status.

Step 3: Pay the [SEVIS Fee](#) (Form I-901). Payment will be made after you have received the new Form I-20, as it will require information from that form to complete the payment. The receipt is the last item that you will need to include in your application.

Step 4: Send all documents and fee payment to the [appropriate address](#)

**USCIS will not discuss or share any information with an official at Parkland College without the physical presence of the petitioner in the office when contact is made with a USCIS official.

[Review the status of your petition with USCIS](#)

You should receive a **letter of receipt** from USCIS within **1 to 2 weeks** after submitting the application. **Approval** of a Change of Status Application may take from **3 to 6 months**. The letter of receipt will give an estimate of current processing times. Bring the **Notice of Action (Form I-797)** to the International Admissions Office (U238). This document should be kept with your other immigration documents as proof of your change of status. Your Parkland College records will be changed to reflect your correct status with USCIS.