



CHANGE OF NON-IMMIGRANT STATUS TO F-1 LEGAL WAIVER AND RELEASE FORM

I must read, understand and agree to all the following terms and conditions: **The Office of International Student Services (OISS) at Houston Community College (HCC) provides staff for the purpose of advising, guiding, and supporting students through the admission and immigration procedures. The Principal Designated School Officer (PDSO), Designated School Officers (DSO), Academic Counselors, Student Services Associates, and other employees are trained to work with international students to ensure a smooth and successful transition to HCC. The primary goal of OISS is to be the advisor to F-1 and M-1 students seeking admission to HCC. The PDSOs and DSOs are the liaison between the school and the United States government regarding all relevant issues relating to this group of international students, and must ensure that the school maintains its eligibility to admit international students.**

The law requires HCC to collect the following information from students regarding F and M visas: Biographical information, visa classification and date of issuance, and any change or extension of visa classification, academic status (e.g. full-time enrollment), and any disciplinary action taken by the school as a result of a crime committed by the international student. All information provided is for educational purposes only.

I understand that in consideration and as a condition of my acceptance to HCC, I have an obligation to meet with a DSO for advising. The DSO is responsible for reporting and updating information with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) relating to the immigration status of international students. The DSO is in no way an "Advocate", or a "Representative" for the student in a legal capacity. All matters relating to the immigration status of the student is the student's responsibility, and not the responsibility of HCC.

I hereby release all employees of HCC of any and all liabilities resulting from the advice given by a DSO or staff of the OISS. I understand that DSOs and other HCC employees do not provide legal advice to students. If a student has an immigration issue that requires legal advice, the student is encouraged to seek legal counsel from a qualified immigration attorney not affiliated with HCC.

THE UNDERSIGN HAS READ THE ABOVE WAIVER AND RELEASE, AND SIGNED IT VOLUNTARILY

I agree to the conditions stated above.

(This declaration must be signed by the student, or a parent/guardian/sponsor, if the student is under the age of 18.)

Print Student's Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date of birth: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY) **Date:** _____

Print Parent/Guardian/Sponsor Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Interpreter's Signature (where applicable): _____ **Date:** _____



Change of Status to F-1

DEADLINES FOR CHANGE OF STATUS REQUEST BY APPLICATION

Fall Semester	July 1
Spring Semester.....	November 18
Summer Semester.....	April 1

These deadlines will be strictly observed

PROCEDURES

You must be admitted into a fulltime program of study at Houston Community College and obtain the SEVIS I-20 Form from the Office of International Student Services (OISS). Students planning to attend HCC as a fulltime student in F-1 status have two options available to them for a change of status:

Change of Status Option 1: Obtain the SEVIS I-20 Form, Travel outside the U.S. then re-enter the U.S. as an F-1 student

Students/prospective students may submit the New International Student application to OISS to request a SEVIS I-20 Form. Upon receipt of the SEVIS I-20 Form from OISS, the student will then schedule an interview with the U.S. Embassy/Consulate in the home country to apply for the F-1 visa (student visa). Once a U.S. F-1 visa sticker is issued, the student **MUST** re-enter the U.S. within 30 days of the start date on the SEVIS I-20 Form. The Change of Status is complete only after the student enters the U.S. and receives a new I-94 card marked "F-1" "D/S" and the SEVIS I-20 Form is stamped at the port of entry. For additional information regarding F-1 visa application see the link for "International" on our website.

Who can benefit from Option 1?

Any immigrant in the United States on a temporary visa who wishes to change their immigration status to F-1 student status. Students with J-1/J-2 status subject to Sec. 212(e) are not eligible to apply for change of status in the U.S. without first obtaining a waiver from the Dept. of State. (See an advisor)

Change of Status Option 2: Obtain the SEVIS I-20 Form then File I-539 "Change of status" application to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Students/prospective students may submit the New International Student application to OISS to request a SEVIS I-20 Form. The student will then gather the supporting documents required by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for the change of status that can be found on the Change of Status checklist. OISS will not file a Change of Status on your behalf. The student has the option of having an attorney file it or the student may file it. If student chooses to file it for him/herself, OISS will review the I-539 application with the student, upon student's request, to ensure that all the supporting documents required by DHS are included. Student will be required to sign a Change of Status Waiver with OISS. Once the I-539 application is filed to DHS, it may take 120 days or longer for a decision to be issued.

NOTE: This process only changes visa status. It will not change the U.S. visa sticker in the student's passport. This means that if the student departs the U.S. (after changing status by application), and wants to re-enter, the student must still obtain the appropriate U.S. visa sticker in the passport by scheduling an interview with the U.S. Embassy/Consulate in the home country. Approval of a change of status in the U.S. does not guarantee that the student

will be issued a visa in the home country. For additional information regarding F-1 visa application, see the link for "International" on our website.

Who can benefit from Option 2?

If you are a child in a dependent visa classification (e.g., F-2, H-4, L-2, R-2, etc.) you must change your status before your 21st birthday. Other changes in status (e.g. F-1 to F-2) may require other documents not listed on the checklist, such as a marriage certificate. Discuss your status with an advisor at OISS.

Who CANNOT benefit from Option 2?

1. A person whose immigration status has already expired has no status to change
2. A person visiting the U.S. under the [visa waiver program](#) is not eligible to change status in the U.S.
3. A student/person with a current J-1/J-2 status **IF** subject to Sec. 212(e) (two-year home residency requirement) cannot change to F-1 in the U.S. unless they receive a waiver from the State Department

WHAT ARE YOUR OBLIGATIONS TO OISS AS A CHANGE OF STATUS APPLICANT?

You must keep OISS updated on the progress of this application at all times to assure that the SEVIS I-20 Form record is maintained while the application is pending.

If you receive your approval notification (or receive any email notification about the case approval), please report to OISS immediately to process your authorization to initiate the registration process. Upon completing the initial advising session, you must complete all required placement tests and register and pay for your courses immediately to secure fulltime status. [Failure to register for courses after the F-1 status is granted by DHS may lead to violations of student status.](#) If your petition is still pending after the program start date on your SEVIS I-20 Form, you must see an advisor at OISS for further instructions.

All new incoming students with an approval of Change of Status must attend the [Mandatory International Student Orientation](#). A non-refundable orientation fee of US \$50.00 will apply upon reporting to the Office of International Student Services with the Change of Status approval.

We look forward to welcoming you as a student here at Houston Community College.



CHANGE OF STATUS CHECKLIST

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Thank you for your interest in Houston Community College. The Office of International Student Services (OISS) can help you assemble all the documents required for filing for a Change of Status. You have the option of having an attorney file for the change of status on your behalf. Please note that the process may take up to **120 days or longer**.

If you decide to file for the Change of Status without the services of an attorney, please note that OISS will not file the documents for you. We can only assist you by reviewing the documents after we have issued you a SEVIS I-20 Form.

Below are the documents you need to bring with you when you meet with a Designated School Official (DSO) (**NOTE: Incomplete application will not be accepted for reviewing**):

1. Complete the I-539 (Change of Status Form); Attach Money Order for \$290 made out to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security". (Form can be downloaded from <http://www.uscis.gov>)
2. Prepare a set of Original Financial Documents:
 - A. If you are supported by a Sponsor, please provide the following documents:
 - (i) Affidavit of Support (I-134) (found on HCC website) or a personal, notarized statement of support;
 - (ii) Bank letter stating balance of account and date account was opened **OR** last 3 months of bank statement (not computer downloads); and
 - (iii) Letter from sponsor's employer stating length of employment and salary, if Sponsor is U.S. citizen; **OR** copy of the most recent income tax return if the Sponsor is self-employed.
 - B. If Sponsor is a government agency or company, the following document is required:
 - (i) An Official sponsorship letter
 - C. If the student is self-supporting, the following document is required:
 - (ii) A bank letter validating at least \$22,980 U.S. (plus \$4,400 for each dependent)
3. Read and sign The Waiver and Release Form
4. Submit a copy of visa, passport and I-94 departure record (both sides), I-797 (where applicable)
5. Submit original SEVIS I-20 Form (DSO will prepare this document)
6. Pay the SEVIS fee at www.fmjfee.com
7. Submit a receipt for paid \$75.00 application fee (payable to "Houston Community College")
8. Write a personal letter addressed to DHS requesting permission to change status to F-1, explaining why you would like to become a student and stating that you intend to return home after completion of study.
9. Mailing address and instructions will be provided by DSO.

If you have any questions regarding this application process, please contact the OISS by email at: int_student_svcs@hccs.edu or call (713) 718-8521

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