An F-1 student who has overstayed his or her authorized period of stay or has otherwise failed to maintain F-1 student status may be reinstated to lawful F-1 status at the discretion of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) district director.

The USCIS director may reinstate the student to lawful F-1 status, if the student:

1. Establishes to the satisfaction of the USCIS director that the violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond the student’s control or that failure to receive reinstatement to lawful F-1 status would result in extreme hardship to the student;
2. Is currently pursuing, or intending to pursue, a full course of study at the school that issued the form I-20;
3. Has not engaged in unauthorized employment; and
4. Is not deportable on any ground other than section 241(a)(1)(B) or (c)(i) of the Act (overstaying or failing to maintain status). [8 CFR 214.2(f)(16)(i)]

Application Procedure

A. Submit documents to OIA to get Reinstatement I-20 (Refer to Required Documents for 1-20 Issuance handout).

B. You must submit the following documents to USCIS. You should include:
   1. Copy of all three pages of your new form I-20 with the “Reinstatement” annotation in section three. Be sure to sign it before you copy it;
   2. Completed Form I-539 with “3 – Reinstatement to student status” marked in Part 2, for the application type;
   3. Processing fee (Check Payable to Department of Homeland Security);
   4. Receipt for paying I-901 Fee if you have been out of status for more than five months. Go to fmjfee.com to pay online. For other methods of payment, see ice.gov/graphics/sevis/i901/index.htm;
   5. Copy of front and back of Form I-94 or printed copy of electronic Form I-94 card and copy of admission stamp;
   6. Copies of previously issued Forms I-20 (if available);
   7. Verification of financial support; and
   8. Written statement of explanation addressed to USCIS stating the following:
      a. Why the student is out of status (specify the violation);
      b. The reason for the status violation;
      c. The effect on the student of failure to receive reinstatement; and
      d. A statement that the student is currently pursuing or intending to pursue a full course of study.

For further information please see the instructions located on the Form I-539. Note that the Form I-539 may be filed electronically through the USCIC Electronic Immigration System (ELIS).

Meet an immigration coordinator in the Office of International Affairs to review the above documents.