Reinstatement for F-1 Students

An F-1 student who has overstayed their 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 U.S. 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
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

1) Submit documents to the Office of International Affairs to get Reinstatement I-20 (Refer to the Required Documents for I-20 Issuance handout)

2) You must submit the following documents to USCIS:
   - 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.
   - Completed Form I-539 with “c” checked and “Reinstatement to student status” written in Part 2, item 1
   - Processing fee (Check payable to the Department of Homeland Security)
   - 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/sevis/i901/faq.
   - Copy of front and back of Form I-94 or printed copy of electronic Form I-94 card and copy of admission stamp
   - Copies of previously issued Forms I-20 (if available)
   - Verification of financial support
   - Written statement of explanation addressed to USCIS stating the following:
     - Why the student is out of status (specify the violation)
     - The reason for the status violation
     - The effect on the student of failure to receive reinstatement
     - A statement that the student is currently pursuing or intending to pursue a full course of study

For more 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.