

Regaining F-1 Status

If you fail to maintain status, you are ineligible for any F-1 benefits. There are two ways you can regain your status:

- Apply for **reinstatement** to F-1 status
- **Travel and reenter** the US in F-1 status

Reinstatement:

When requesting reinstatement, you must establish to the satisfaction of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that you:

- Have not been out of status more than five months at the time of filing the request for reinstatement (or explain why the reinstatement application could not be filed sooner).
- Do not have a record of repeated or willful violations of immigration regulations.
- Are current pursuing, or intending to pursue, a full course of study in the immediate future at the school which issued your I-20.
- Have not engaged in unauthorized employment.
- Are not deportable on any ground other than overstaying or failing to maintain F-1 status.

You must also establish that:

- The violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control. Such circumstances might include serious injury or illness, a natural disaster, or inadvertence, oversight or neglect on the part of the Kearney Center, but do not include instances where a pattern of repeated violations or where a willful failure on the part of the student resulted in the need for reinstatement.
- The violation relates to a reduction in your course load that would have been within the Kearney Center's power to authorize, and that failure to approve reinstatement would result in extreme hardship to you.

If USCIS approves the reinstatement request, the adjudicating officer will endorse your I-20 to indicate that you have been reinstated and will return the I-20 to you. If USCIS does not approve the reinstatement request, you may not appeal the decision and need to prepare to leave the US immediately.

Travel and Reentry:

In some cases it may be advisable to depart the US and re-enter with a new I-20 rather than applying for reinstatement. You may do this by obtaining a new I-20 from the school you are currently attending or wish to attend, depart the US, apply for a new F-1 visa if your current visa has expired, and return to the US. You are not eligible for [automatic visa revalidation](#). A re-entry to the US after a status violation is viewed by Immigration as "initial attendance" in F-1 status. As such you are bound by restrictions placed on new students, such as the academic year waiting period for eligibility for practical training and off-campus employment authorization.

Next steps for Reinstatement to F-1 status:

Meet with your immigration advisor in the Kearney Center to discuss your options to regain F-1 status. If you are eligible to apply for **reinstatement**, gather the following documents/items for your application:

	Form G-1145
	Form I-539 (write "REINSTATEMENT" at the top of the form)
	Check/money order made payable to US Department of Homeland Security for USCIS filing fee
	Photocopies of all previously-issued I-20s
	Copy of valid passport page
	Copy of visa
	Copy of I-94 record (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home)
	Photocopy of new Reinstatement I-20 signed by Kearney Center immigration adviser
	Evidence and source of amount of financial support
	A letter requesting reinstatement to F-1 student status which explains your situation and truthfully states that failure to maintain status was due to any or all of the reasons listed above
	Supporting documentation (for example: a letter of support from faculty adviser familiar with your case)
	Current transcript and transcripts from other US schools previously attended.

Keep a copy of your application for your records.

Mail to: **USCIS**
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266

Next steps for Travel and Reentry:

Meet with your immigration advisor in the Kearney Center to discuss your options to regain F-1 status. If you decide to travel and re-enter the US, provided update bank documents and request your new initial I-20. You must pay the [I-901 fee](#) on your new I-20.