

GUIDE TO REINSTATEMENT OF LEGAL F-1 STATUS



International Student
and Scholar Services Office

Division of Student Affairs

WHAT IS REINSTATEMENT?

- Reinstatement is a process for F-1 students to regain legal status after a violation of full-time student status.
- It's essential to maintain legal status to continue studying in the U.S. without immigration issues.

WHY IS REINSTATEMENT NECESSARY?

- Failure to maintain full-time student status can result in accruing unlawful presence in the U.S.
- Unlawful presence can lead to serious consequences, including removal from the country.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

- Loss of benefits such as working on-campus, OPT, and CPT.
- Difficulty in future visa or immigration processes.

ELIGIBILITY AND CONSIDERATIONS

Criteria:

Must prove violation was beyond control and reinstatement denial leads to economic hardship.

Timeline:

Response from USCIS may take 7-8 months.

DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Requirements: Stay enrolled full-time at University of Houston.
- No work allowed on or off campus.

ALTERNATIVES & TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

- If Denied:
 - Possibility to leave and return with appropriate documents (initial attendance I-20)
- Travel Option:
 - Considered if violation is under 180 days.

APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST

- Documents Required:
 - I-20s from all U.S. institutions. Passport and I-94. USCIS documentation.
- Forms to Complete:
 - I-539, I-539A for dependents, G-1145

PERSONAL LETTER TO USCIS

- **Your Chronological History**
- Please write a detailed explanation of your activities since arriving to the U.S. This explanation should be presented in order of dates that it happened. Use exact dates. The information you provide should answer the following questions:
 - On what date did you fail to maintain your F-1 status?
 - On what date did you realize you were no longer in valid F-1 status?
 - On what date did you contact your DSO to resolve the problem?
 - Provide an explanation of the events that led up to your failure to maintain F-1 status.
 - Provide an explanation regarding why your loss of F-1 status is due to circumstances beyond your control.
 - Provide a statement detailing how a denial of your request for reinstatement to F-1 status would result in extreme hardship to yourself.
 - Provide a yes or no respond regarding whether you are currently attending classes.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

- Types of Proof:
 - On-campus assistantship verification.
 - Bank statements or sponsor letters (recent and on official letterhead).
 - Scholarships verification.
- Important Note: Blackout sensitive information (e.g., SSN, bank account numbers).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Academic Records:
 - Official transcripts from all U.S. institutions.
- Payment Details:
 - \$470 file fee (\$420 if online)+\$85 biometrics.
 - Addition biometrics fee for dependents.

SEVIS FEE PAYMENT

- Requirement: \$350 SEVIS fee if violation is older than 5 months.
- Website: www.FMjfee.com.

MAILING CHECKLIST

- Personal reinstatement letter.
- Completed forms (I-539, I-539A, G-1145z0.
- Previous and new I-20s.
- Financial support proof.
- Passport and visa page copies.
- I-94 printout.
- SEVIS fee receipt.

ONLINE FILING

- You can and should file your application online with USCIS if you are the only applicant. If you file by paper, you will receive an additional notice to create your USCIS online account for your application. This is recommended to do as it will provide you access to your application status and any notices you may have missed. There is also a \$50 reduction cost for filing online.

ISSSO SUPPORT

- Please schedule an appointment with an ISSSO counselor for personalized advice.
- Consider discussing the travel option if applicable.