

# INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE at HUNTER

## Change of Status to F-1

**There are two ways of gaining a new F-1 status:**

### **Option 1:** Travel and Reentry

Obtain an I-20 from us and leave the U.S., apply for a new visa at a U.S. consulate in your home country, and reenter the U.S. with a student visa. You will gain your new status when you are admitted into the U.S. This process is faster than changing status in the U.S. Also, you will obtain the visa and the status.

### **Option 2:** Change Status within the U.S.

1. You must hire an immigration lawyer in order to obtain a Change of Status Requested I-20 from the IELI and discuss your program start date with your lawyer. Please see our program start dates [here](#).
2. Once your lawyer chooses your program start date, complete [the online application](#) and make the full payment.
3. Financial Support
  - Bank Statement or Bank Letter in English with a minimum balance of \$22,500 (can be emailed in PDF)
  - If someone else is a financial sponsor (can be emailed in PDF)
    - \*Sponsor's Bank Statement or Bank Letter in English with a minimum balance of \$22,500
    - \*[Affidavit of Support Form](#)
    - \*Proof of income (Pay stub, W-2, Job letter, Income Tax Return, etc..)
4. Letter from an immigration lawyer claiming responsibility of change of status case (can be emailed in PDF)
5. Copy of current visa (can be emailed in PDF)
6. Copy of the I-94 arrival stamp (can be emailed in PDF)

\*\*\* A Change of Status Requested I-20 is issued in one week once we receive a complete application, and you will need to bring it to your immigration lawyer. Your lawyer will file a change of status application to USCIS once your lawyer receives a Change of Status Requested I-20.

## Important points to know:

- Processing with USCIS can take at least 6 to 12 months or longer. While the application is pending you may not leave the United States.
- Applicants in B-1/B-2 status may not begin classes until they have changed to a student status.
- Applicants who are changing status from F-2 can begin classes part-time but can only be enrolled full time once the application has been approved.
- The USCIS process will change your immigration status within the United States but does not give you a new visa stamp in your passport. After the application is approved and if you need to depart the U.S., you will need to apply for an F-1 visa at a U.S. consulate or embassy in your country in order to return in F-1 status.