



**The Catholic University of America**

# **After the I-20 or DS-2019 is issued for Change of Status: Information for Individuals Seeking Student Status**

Prepared by

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Services

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# Change of Status Information

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## **Review the documents**

Before applying for the Change of Status, review the information that appears on your Form I-20 or your Form DS-2019. If any information on your form is incorrect, please contact the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) immediately using the contact information provided in the cover letter accompanying this packet.

**Note:** The spelling of your name on all U.S. visa and immigration documents must be exactly the same as the spelling of your name in your passport. The same is true for dependents. If your name and/or date of birth on Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 are not exactly the same as the information in the passport, please request a corrected document. The incorrect document must be returned to ISSS.

*If you are a J-1 student* (you have received form DS2019) and all information on your document is correct, sign your name in the place indicated for your signature. If you have dependents (husband or wife, or unmarried children under the age of 21) who will accompany you to The United States a separate Form DS-2019 must be issued for each of them to use in entering the U.S. Check each form to make sure all of information is correct and sign in the indicated spaces.

*If you are an F-1 student* (you have received form I-20) and all information is correct, complete item 11 on page 1. If you have dependents (husband or wife, children under the age of 21) who will accompany you to The United States they must each have a separate I-20 document. Please review all the information and sign your name (not the name of the dependent) in item 11 on page 1.

## **Paying the SEVIS Fee**

Once you have determined that the documents accurately reflect you and your academic program at CUA, you will need to pay the appropriate SEVIS fee (\$200 for students seeking F-1 status; \$180 for students seeking J-1 status). This fee is mandated by the U.S. government and must be paid before you submit your visa application to the U.S. Consulate. A receipt showing that you have paid the fee must accompany the application you submit to the U.S. consulate for your visa stamp. There are two methods for paying this fee.

### **On Line Payment**

You may charge the SEVIS fee to a credit card and pay the fee on line by:

1. Go to [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com). This takes you to the instructions for the Form I-901. Scroll down to the bottom of the page. Click on “Yes” to indicate you have either a Form I-20 or a Form DS-2019.
2. Indicate whether you have an I-20 or a DS-2019 and click on “OK.”

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3. Complete the form online and supply the requested information. Enter your name exactly as it appears on the immigration document issued to you by CUA. You will be asked to provide CUA's program number.
  - CUA's F-1 program number is: WAS 214F 00013000
  - CUA's J-1 program number is: P-1-01300Click on "I accept"
4. Enter the necessary Visa, MasterCard or American Express information.
5. Print a copy of the online receipt.
6. Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

### Payment through the Mail

You may also choose to pay the fee through the mail. It will take you a little longer to receive a receipt using this method.

1. Obtain a Form I-901 "Fee Remittance for Certain F, J, and M Nonimmigrants." (available at [www.FMJfee.com](http://www.FMJfee.com))
2. Complete the Form I-901. Be sure to write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20 form.
3. Prepare a check, international money order or foreign draft (drawn on US banks only<sup>1</sup>) in the amount of \$100 USD, made payable to "The Department of Homeland Security"
4. Mail the completed I-901 and payment to the address listed on Form I-901).
  - a. Via regular mail or Air mail:

I-901 SEVIS Processing Fee  
P.O. Box 970020  
St. Louis, MO 63197-0020

- b. Via Overnight or Express Mail/Courier Service:

I-901 SEVIS Processing Fee  
1005 Convention Plaza  
St. Louis, MO 63101

5. The Department of Homeland Security should send you a Form I-797 receipt notice within 3 days of processing the fee. Be sure to make copies of your receipt, and keep it with your other important immigration documents

Once you have your receipt, you are ready to submit your application for change of status to F-1.

### ***Applying for the Change of Status***

Once the I-20 has been issued and you have paid the SEVIS fee, you must collect the following documents:

1. A cover letter requesting the change of status and explaining why you wish to change your status. In this letter, you should also explain your ties to your home country. Also, if on the Form I-539 you answered “yes” to any of the questions in Part 4 Number 3, you may wish to provide an explanation of that answer.
2. A \$300 fee check or money order to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. (Unless you are changing from A or G status)
3. Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status Form I-539, available on the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service website:  
<http://uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/index.htm>.
4. If you currently hold A or G status, Form I-566, signed by the US Department of State
5. Evidence of your eligibility (Original Form I-20; Form DS-2019; evidence of relationship to principle alien; etc.). This must have original signatures of both the international advisor and you.
6. Evidence of having maintained legal status.
  - ✓ Copy of your I-94 card.
  - ✓ Copy of visa
  - ✓ Copy of passport.

Once these documents have been assembled, they are sent to the USCIS Regional Service Center having jurisdiction over your place of residence. For the Washington, D.C. area, this is:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Vermont Service Center  
75 Lower Welden St.  
Saint Albans, Vermont 05479

We recommend making photocopies of the application prior to submitting it to CIS. The application should be mailed to CIS using some form of mailing service that will enable you to track the packet (certified mail with return receipt or express or priority mail via the US Post Office; Federal Express; UPS; DHL, etc.) In the event that the application is lost or delayed, you will have evidence that it was sent and when.

Upon receipt of the application, CIS will issue you a receipt notice formally acknowledging that they have received the application. This receipt notice will contain a case number (also known as the receipt number) and will be sent to the address listed on the Form I-539. Once you receive this notice, please notify ISSS (preferably by giving them a copy of the notice) so they can monitor the progress of your application and more easily maintain your record in SEVIS.

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Please note: The application for a change of status is seen by the government as a personal application that belongs to you. ISSS does not represent you in the process and can offer you no legal advice on the best way of obtaining your student status. ISSS' role is limited to providing you with information on the process for obtaining student status.

Once CIS approves the Change of Status application, the Approval Notice will be mailed to the address on the Form I-539. If you move while the application is pending, you must immediately notify CIS of your new address in writing, referencing your case number. Notify ISSS immediately so they can activate your record in SEVIS. Failure to do so may result in the loss of your legal status.

### ***Travel While Change of Status is Pending***

It is not advisable to travel outside the U.S. while your application to change status is still pending. Leaving the U.S. during this time is seen by the U.S. government as the abandonment of your application. If you will indeed travel, notify ISSS of your plans. They will need to issue a new I-20 so that you can go to a U.S. consulate overseas and apply for an F or J visa.

### ***After approval of the Change of Status***

Once your change of status is approved, you must notify ISSS so that ISSS can finalize your immigration status with the Department of Homeland Security by activating your student record in SEVIS. Failure to do this may result in your eventual loss of legal status.