

CHANGING NONIMMIGRANT STATUS

Since a person's nonimmigrant status must match the purpose of his/her stay in the U.S., a change of status may be necessary when the objectives of the visit have changed. For example, a person may come to the U.S. to study on an F-1 student visa and then later decide to change to a J-1 Research Scholar to do postdoctoral work after completing his/her Ph.D. degree.

Changing nonimmigrant status can be a complex process. The timing of the change is critical and must be done with care to avoid falling out of status during the transition. Before you undertake a change of status, we recommend you make an appointment to speak to an Advisor in the International Office about the process and to plan ahead.

In general, there are two ways to change nonimmigrant status:

1. Travel outside the U.S. and re-enter in the new status, or
2. Stay in the U.S. and request a change of status by application to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

	CHANGE BY TRAVEL	CHANGE BY MAIL
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plane ticket to home country ▪ Visa application fee (varies) ▪ SEVIS Fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USCIS Processing Fee= \$290* *Fees for applications postmarked on or after November 23, 2010 must include a new fee of \$290. ▪ SEVIS Fee
Processing Time	<p>Since traveling requires visiting a U.S. consulate outside the U.S. to obtain the new visa stamp, the length of time is dependent on how long that process will take. Due to delays, long processing times and security checks, we recommend talking with International Office before choosing this option. Visa processing without security checks can be from 7-21 days. Security checks can take an additional 3 months.</p> <p>NOTE: I-20 begin date should be approximately the date of your re-entry into the U.S. If your re-entry is delayed, notify the International Office.</p>	<p>The amount of time needed for processing a change of status can vary. USCIS has stated its intention to process these requests quickly. Recent International Office experience is approximately 3 months. This processing length can change at any time and is not guaranteed.</p> <p>NOTE: This process does not give you a new visa stamp. The next time you travel outside the U.S. you will need to visit a U.S. consulate or embassy to request a new visa stamp that reflects your changed status.</p>
Other Concerns	<p>It is very difficult to obtain a visa stamp in Canada or Mexico if you are not a national of that country. If denied a visa, you must return to your home country to apply for a visa there. Coppin's International Office does not recommend applying for a visa stamp in either Canada or Mexico unless you are a legal resident of these countries.</p>	<p>Visitors in B-1/B-2 status cannot work until status change is approved by USCIS. Those in other immigration statuses cannot work if their current work authorization expires prior to USCIS approval of the change of status.</p>