

The Change of Status B-1/B-2 to F-1 Process

Change of Status Requirements

To initiate your Change of Status to F-1 **you must be an Accepted and/or Matriculated student at Hunter College.** Ensure that you have paid the commitment deposit fee to avoid processing delays. As an F-1 student, **you will be required to pay out-of-state tuition.** This will remain the case for as long as you hold F-1 status. If you plan to change your status from B1/B2 to F-1, **you must wait at least 90 days after entering the United States before applying to schools such as Hunter or other CUNY institutions.** Once you apply, you **cannot** leave the U.S.; if you do, you must instead schedule an appointment at the U.S. embassy in your home country to apply for the F-1 visa. It is also important to maintain valid B1/B2 status throughout the process, **which includes renewing your I-94 at least two months before its expiration date.** Please note that you cannot begin attending classes until you receive official approval from USCIS confirming your F-1 status.

**B1/B2 students should NOT enroll in classes before the F-1 approval.*

Processing Time and Application Steps

The change of status process can take approximately **nine months to one year.** To receive a decision in time to begin the upcoming semester, **it is required that you pay the premium processing fee of \$1,685** to help avoid delays that could affect your ability to start your program on time. Careful planning is essential to ensure there are no interruptions in your academic timeline. To apply for admission to Hunter College, submit your application online through the [CUNY Admissions website](#) if you intend to pursue a bachelor's or master's degree.

How to Proceed After Admission

After acceptance, you must contact the school's International Students Office (ISO) and submit all required documents listed in the **Change of Status Required Documents Checklist** so that the International Student Advisor can process your I-20 for the change of status. Once you receive the I-20, you can pay your SEVIS fee and then proceed with the change of status instructions.

Please review the following documents/forms, complete the required steps, and upload the required documents:

1. Review the [Change of Status Required Documents Checklist](#)
2. **Complete the Certificate of Eligibility** (SEVIS I-20)
 - For admitted [undergraduate students](#) (Bachelor's degree)
 - For admitted [graduate students](#) (Master's degree)
3. **Upload all required documents** to the [I-20 Document Upload for Change of Status Form](#)
4. Create [USCIS account](#) (Submit I-539 & Pay)
5. Notify ISO of F-1 Approval and/or Denial notice

Acceptable Examples of Financial Documents

- Recent bank statements (checking or savings accounts)
- Scholarship or fellowship award letters
- Sponsor's bank statements along with an affidavit of support
- Official loan approval letters
- Employer's letter from your sponsor confirming projected support for the remaining years of study (if applicable)

**All documents must be recent and in English by a certified translator.*

For more information on the difference between F-1 status and an F-1 visa, visit: [Student Visa vs. Student Status: What's the Difference?](#)

Next Steps After Submitting Required Documents

Once all required documents are submitted, the Hunter DSO will issue you an initial I-20 for your change of status. Once you receive your I-797 Approval Notice confirming your change of status to F-1, **you must submit a copy of this notice within seven (7) business days.** Failure to submit the approval notice within the required timeframe **will result in your F-1 status being automatically reverted from “approved” to “terminated”** in SEVIS. **If you need to leave the U.S., please contact the DSO to inform them of your plans.** The DSO can provide an initial attendance I-20 so you can schedule an appointment at the U.S. embassy in your country to apply for an F-1 visa to return for your studies. If you have obtained another status and no longer wish to pursue the change to F-1, **you must notify the DSO so they can cancel your F-1 I-20 request.** Otherwise, your F-1 approval could automatically override your current immigration status.