

REQUEST FOR DEPENDENT I-20

International Student and Scholar Services

Florida International University

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If you are holding a valid F-1 status and wish to have your dependent(s) stay with you in the U.S. throughout the duration of your study, **your dependent may apply for an F-2 visa at a U.S. consulate abroad or, if already in the U.S., for a change of status (COS) to F-2.** In either case, you must first request an I-20 for your dependent. Before requesting a dependent I-20, you should be aware of the following considerations:

- **“Dependent” status pertains only to your spouse (husband or wife) and children under 21.** “Dependent” status does NOT apply to parents or siblings.
- **A person in F-2 status is NOT allowed to work.** If an F-2 status holder engages in any employment while in the U.S., that employment will be a violation of immigration law and this person will be subject to deportation. A person in F-2 status is not allowed to enroll in college/university classes.
- If your dependent entered the U.S. on a **“Visa Waiver,”** he or she cannot apply for a change of status. Your dependent **MUST** travel to his or her home country, apply for an F-2 visa at a U.S. Consulate there with an FIU dependent I-20 and all supporting documents and then reenter with an F-2 visa in his or her passport.
- If your dependent is applying for a change of status to F-2, be aware that USCIS processing can take up to several months and there is **NO GUARANTEE of approval.** Should your dependent’s COS application be approved, note that he or she will have **only an F-2 status and NOT an F-2 visa. See the reverse side of this form for more information about the documents needed to apply for a change of status to F-2 through USCIS.**

If you have any questions about F-2 status or feel you need to discuss your case in more detail, you should make an appointment to meet with an ISSS adviser before requesting the dependent I-20.

To request a DEPENDENT I-20, you must submit an E-form through the [FIU ISSS Portal](#).

In the ISSS Portal, please select: **Document Request > Dependent I-20.** Please note the processing of your I-20 may take up to 5 - 7 business days.

1. **Dependent’s biographical information** – Relationship, legal name, date of birth and other information.
2. **Proof of Funds** to show sufficient money to cover ALL expenses for at least one academic year. In addition to standard estimates for tuition and fees, living expenses, and other costs, you will be expected to show \$6,000 for a spouse and \$4,000 for each child. Documents provided must be originals (not photocopies). Valid documents to prove funds:
 - MUST BE IN ENGLISH
 - MUST SPECIFICALLY STATE TOTAL AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE to you in US dollars
 - MAY INCLUDE:
 - (1) current bank letter and (if not your own account) signed letter from sponsor
 - (2) current scholarship letter from sponsoring agency or organization
 - (3) official and current letter verifying educational loan awarded to you
 - (4) ISSS Graduate Stipend form completed by department and signed by the Dean
3. **Photocopy of dependent’s passport**

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If your dependent is in the U.S. and plans to apply for a change of status to F-2, the change of status application packet may be mailed to USCIS at the address provided below OR **may be submitted electronically by using ELIS, the USCIS Electronic Immigration System.** If your dependent is interested in applying online using ELIS, go to <http://www.uscis.gov> and click on the ELIS icon on the right side of the page to view more detailed instructions. In ELIS, he or she must create an online profile with USCIS and upload all documents needed to complete the application. Whether mailed to USCIS or submitted online through ELIS, the application **MUST** include:

- _____ **1. Photocopy of FIU dependent I-20**
- _____ **2. Proof of Funds** as specified on page 1
- _____ **3. Form I-539: Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status** – If mailing the application, download the form by visiting the USCIS website at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>. Click on "Forms" and find Form I-539 by scrolling down the page. Type all the information on the form (NOTE: under Part 3, in answer to question 1, indicate “D/S”), print it out, and sign where stated.
- _____ **4. Application Cover Letter** – This letter must be addressed to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and must include *at least* the following:
 - ___ **a.** Explain clearly why you are choosing to apply for a change of status in the U.S. instead of travelling abroad to obtain an F-2 visa from a U.S. Consulate.
 - ___ **b.** Provide details of your most recent entry into the U.S. (i.e. date, port of entry, visa classification).
- _____ **5. Application Fee** - If mailing the application, prepare a personal check or money order payable to “**U.S. Department of Homeland Security.**” This is a NON-REFUNDABLE fee.
- _____ **6. Proof of family relationship** – Documents such as marriage certificate, birth certificate. If documents are not in English, you must submit official translations.
- _____ **7. Immigration Documents:**
 - ___ **a.** Photocopies of dependent’s passport identification page and expiration/validity page
 - ___ **b.** Photocopy of entry visa in dependent’s passport
 - ___ **c.** Photocopy of dependent’s Form I-94 (front and back) or print out of online I-94
 - ___ **d.** Photocopies of F-1 student’s passport identification page and expiration/validity page
 - ___ **e.** Photocopy of entry visa in F-1 student’s passport
 - ___ **f.** Photocopy of F-1 student’s Form I-94 (front and back) or print out of online I-94
 - ___ **g.** Photocopy of F-1 student’s Form I-20

ISSS recommend using the services of an immigration lawyer to help with this process.