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New international students who are currently in the U.S. in another visa status may choose to submit Form I-539 Change of Status (COS) Application to F-1 student status to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). Please be aware of the following:

- USCIS takes approximately 3-6 months to review a COS application. Your current status (including the end of grace period) must be valid at least 30 days before the first day of class. You must end J-1 activities by the start date on the I-20.
- There is no guarantee that your application will be approved. If your application is denied, you must leave the U.S. when your current status expires. If your current status has already expired, you will have to prepare to leave the U.S. immediately.
- If you are changing from B-2 tourist or F-2 dependent status, you cannot start studying until your application is approved.
- If you leave the U.S. while your COS Application is pending, your application will automatically be denied. You will not be able to re-enter the U.S. on F-1 status until you obtain a new I-20 from our office and apply for an F-1 visa stamp at the U.S. embassy/consulate in your home country.

In order to apply for a COS Application with USCIS, please follow the steps below:

1. **Apply to Silicon Valley Intensive English Program by submitting the following documents:**

- a. Application for admission: <http://smccd.edu/sviep/applyinformation.php>
- b. Bank Verification showing funds of at least \$26,000 USD.
- c. Transcripts: Academic records from previous schools. Documents in languages other than English must be accompanied by an English translation.
- d. Passport photo.
- e. Copy of a valid passport.
- f. Submit \$50 application fee.
- g. English Proficiency exam results. Proof is **NOT** required for admission to the Intensive English Program. If you have a TOEFL (paper-based or internet-based), IELTS or Pearson score, please include an unofficial copy of your results (in PDF format) with your application in order to serve you better.

2. **Submit additional documents for your USCIS COS Application.**

- a. Form I-539 COS Application: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-539.pdf>
- b. \$370 check or money order payable to "The US Department of Homeland Security"
- c. Copies of your current passport, visa, I-20 and/or DS-2019
(If you are a dependent, copies of the principle visa holder's passport, visa and I-94 card.)
- d. Copy of your I-94 approval notice or electronic record from www.cbp.gov/i94
- e. Copy of your acceptance letter and signed I-20 from SVIEP office
- f. SEVIS fee payment receipt: www.fmjfee.com
- g. Copies of items in Step #2b, c, d, e, f
- h. Letter addressed to USCIS requesting a change of status and reason(s) for why you are requesting the change.

3. **Evaluating your application, pickup and mail your COS Application to USCIS**

Once your application is received and approved, your I-20 form (certificate of eligibility for non-immigrants to study in the United States) will be created in SEVIS. You should schedule an appointment to meet with a SVIEP staff to review and pick up your Change of Status application. Note: we only give I-20 forms to the student named on the I-20 form. You must then mail the I-20 form and all supporting documents to the following address using US Postal Service. It is recommended that you make a copy for yourself and mail the application with tracking information to

USCIS
P.O. Box 660166
Dallas, TX 75266