REINSTATEMENT TO LEGAL F-1 STATUS

BASIC DESCRIPTION: Reinstatement is required if you have violated your full-time student status. Violation of your student status will cause you to accrue unlawful presence within the U.S. and may lead to your removal. If you can prove that your violation was outside of your control and that it will cause an extreme economic hardship if you are not granted a favorable response, then there is a chance of being reinstated. It will take at least seven to eight months, if not longer, to receive a response from USCIS and during this time you have to remain enrolled at UH full-time and you are not allowed to do any work on or off campus. If you are denied reinstatement, you may have to leave the U.S., but you can usually return if you travel with an “initial attendance” I-20, a valid F-1 visa, and your passport. In some cases, students may prefer to travel and not apply for reinstatement as long as the violation does not exceed 180 days. If you want to consider traveling, more details can be covered at the time of your appointment with an ISSS Counselor.

APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST:

- I-20’s from all institutions attended in the U.S., passport, I-94, and any documentation received from USCIS.
- Complete the I-539 (Add the I-539A for any dependent that is included in application). All required forms, including I-539, I-539A, and G-1145 can be downloaded at: https://www.uscis.gov/i-539.
- Personal letter to USCIS describing your violation and what caused it. You must state: (1) how your violation of status resulted from circumstances beyond your control and that failure to be reinstated would result in extreme economic hardship, (2) your filing for reinstatement is your immediate action (within 5 months from when the violation occurring), and (3) you are currently pursuing or intend to pursue a full course of study at UH. For example:

  Date

  Dear USCIS Officer:

  I am applying for reinstatement because I (state your violation) during the ___________ semester. This happened because (provide the reason especially emphasizing any circumstances beyond your conscious control). I am taking full-time hours this semester (or always have taken full-time hours) (or plan to be full-time next semester).

  If I am not reinstated, it will result in extreme hardship because (list a reason).

  Sincerely,
  Your name

- Evidence of financial support. Examples:
  - On-Campus Assistantship Positions: Complete an RA/TA Fellowship Verification form (available at ISSS). Note: You cannot work while out of status.
  - Funds from a sponsor or personal account: Bring a current bank statement or a letter on official bank letterhead not older than 2 months. If your sponsor is not your parent and is either a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, he/she will need to complete form I-134 Affidavit of Support. This form can be downloaded at: https://www.uscis.gov/i-134.
  - Scholarships: Verified with a letter from your college or supplying agency. It should also state if you are eligible for resident tuition.

Please black out any Social Security Number(s) and bank account number(s) on all documents.

- Transcripts from all academic institutions attended in the U.S.
- A check or money order payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $455 and $85 for any additional dependents. You can also pay by credit card using form G-1450, which is found here: https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450
- Pay a SEVIS fee of $200 if your violation is older than 5 months. Print the I-901 receipt verifying payment. The website for paying the SEVIS fee is: www.FMJfee.com.

MAILING CHECKLIST (Send the application through certified mail with a return receipt or with delivery confirmation):

- Personal letter requesting reinstatement.
- Completed and signed Form I-539 and any I-539A’s.
- Completed form G-1145.
- Copies of all previous I-20’s.
- Transcripts from all schools attended in the U.S.
- The new I-20 that will be issued by ISSS recommending “Reinstatement.”
- Proof of financial support. If the monies are from a foreign bank, they must state US dollars or you can provide a printout from a currency exchange rate converter on the internet.
- Copy of passport that is still valid for 6 months into the future and copy of the most recent visa page.
- I-94 card or print out from www.cbp.gov/i94
- Receipt of SEVIS fee of $200 (if applicable).
- Required payment to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $455 plus $85 for additional applicants.