

My I-20 has expired: Get a New I-20

An expired I-20 is a difficult problem to fix! Always make sure your I-20 document is current. The dates are listed on the front of the I-20 in item number 5. If your document expires, you will need to do a lot of paperwork to get back in status! Also, you could lose your benefits like OPT and have to start over. Don't let this happen to you!

If your I-20 has expired, please follow these instructions:

- 1) Make an appointment with an ISP advisor to go over your options and choose the best one for your situation.
- 2) The advisor will explain your options:
 - **New Entry:** Return home or go to Mexico to re-enter the U.S. with a new I-20 and, in some cases, a SEVIS fee payment receipt.
 - **Reinstatement:** Make a request to the U.S. government to return your status.
- 3) After you and the advisor choose a course of action, follow the instructions below.

New Entry

A new entry will start your student status over again, as if the student were entering the U.S. for the first time. To complete a new entry:

- 1) Request a new entry I-20 from the advisor. An ISP worker will call when your new I-20 is ready for pickup.
- 2) You may be asked to provide a new bank statement.
- 3) If you are going to Mexico to activate your new entry I-20, first [check to see if you need a visa to enter](#). If you do, please get the Mexican visa using the [instructions on the consulate web site](#).
- 4) Pay a new SEVIS fee (\$200) with the SEVIS ID from your new I-20 at www.fmjfee.com (if you have been out of status for more than 5 months)
- 5) Arrange transportation to Mexico or home. There is no minimum amount of time you must stay.
- 6) When you return to the U.S. from Mexico, you must stop at the Immigration office (go inside) to get your I-20 processed. **Do not just go through the vehicle line!**
- 7) As soon as you can, bring the I-20 to the ISP office so that the front desk worker can make a copy of the new stamp on the I-20 for your file.

Please note: If you do a new entry, your time that counts toward OPT benefits starts over! So, you will need to study for at least 9 months to earn that benefit back.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement will only be approved by the immigration service if the status violation was beyond the student's control. The examples they give are natural disasters or school closures.

To apply for reinstatement:

1) Complete the I-539 form and write "Reinstatement" on Part 2, Item 1C.

2) Send:

- I-539
- Reinstatement I-20
- Copies of all previous I-20s, visa stamp, passport name page, and I-94
- New copies of financial information
- Letter explaining how the status violation was beyond your control
- New SEVIS fee receipt
- \$300 fee by check or money order to USCIS

To:

USCIS California Service Center
P.O. Box 10539
Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-1053

4) The reinstatement process may take about 3 months, but can sometimes be much longer.

- If your request is approved, you will receive your stamped I-20, receipt and new I-94 in the mail
- If your request is denied, you will receive a letter saying you should make arrangements to leave the United States.

Note: We recommend that all students sending requests to the USCIS bring their documents to the ISP office for review and to copy for your student file.