

# International Student Services

## F-1 Status Rules and Responsibilities

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grants F-1 status to individuals for one purpose: to study full-time in a degree seeking program in the U.S. Other activities, such as employment, are privileges authorized with special written permission in specific circumstances. ***Penalties for failing to follow the rules will result in loss of F-1 status and all related benefits and privileges and could lead to removal (deportation) from the US.***

This guide is designed to make sure you are aware of your responsibilities as a student in F-1 status. DHS expects you to know and follow all rules all the time. Following the rules is ***your*** responsibility. The International Student Services (ISS) Office is the only source of information and advice on campus regarding your F-1 status while studying at the Community College of Philadelphia. In extenuating circumstances, students may consider consulting an immigration attorney.

### **Rules & Responsibilities**

**FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT:** You must be a **FULL-TIME** student every semester.

- Register and complete 12 credits or more each semester at Community College of Philadelphia.
- Contact ISS if you have any registration problems. If there is a reason you cannot register for 12 credits, you must seek written permission from ISS before the semester begins—this is only allowed in certain circumstances.
- Do not drop or withdraw from a course during the semester for any reason without written approval from ISS under any circumstances. At the end of each semester, you must have completed 12 credits.
- Go to class: The College has a strict attendance policy. If you do not go to each class session, you may be dropped from class placing you below the required 12 credits.
  - Earning the grade of “FS” means “Failure: Stopped Attending”, which is equivalent to a class withdrawal for immigration purposes

**EMPLOYMENT:** Do **NOT** work anywhere off campus unless you obtain work authorization from USCIS, DHS or authorization on the I-20 form specifically for Curricular or Optional Practical Training (CPT/OPT). *Possession of a Social Security Card/Number does NOT grant you the right to work in the US.* On-campus employment is acceptable.

**TUITION PAYMENTS:** Pay the required tuition and fees by the semester deadline established by Student Tuition Services. *F-1 students are never considered residents of Philadelphia or the state of Pennsylvania for tuition purposes, regardless of their length of time in the US. Notify ISS immediately if there are any delays in payments; otherwise, you risk falling out of status!*

**READ YOUR I-20:** Before signing your I-20, please read page 3 carefully. Also read all resources provided by ISS. Contact ISS with any questions.

**DISTANCE EDUCATION:** Do not enroll in more than one class of distance education per 12-credits. Such a course can count no more than 3 credits toward full time enrollment. Distance education/online courses (aka “remote learning” or “virtual learning”) courses are courses taught online where a teacher and students are not physically present in a classroom. At least 9 credits must be in-person.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** Do not expect to receive any financial assistance or to work, even on campus, in the U.S.

**ON-CAMPUS JOBS:** If you obtain an on-campus job, work no more than 20 hours per week while school is in session. On-campus employment is only allowed if your I-20 has not expired, you have not graduated, and you are a continuing student maintaining valid F-1 status.

**CHANGES IN YOUR SITUATION:** You must report the following for you (and any F-2 dependents) to ISS within 10 days:

- Change in immigration status
- Change in local home address in the US
- Change in legal name
- Change in major (curriculum) or program level

**COMPLETION DATE ON YOUR I-20:** Do not let the completion date (“program end date”) on your I-20 expire. If you need more time to complete your program, submit a I-20 Extension Request, including verification of continued financial support, to ISS at least two weeks before the expiration date. The delay must have been caused by a compelling academic or medical reason and not by academic probation or suspension.

**FINAL SEMESTER:** When you are in your final semester, you should report to ISS before the last day of classes to update the following:

- If you will complete your studies before or after the expected completion date on your I-20
- If you will apply for Optional Practical Training
- If you plan to transfer to another school

**TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL:** If you plan to transfer to a different school, you must notify ISS to make arrangements before the end of your last semester. The transfer must be completed with an international student advisor at the new school by following that school’s instructions. If you are completing your program at CCP, the transfer must be processed no later than 60 days from your completion of studies date.

**60 DAY GRACE PERIOD:** Within 60 days of completing your program (the end of your 60-day grace period after graduation), you must leave the US unless you have made other permissible arrangements, such as transferring or changing of status.

**TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE US:** Obtain a travel signature from ISS on your I-20 before you travel internationally. Travel signatures are valid for twelve months for enrolled students in good standing or six months for students on OPT.

**PASSPORT:** Maintain a valid passport. Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months in the future. Renewals can be processed within the U.S., through the Embassy of your country of citizenship.

**OTHER IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS:** Keep updated copies of all immigration-related documents, including renewals, replacements, etc., such as the front and back of the I-94 card or electronic record each time you (re)enter the US.

**URGENT SITUATIONS:** In an urgent situation, contact ISS before you withdraw from classes. If you obtain approval from ISS, you will have a 15-day grace period to depart the U.S.

**TAX FILING:** File non-resident tax forms each year as required by federal regulations of the Internal Revenue Service.

**HEALTH INSURANCE.** The College requires that you maintain adequate medical insurance coverage during your time in F-1 status. While the College offers information on International Student Insurance providers and plans, students can choose any provider they wish.

**VIOLATIONS:** Understand that if school records indicate or if it is learned that you have fallen out of F-1 status or violated the rules and regulations, ISS is required under federal law to report such violation to DHS by terminating your I-20.

**I have carefully read this form and I understand the requirements of my F-1 status and my responsibilities as an F-1 student. I understand that if my F-1 student status is violated in any way, I will not be eligible to receive any benefits or privileges, and it may lead to deportation from the U.S. If I am ever unsure about or my F-1 status responsibilities, I know that I should consult ISS before taking any action.**

Student Name:	Student Signature:	Date:
Student ID Number:	City of Birth:	Country of Birth:
Student Email Address:		