

An F-2 dependent is an eligible spouse or minor child of an F-1 student. F-2 dependents are issued their own dependent I-20 and are considered to be in status in the U.S. as long as the F-1 student is in status. Each F-2 dependent will be given an entry stamp on their passport upon arrival that should state “F-2” and “D/S”, indicating that he/she is eligible to remain in the U.S. as an F-2 for the duration of status as indicated on the I-20.

The following are F-2 regulations set forth by the Department of Homeland Security. It is essential that you read and understand these regulations. If you have any questions, please let us know. **It is your responsibility to follow these regulations or face possible termination of your F-2 status in the U.S.**

- **Study**
There is a significant distinction between an F-1 student and F-2 dependent when it comes to receiving an education. F-1 students are *required* to be enrolled as full-time students, whereas F-2 dependents are prohibited from it. An F-2 dependent may not engage in any kind of full-time study according to government regulations. The only exception to this is an F-2 child who is enrolled full-time in an elementary or secondary school (kindergarten through 12th grade).
- **Vocational or Recreational Part-time Study**
An F-2 spouse or child may engage in part-time study, as long as the study is vocational or recreational in nature (an English language course, a tennis class, a cooking class). This means that the study is intended as a means of pursuing a hobby or an interest, and is incidental to your status. Part-time study that counts towards a degree requirement, leads to an educational or professional objective, or satisfies a prerequisite is strictly prohibited and would be considered a violation of the F-2 visa status.
- **Work**
F-2 dependents may not work under *any* circumstances. This also means that F-2 dependents are not eligible for Social Security Numbers (SSN) under any circumstance, as SSNs are reserved for those who are employed.
- **Travel**
An F-2 who is traveling outside the U.S. must obtain a travel endorsement on his/her dependent I-20, and must carry all the same documents the F-1 visa holder is required to have when re-entering the U.S.
- **Change of Status to F-1**
An F-2 dependent may request a change of status to F-1, should the dependent wish to pursue an educational goal. However, the F-2 must wait for the change of status to be approved, prior to being eligible for any F-1 benefits. A change of status typically takes between 2-4 months to process, and an F-2 must be accepted to a program before beginning the change of status process. For more details on how to change your status, please schedule an appointment with an OISS advisor by calling 713-348-6095.

Note for all F-1 and F-2 visa holders: You must report any life event that may affect your immigration status such as birth of a child, marriage, change of legal name, divorce or death.