

Summary of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Final Rule:

Establishing a Fixed Time Period of Admission and an Extension of Stay Procedure

Scheduled to take effect **September 15, 2026**. DHS may delay implementation of rules pertaining to change of educational objectives and transfer up to two years from the effective date (Sept 14, 2028) if it determines implementation is infeasible for any reason.

	F and J students present in the U.S. on Sept 15, 2026:	F and J students who enter the U.S. or are approved for an Extension of Stay (EOS) by USCIS after Sept. 15, 2026:
Admission to the U.S.	Duration of Status (D/S)	Fixed Period of Admission
Length of Stay	Remain until the I-20 or DS-2019 Program End Date, up to four years + grace period (F-1: Nov 14, 2030; J-1: Oct 15, 2030) Grace Period: - F-1s: 60 days - J-1s: 30 days Students who depart after Sept 15 may be readmitted with a Fixed Period of Admission.	Determined by I-94 Admit Until Date (AUD): Programs under four years: Program End Date + 30-day grace period Programs over four years: Maximum four years, not to exceed Program End Date + 30-day grace period OPT: EAD end date + 30-day grace period
Changing Educational Objectives	Undergraduate students: May not change major, change educational level or transfer schools during the first year of study Graduate students: May not change major, change educational level or transfer schools during the program of study After program completion: May only enroll in a program at a higher educational level	
Extension of Stay (EOS)	May be required for: - Completing current program - Beginning a new program - Transferring schools - Post-completion OPT, STEM OPT or Academic Training Process: - Request updated I-20 or DS-2019 from ISS before Program End Date, then - Apply with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) up to 180 days before AUD: - File Form I-539 - Pay required fee - Complete biometrics (if required) Status while pending (if timely filed): - Considered to be in a period of authorized stay - May continue full course of study - Retain eligible employment for up to 240 days if filed before Program End Date (e.g. on-campus employment, CPT, pre-completion OPT, severe economic hardship) Alternatively, students may travel and seek readmission to the United States with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Be aware that while ISS can provide information about options and relevant factors, students who need assistance making decisions should speak with an experienced immigration lawyer.	
Employment	F-1 students admitted for duration of status who remain in the U.S. and timely file for post-completion or STEM OPT by March 18, 2027 do not require EOS	EOS required for post-completion OPT, STEM OPT and Academic Training following program completion