



January 30, 2013

Dear Attorneys and Accredited Representatives,

As Chief of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Office of Transformation Coordination, I want to personally inform you of enhancements to the agency's electronic immigration system, known as USCIS ELIS. On May 22, 2012, USCIS launched the foundational release of USCIS ELIS, which provides a streamlined, Web-based process for individuals, attorneys, and accredited representatives to submit and track their benefit requests.

As of January 14, 2013, new USCIS ELIS features allow attorneys and accredited representatives to electronically interact with clients, who can now verify, review, and e-sign their benefit requests. The new system features are part of our continuous effort to better serve our customers and move USCIS to an electronic environment. USCIS ELIS will gradually expand to include more features and functions until most types of immigration benefit requests can be electronically filed.

Please review the "[E-Filing Steps for Representatives Web page](#)" for more information on how to use the new features. Additionally, USCIS created a [guide](#) with tips and filing instructions to assist attorneys and accredited representatives. To access USCIS ELIS, please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis>.

In the present release, applicants and their representatives are able to electronically file select categories of the Form I-539, Application to Extend or Change Nonimmigrant Status. Currently, the following visa types can be processed in USCIS ELIS, with exceptions:

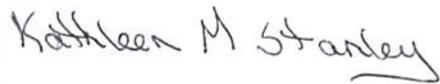
| Action | Exceptions |
|---|--|
| Extend B-1, B-2, F-1, M-1, or M-2 status. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals in the F-1 classification who received a date-specific visa that requires completion of a given course of study within a specific time can extend status in USCIS ELIS.Other F-1s are admitted for duration of status and should contact their designated school official to extend status. |
| Change status to B-1, B-2, F-1, F-2, J-1, J-2, M-1, or M-2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">An M-1 student may not change status to an F-1 student.Exchange students sponsored by USAID are not permitted to change status <u>unless</u> they receive prior approval from USAID. |
| Reinstate F-1 or M-1 status. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The spouse or child of an F-1 or M-1 student may be included in the principal's benefit request. |

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While electronic filing is not mandatory, we encourage all individuals who are eligible to file Form I-539 to use USCIS ELIS and provide us with feedback on the system by e-mailing us at uscis-elis-feedback@uscis.dhs.gov.

USCIS welcomes the opportunity to assist you and your clients in learning more about USCIS ELIS. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 233-2300, if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen M Stanley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline at the end of the name.

Kathleen M. Stanley
Chief, Office of Transformation Coordination