

International students at 15 Ohio colleges may regain legal status after federal reversal

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COLUMBUS, Ohio - Ohio colleges are reviewing federal records to find international student reinstatements after President Donald Trump's administration said Friday it is reversing its termination of legal status for hundreds of students nationwide.

This could allow at least 62 students who had lost their legal status to complete their studies in Ohio.

By Friday afternoon, three of the 10 Kent State University students had their visas revoked had been reinstated, college spokesman Eric Mansfield said. KSU notified the students, who had graduated but were allowed under their visas to have temporary employment in their fields.

All four Case Western Reserve University students whose records were terminated earlier in the month were returned to active status Friday afternoon, the university said.

Other Ohio colleges said they were following the fast-evolving situation.

[The Associated Press](#) reported Friday that federal government lawyers read statements in California and Washington federal courts saying Immigration and Customs Enforcement was manually restoring the status of students whose records were terminated in recent weeks.

This comes after students nationwide filed at least 100 lawsuits, and judges in more than 50 of the cases sided with the students in temporary orders, [according to Politico, which first reported the Trump reversal](#). More than 1,000 students across the country had lost their legal status or had visas revoked.

Furthermore, [a new AP poll](#) shows many Americans don't support Trump's attempts to deport international students, most of whom claim in court documents they have not been convicted of any crimes.

In Ohio, [the 62 affected students](#) were studying at Ohio public and private colleges and universities. At least three had filed lawsuits to reinstate their status, and two had won temporary judicial orders.

Jana Al-Akhras, an immigration attorney who is representing an Ohio State University student in a case against Trump over his legal status, cautioned that the restoration of students' legal status isn't the same as restoring their visas in the eyes of the government.

Students have a federal student immigration record in a database known as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. The federal government in recent weeks has terminated the status of hundreds of those student records, while maintaining in court documents that cannot be conflated with a revocation of their visas, Al-Akhras said.

The federal government said Friday that it's reversing the terminations while it develops a new policy framework for SEVIS terminations, she said. Al-Akhras added that she believes the federal government will attempt to develop framework that's more successful for Trump in court.

"What I believe is happening is ICE overplayed their hand," she said. "The courts found for the students."

Of the remaining seven Kent State students, three were students and four had graduated and were working temporarily in their fields on the student visas, Mansfield said.

Youngstown State University had the highest number of students with terminated status at 14.

"This is an evolving situation, and YSU is working with the appropriate agencies and offices to inform and assist our students as quickly as possible," YSU spokeswoman Rebecca Rose said.

"While this appears to be a positive development, the university is eager to receive more details on the new SEVIS policy framework that is mentioned in numerous reports," said Chris Booker, spokesman for Ohio State University, where 12 students lost their legal status.

Booker added that OSU will work to support the impacted students who are behind in their coursework.

On campuses throughout the state, springtime means final exams. The federal government changed the status of most students at the beginning of April.

Walsh University, a Catholic school in North Canton, worked with its students – who left campus earlier this month – to finish the semester, said Kim Graves, a school spokeswoman.

As the changes to legal status became public knowledge earlier this month, the schools had said the federal government hadn't notified them beforehand that the students' status was being changed. They found out by looking at a federal database.

Two Ohio State University students each won temporary orders from judges requiring the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to reinstate their status and bar the government from kicking them out of the United States.

[OSU doctoral student Prasanna Oruganti's order](#) came Wednesday from Judge Algenon Marbley, a federal judge in Columbus.

[OSU master's degree student Ahwar Sultan's order](#) was granted Friday by Judge Tanya Chutkan in Washington, D.C.

[Sultan appeared Thursday at the Oval on Ohio State's campus](#), saying he believed he was targeted for his activism for Palestinians and against Israel. He doesn't have a criminal record, said Al-Akhras, his lawyer.

University of Cincinnati PhD student [Jiarong Ouyang's case](#) is in federal court in San Francisco, part of a four-student complaint. A hearing was scheduled for Friday, according to court records, although it's not clear whether the government asked for a case dismissal due to coming reversals.

[The AP-NORC at the University of Chicago](#) poll shows 47% of Americans oppose Trump revoking visas of students over pro-Palestinian activism; just 28% support it and 24% neither favor or oppose.

Among Americans with a college degree, the poll found six in 10 strongly opposed it.