



Severe Economic Hardship Employment Instructions

Overview

If other employment opportunities are not available or are otherwise insufficient, an eligible F-1 student may request employment authorization from USCIS based on severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control. These circumstances may include a loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and /or living costs, or unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses. *Source: [8 C.F.R. 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(C)-(D) and (F)]*

Eligibility Criteria

You are eligible to apply for employment based on severe economic hardship if:

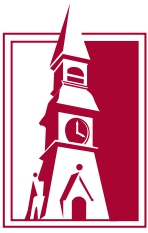
- You have been in F-1 status for one full academic year
- You are in good academic standing and are taking a full course load
- Employment (if approved) will not interfere with your studies
- You can demonstrate that the employment is necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen economic circumstances beyond your control

Other Notes

- Duration:
 - Granted by USCIS in increments of one year at a time, or until the Program End Date, whichever is shorter.
 - Authorization ends if a student transfers schools.
- Hours per Week:
 - Limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session; can be full-time during official school breaks.
- Approval Process:
 - Must apply for EAD from USCIS, and receive EAD before employment begins
 - It may take USCIS up to 90 days to process a completed I-765 work authorization request. a. You may not begin employment until the Start Date indicated on your EAD.
- If you transfer to another school, the Economic Hardship authorization to work is automatically and immediately terminated

How to Apply for Severe Economic Hardship Employment

1. Schedule an appointment with an IE advisor and bring the documents listed on the next page.
2. The IE advisor will review your documents.
3. The IE advisor will send your request to SEVIS electronically, and generate a new SEVIS I-20. The recommendation will be written on page 2 of the new I-20.
4. IE will notify you when your new I-20 is available.
5. Bring your Student ID to the International Welcome Center front desk to pick up your new I-20.
6. Sign your name on the I-20 immediately.
7. Send your request to USCIS (see below).



Required Evidence

- Economic Hardship Form (next page)
- 2 Passport-style photos (taken within the past 30 days), written on back with LAST NAME, First name & Current I-94 number.
- Check/Money Order for \$410 made to “The Department of Homeland Security”
 - (Optional) [Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver](#) with evidence
- [Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance](#)
- [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#), “Permission to Accept Employment” and Category (c)(3)(iii)
 - **Verify that the Certification Signature is below the line: it must be imaged for the EAD card**
- Current I-94
- Copy of Social Security Card (if you have one, front and back)
- Original I-20 with Economic Hardship Request, requested within 30 days of application
- Personal Statement
- Copies of previous I-20s (pages 1 and 2)
- Copy of Passport (bio page, current and any old), Visa (current F-1 visa and any old F-1 visa copies), Port of Entry (POE) Stamp (current)
- Transcripts
- [SEVIS I-901 Payment Confirmation](#)
- Proof of Economic Hardship
 - Examples: Letter from employer of financial sponsor, USA Bank Statements, foreign statements (translated); Print off of USCIS Special Alerts for Special Situations or Immigration Relief Measures; News Articles (printed from internet, copied from newspapers, news sources); Proof of devaluation of foreign currency.
- Copies of old I-20s (pgs. 1 & 3)
- Any Change of Status (COS) I-797, Notices of Action

Mailing to USCIS

Send your complete request to USCIS at the following location:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS):

USCIS
P.O. Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

