



Center for International Studies

Off-Campus Work Authorization: Severe Economic Hardship

Who is Eligible?

F-1 students who experience economic hardship brought about by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control may apply for off-campus work authorization if on-campus employment opportunities are either not available or otherwise insufficient.

In order to obtain off-campus employment authorization, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Student must have been lawfully enrolled in a full course of study for at least 9 months and be in good academic standing.
2. Student must be residing in the U.S. in legal, F-1 status.
3. Student must have made a good faith effort to locate on-campus employment

What Qualifies as Severe Economic Hardship?

- A loss of financial aid or on-campus employment that occurred due to a reason that was not the student's fault
- Substantial fluctuations in the value of the student's home country's currency
- Unexpected or inordinate increase in tuition or living expenses
- Unforeseen medical bills
- Other substantial and/or unforeseen economic expenses

Application Procedure

Students are required to meet with the International Student Adviser in the Center for International Studies **before** submitting the application to the USCIS.

The following materials are required to apply for off-campus employment based on economic hardship:

1. Completed Form I-765: Students applying for Economic Hardship should use code (c) (3) (iii) for item #16 on the I-765
2. A SEVIS issued I-20 form that has been authorized for off-campus employment on page three by the International Student Advisor/Designated School Official
3. Evidence/supporting materials that document the unforeseen financial circumstances and that the student qualifies for off-campus employment: This evidence can come in the form of bank statements, currency valuations, medical bills, etc.
4. Photocopy of passport data page
5. Photocopy of visa stamp in passport
6. Photocopies of front and back of I-94 arrival/departure card

7. Two passport style photographs: Photographs must be 2 inches x 2 inches with a white background
8. Check or money order for \$340 made payable to the “Department of Homeland Security”
9. A brief letter, written by the applicant, that offers convincing evidence to the USCIS that he/she is a deserving candidate for the Economic Hardship work authorization

Important Points to Remember

Once all materials have been evaluated, the Center for International Studies will make a determination as to the student’s eligibility for off-campus employment and submit the application to the USCIS Service Center.

The USCIS is responsible for granting final permission regarding off-campus employment authorization.

If the USCIS grants permission to the applicant, an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be issued. The Economic Hardship employment authorization is valid for an initial period of 12 months only and the EAD will reflect the 12 month authorization.

A renewal of the employment authorization requires the submission of a second I-765 application. Any applicant seeking an additional period of off-campus employment authorization is required to follow the application procedures described above.

The student will be notified if the application is denied. A denial by the USCIS **cannot** be appealed.