

Off-Campus Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship

Eligibility

The student must meet these eligibility criteria:

1. Student has been in F-1 status for at least one academic year (9 months).
2. Student is in good standing with the school (minimum 2.0 GPA and full-time enrollment).
3. Student has demonstrated severe financial hardship and is unable to find sufficient on-campus employment.

How to Apply

1. **Write a letter** completely explaining your personal financial situation and gather documentation to demonstrate severe economic hardship. The U.S. CIS will only consider severe economic hardship caused by **unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control** such as:
 - Unexpected change in the financial conditions of the source of support,
 - Substantial fluctuation in value of currency or rate of exchange,
 - Inordinate increase in tuition and/or living expenses,
 - Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment,
 - Outstanding medical bills, and/or
 - Other substantial and unexpected expenses.

Documentary evidence may include such items as: medical bills, letters from family about loss of financial support, family illness, political or natural catastrophes, newspaper or magazine publications or bank statement about significant changes in the rate of exchange or substantial currency devaluation, statement concerning the loss of financial aid or sponsorship, etc.

2. See an international student advisor in the International House with your letter and documentary evidence of financial circumstances.
3. If approved, the international student advisor will prepare a **new SEVIS I-20** which will certify that the student is eligible to apply for employment based on severe economic hardship.
4. **Employment may not begin until the student is issued a permit called an "EAD"** by the U.S. CIS. To obtain an EAD card, the student must apply directly to the U.S. CIS within 30 days of the international student advisor's recommendation.

Note: A student cannot begin working off-campus until the off-campus employment based on severe economic hardship has been approved by the U.S. CIS and the student has received his/her EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) in the mail. A student is limited to 20 hours of work per week when school is in session; however, a student may work full-time during semester/summer breaks.

(please turn over)

Materials: 1) **\$410 filing fee** (check or money order made payable to the **Department of Homeland Security**)

- 2) **2 passport-type photos** with name and I-94 number printed on back – must be recent photos, taken within 30 days of submitting your application materials
- 3) Completed and signed **I-765 form**. Fillable form and instructions are available online at: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf>

****Eligibility category (for question #16) is: (c)(3)(iii)**

- 4) Photocopy of **new, signed SEVIS I-20** with Severe Economic Hardship endorsement
- 5) Copies of your **F-1 visa, I-94 card** (front and back) or **electronic I-94** (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>), **passport photo/identity page** and passport expiration date
- 6) Your letter explaining your financial situation/why you're applying for off-campus work authorization
- 7) Documentary evidence of severe economic hardship beyond your control

It is recommended, but not required, that you also submit:

- Transcripts verifying full-time enrollment throughout academic program

Mail the above materials/documents to the address below:

If sending by regular US Post Office mail:	If sending by Express mail (such as Fed Ex, DHL, etc.):
USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036	USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034

It is recommended that you mail your application by either **certified mail or return receipt** to have proof of sending your application.

****Always keep copies** of all documents sent to and received from the U.S. CIS.**

Change of address: If you change your address while the OPT application is in process, you need to update your address at: www.uscis.gov/addresschange

Extension: Authorization is only granted one year at a time. A student may apply for an extension if his/her economic conditions continue and he/she maintains good standing with the U.S. CIS and Washburn. An application for an extension follows the same procedures as the original application.