



CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, IMMIGRATION, AND STUDY ABROAD

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

WHAT IS IT?

Severe economic hardship employment authorization is a benefit that allows F-1 students who are experiencing serious financial difficulties caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control to work off campus for up to twenty hours per week.

HOW CAN YOU QUALIFY FOR IT?

1. You must have been enrolled full-time in F-1 status for a least one academic year.
2. You must have a GPA of 2.0 or higher.
3. You must explain how on-campus employment has been either unavailable/insufficient to meet your needs.
4. You must convince USCIS that working will not interfere with your full-time studies.
5. You must be able to provide evidence which proves that you have financial problems that are caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond your control (e.g., medical bills, illness, death/business problems of sponsor, natural disasters, currency devaluation, etc.)

*If your financial difficulties are caused by problems your sponsor is having, that person must complete a Sponsor's Affidavit of Severe Economic Hardship and provide evidence of the unexpected circumstances that are now affecting your support. S/he will also have to complete a Revised Affidavit of Financial Support indicating the new amount that will be provided (if any) and evidence of continued financial capability to provide it. Evidence may include newspaper articles, back issues of the *New York Times* or *Wall Street Journal* showing currency devaluations, official school notices, or medical/dental bills.*

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

If you think you qualify for severe economic hardship employment authorization, **make an appointment to see the International Student Adviser** to discuss your situation. **Bring any evidence** that you have to prove your financial need. At your meeting you will receive an application to fill out and return to us. We will review the application after you return it to us to make sure that you qualify. If we agree that you do, we will recommend that USCIS authorize your employment due to severe economic hardship and send your application to USCIS for adjudication.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

After your application is filed, plan that it will take **several months** for the application to be processed by USCIS. It could take less or more depending on their workload and any security clearances.

Sometimes, USCIS will request more evidence of your financial problems. If this happens, please make an appointment to see us right away.

It's important to take USCIS processing time into consideration when planning the date you want to start working! YOU CANNOT BEGIN TO WORK UNTIL YOU HAVE YOUR EAD CARD!

HOW LONG WILL I BE ABLE TO WORK?

USCIS grants hardship employment authorization for one-year periods. It can be renewed annually up to your expected date of completion of study.

Your employment authorization is automatically terminated if you fail to maintain your F-1 status.

APPLYING FOR DSO RECOMMENDATION FOR SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORMS:

1. Severe Economic Hardship Employment Authorization Recommendation Request Form

2. F-1 Student Status Responsibilities While On Severe Economic Hardship

3. [Form I-765](#): APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION. Go to uscis.gov, complete items 1-16, print out, and sign in black ink

- Item 3: Address: If you would like us to help track the adjudication of your application, enter our office address.
- Item 9: Social Security Number is not your school identification number. Leave it blank if you don't have one.
- Item 10: I-94 Number
- Item 11: If you have ever applied for hardship or optional practical training employment before, answer yes, where and when you applied, whether it was granted or denied, and attach a photocopy of any EAD card issued for it.
- Your Certification: sign in BLACK INK, put your telephone number and the date.
- Item 16: Enter the code for severe economic hardship: (c)(3)(iii).

4. **Attachment to I-765: WHY I NEED OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION TO AVOID SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP.** Be sure the form is fully completed on both sides.

5. [Form G-1145](#): E-NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATION/PETITION ACCEPTANCE. Go to uscis.gov, complete, print out and sign in BLACK INK the MOST RECENT Form G-1145 available.

ATTACH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS TO YOUR APPLICATION

- **Evidence**: Attach any documentation that will prove you are experiencing severe economic hardship that was both unexpected and beyond your control.

If your financial difficulties are caused by problems your sponsor is having (the person whose name appears on your form I-20, have your sponsor complete the Sponsor's Affidavit of Severe Economic Hardship/Revised Sworn Promise of Cash Support form attached and provide evidence of the unexpected circumstances that are now affecting your support and evidence of continued financial capability to provide the new promised support (if any).

- **Two passport-type photographs.** Print your name and I-94 number on the back in pencil.
- **Forms I-20.** Photocopies of all previous forms I-20 issued by us and other schools you have attended.
- **Photocopies of any previous EAD Card(s).**
- **Form I-94.** Photocopy of paper I-94 or [electronic I-94](#).
- **Photocopies of your passport identification page(s) and visa.**
- **\$410 fee** in the form of a check or money order made payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. If you are using a personal check, it must have your name and address on it.

INFORMATION ABOUT APPLICATION PROCESSING

- 1. If everything is in order, we will issue you a new form I-20 with our recommendation on it.**
We will contact you to come in and pick up your application.
- 2. We will provide you with information about how and when to send your application to USCIS.**
- 3. If you put our office address on your form I-765, USICS will communicate with us about your application.** If they request additional information, we will contact you. If your application is approved the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be sent here and we will contact you to come in and pick it up.
- 4. You cannot begin working until you have received your EAD card.**