

F-1 Severe Economic Hardship

If you are suffering a severe economic hardship due to unforeseen changes in your financial circumstances, you may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for authorization to work off-campus.

Examples of unforeseen circumstances:

- Loss of financial support or on-campus employment.
- Substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate.
- Inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs.
- Unexpected changes in the financial condition of your source of support, such a loss of a family business
- Excessive medical bills.

Eligibility:

- You must have been in F-1 status for one academic year
- You must be in good academic standing
- You must document that on-campus employment opportunities are unavailable or insufficient to meet your financial needs.
- You must demonstrate that acceptance of employment will not interfere in enrolling full-time.

Employment guidelines:

- The employment authorization is granted by USCIS in increments of one year at a time.
- Students using this authorization must still be registered full-time each fall and spring semester.
- The authorization allows you to work for any employer up to 20 hours per week when classes are in session, and full-time during semester breaks and vacations.
- The work is not required to be related to your course of study.
- An offer of employment is not required to apply.
- This employment does not affect your eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT).
- Employment authorization is automatically terminated if you graduate, fail to maintain status, or transfer to another school.

Application Process: You must submit an application to USCIS and must receive your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) before you may begin working. Follow the steps below:

STEP 1: Be Informed. Read this handout thoroughly and carefully. With questions, consult the International Programs Office.

STEP 2: Submit a Severe Economic Hardship Request Form and personal statement (with supporting documentation) to the IPO front desk. A new I-20 recommending the work permission will be ready for pick-up in 3 business days.

STEP 3: Compile a complete application. Gather the required application materials and prepare your application with the following documents included in this order:

- [Form G-1145](#). Use this form if you wish to receive email or text confirmation of your receipt number.
- [Form I-765](#). Complete this online using the form-fillable pdf. Complete all applicable fields.
 - Check the first box, “Permission to accept employment”
 - #1: list your name *exactly* as is appears on your passport and I-20.
 - #10: list your I-94 “Admission number” found on the [I-94 website](#).
 - #15: enter “F-1 student”
 - #16: enter the code (c)(3)(iii)
 - **Be sure to sign the form on page two!!**
- \$410 filing fee (check or money order payable to the “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”)
- Photocopy of your I-20 with the recommendation for economic hardship employment
- Two recent “passport” photos. In pencil, print your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo. No eyeglasses can be worn in passport photos. Passport photos can be obtained at some U.S. Post Offices, FedEx offices, and many retailers such as CVS. More details about can be found at: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/photos/photos.html>
- I-94 record (printed from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/>)
- Personal statement describing the unforeseen economic hardship (if possible, attach additional documentation) and explain why other employment options are unavailable or insufficient
- Photocopy of passport identification page
- Photocopy of F-1 visa page
- Photocopies of any previously-issued EAD cards

STEP 4: Mail your complete application to USCIS.

When you have completed the entire application, make a complete photocopy for your files, and send the entire application to USCIS:

For FedEx/UPS – Recommended!:

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

For USPS

USCIS
P.O. Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85034

STEP 5: Wait for the EAD.

Within one month of sending the application to the USCIS, you should get a standard receipt notice. The “Receipt Number” in the top left corner of this receipt notice can be used to check the status of your case on the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov or by calling the phone number indicated on the receipt. Keep in mind that this information is updated infrequently. **You CANNOT begin working until you have received your EAD and are within the start and end dates printed on the card.**

F-1 Severe Economic Hardship Request Form

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- Excessive medical bills.

To apply for Severe Economic Hardship, you must submit the following to the IPO front desk:

- F-1 Severe Economic Hardship Request Form
- Personal Statement
- Supporting documentation

If eligible for this work permission, a new I-20 recommending economic hardship will be ready for pick-up in 3 business days.

Family Name: _____ First Name: _____

YSU ID #: Y00 _____ YSU Major: _____

Residential Address: _____ Apt/Room Number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

U.S. Phone Number: _____

Employment Dates (mm/dd/yyyy - 1 year maximum). Start date: _____ End date: _____

I have been in F-1 status for at least one academic year: Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____