



## EMPLOYMENT BASED ON ECONOMIC HARDSHIP FOR F-1 STUDENTS

**DEFINITION:** off-campus employment authorization based upon severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control is a special government-granted authorization. Examples of situations when students may request this authorization from the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) include, but are not limited to: substantial fluctuations in value of currency, unusual increases in tuition/living costs, economic fallout from local or global natural disasters or events, unexpected changes in the financial conditions of the student's source of support, medical bills, or unexpected expenses.

### ELIGIBILITY:

1. Student must have been in F1 status for one full academic year
2. Student must be in good academic standing and pursuing a full course of study
3. Student has demonstrated that employment will not interfere with full-time study
4. Student has demonstrated that the employment is necessary as per above definition
5. Student has demonstrated that on-campus employment is unavailable or is not sufficient to meet the needs that have arisen due to the unforeseen circumstances.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Write a letter explaining and detailing your circumstances (see reverse for sample).
2. Complete Form I-765 [www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis) (go to 'immigration forms' then scroll down to I-765) and use code (c)(3)(iii) for Item 27, Eligibility Category.
3. Have 2 passport-style photographs taken (see guidelines [here](#)). Write your name and I-94 # on the back of each photo.
4. Make a copy of your I-94 record, unofficial transcript, photo page of passport, visa page of passport, and copies of all previous I-20s.
5. Write a personal check or get a money order for \$410, made payable to US Department of Homeland Security OR request a fee waiver by completing [Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver](#) and submitting supporting documents.
6. For electronic notification that your documents have been received, complete Form G-1145 located at [www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis) click 'forms' and scroll down. Print and clip to the first page of the application.
7. Scan your completed application (including everything but the photos and your fee payment) and email to [intlssso@uncc.edu](mailto:intlssso@uncc.edu) with the subject header "Economic Hardship Application".

*A counselor will review your submission, then request changes or recommend the off-campus employment by issuing you a new I-20. After you have received the hardship employment-recommended I-20, proceed to Step 8.*

8. Mail above documents and copy of new I-20 to:

USCIS  
PO Box 805373  
Chicago, IL 60680 (regular postal mail only)  
OR  
USCIS  
Attn: I-765 C03  
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603-5517 (express mail only)



**AUTHORIZATION FOR EMPLOYMENT & HOURS PER WEEK**

Employment may begin once the EAD has been received; maximum of 20 hours per week during regular academic sessions, and full time during holidays and school vacations.

**LENGTH OF AUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT**

Employment is authorized for 12 months and is renewable up to the expected date of completion of the current course of study. Employment is automatically terminated if a student is not in status.

**TAX OBLIGATION**

Employment is subject to all state, local taxes and federal taxes unless exempt under certain country tax treaties. Employment is not subject to Social Security (FICA) Tax if residency in the U.S. has been for less than 5 years.

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Address a letter: "To whom it may concern" and include the following information:

1. An explanation of your unexpected financial circumstances including:
  - a. your source of financial support when you first came to the United States
  - b. the unexpected change in your personal source of financial support
  - c. why you need to work

2. LISTING OF CURRENT EXPENSES & INCOME

a. Expenses:

Tuition/Fees\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Books\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Room\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Meals \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Health Insurance\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Transportation\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Miscellaneous\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b. Income: (sources & amount for each)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. Deficit: (difference between expense & income)\$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. Attach any additional supporting documentation including hospital bills, newspaper clippings, letters from sponsor, proof of having exhausted on-campus job opportunities etc.