

Permission to Work: Economic Necessity

Students in the U.S. on F-1 student visas are required to have adequate funding for their education. Occasionally, however, students' situations change after arriving in the U.S. and they have to seek alternative means of support. Under certain circumstances, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will permit students to apply for permission to work due to economic necessity.

To qualify, two rules apply: (1) students must have been in the U.S. in F-1 status for one academic year, and (2) there must have been an unforeseen change in the students' economic situation.

What the Student Needs To Do

1. Complete all of form I-765. (See notes in box).
 - Top: Check "Permission to accept employment."
 - #3: CAUTION! Do not use your L&C address or any address from which you might move within the next four months. We suggest using the ISS office as your address. To do so, use the following:
STUDENT NAME
0615 SW PALATINE HILL RD, MSC 192/INT'L STUDENTS
PORTLAND OR 97219-7899
 - #10: Use your I-94 number.
 - #16: Enter the following code exactly: "(C) (3) (iii)"
 - Sign the form.
2. Bring the completed I-765 form, photographs and all items listed to International Students and Scholars.
 - Your passport
 - Your current I-20
 - Your I-94 form (the small white card usually stapled in your passport)
 - A check for \$380 made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"
 - Photocopies of previous EAD card, if you have one.
 - Two "passport photos." These can be obtained at any passport photo shop. The photos **cannot** be ones you previously used for a passport, visa, etc. Print your name on the back of each picture.
 - A letter from you to DHS explaining clearly your situation and the reason for your need to work, and proving that it is **due to unforeseen circumstances**. Attach any supporting documents.
 - A budget showing your income and expenses for the past year and the income and expenses projected for the coming year. (Look on the website for a sample budget).

ISS Staff Will (Check list)

- Verify eligibility for the benefit.
- Check the I-765 to make sure it is completed correctly.
- Update SEVIS with a recommendation of employment.
 - Select Off Campus Employment
 - Item 1: Recommend
 - Item 2: Economic Hardship
 - Note: “Employment due to economic necessity recommended from date of approval for a period of one year.”
 - Print and sign updated I-20; have student sign page 1.
- DSO may include letter of support.
- Make one copy of everything:
 - I-765
 - Info pages of passport
 - Visa page of the passport
 - I-94 (front and back)
 - Newly printed I-20 (both pages)
 - All previous I-20 forms from all schools
 - Previous EAD cards (front and back), if applicable
 - Pictures (with name printed on the back of each picture)
 - Check for \$380.00 payable to US Dept. of Homeland Security
- Make one additional copy by running the photocopies again.
- Write the date that the forms are being sent on one copy and put it in the student’s file.
- Mail the following to: USCIS, PO Box 21281, Phoenix, AZ 85036 (For courier, the address is: USCIS, ATTN AOS, 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S., Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ, 85034)
 - The letter of explanation from the student with supporting documents.
 - The budget information from the student.
 - Photocopy of all I-20s
 - Photocopy of I-94 (front and back)
 - Original pictures (in a small clear plastic envelope)
 - Original I-765
 - Copy of passport information page
 - Copy of F-1 visa page of the passport
 - Check payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Notes:

- Only copies of the I-20 forms are sent to DHS as part of the OPT application.
- Always mail in a manila envelope and put the check on top.
- Use one paper clip, no staples.