

**International and Exchange Student Center**  
**Applying for Economic Hardship**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

F-1 students are non-immigrants. Therefore, they are not eligible for Financial Aid. Sometimes students may experience severe financial hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control, for example the financial sponsor may become seriously ill, retire from employment, a natural disaster may impact the student's home country, etc. Eligible F-1 students may request a recommendation for Off-Campus employment authorization from the International and Exchange Student Center (IESC).

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- ❖ F-1 students must have been in legal immigration status for a minimum of one academic year (two semesters) or nine consecutive months prior to accepting any off-campus employment.
- ❖ Currently enrolled as a full-time student in good standing.
- ❖ The student must be able to clearly document the circumstances causing the economic need, for example, hospital records documenting the financial sponsor's illness; retirement documents showing loss of employment; newspaper articles about the natural disaster; etc.

Students are eligible for 20 hours of work during school sessions and 40 hours during break periods. The student is required to apply for employment authorization to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Approval is subject to review and adjudication by the California Service Center (CSC) of the USCIS.

**DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION**

USCIS will issue an employment Authorization Document (EAD). This is a card that is mailed directly to the student. Employment authorization will begin on the date requested or the date the employment authorization is adjudicated, whichever is later. The EAD will reflect the period of validity (start and end dates) of employment authorization. In the case of Economic Hardship, employment authorization is granted for one year at a time and must be renewed if the student needs to continue employment. The student will be required to resubmit all proof, documents, and fees when applying for a renewal of this category of employment.

**PROCEDURE**

Students are required to make an appointment to meet with a Foreign Student Advisor (FSA). Please bring the documents listed under Step 1 to your appointment. This will assist you with obtaining preliminary approval.

- ❖ **STEP 1:** The student will submit the following via email to [iescrequest@csun.edu](mailto:iescrequest@csun.edu):
  - Economic Hardship request form (form is available in the [Form and Processes](#) section of the IESC website)
  - Copy of student letter explaining the circumstances that caused the economic need
  - Copy of letter from sponsor explaining circumstances that caused the economic hardship
  - Copies of documents proving the circumstances that caused the economic need.
  - Copies of passport pages showing passport number, expiration date, and full name
  - Copy of most recent I-94
  - Copy of any previously issued EAD(s) (for student file/record)
  - COPY of completed Form I-765. Please review [instructions](#) and download the form at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).
    - This is an online fillable form. Please type or print legibly in black ink.
    - Answer all questions fully and accurately. If a question does not apply to you (for example, if you have not used any other names), type or print "N/A" unless otherwise directed. If your answer to a question which requires a numeric response is zero or none (for example, if you do not have a USCIS Online Account Number), type or print "None" unless otherwise directed.
    - Check the box "Initial permission to accept employment."
    - Students who do not have a Social Security Number (SSN), may now apply for a SSN when completing Form I-765. To apply for the SSN, complete Items #13a. and 14-17b.

- Item #27: Type in the eligibility code(c)(3)(iii)
- Leave Item #28 - 31b. blank
- Certification Section: Sign your name using a BLACK ink pen. Make sure your signature stays within the signature box without touching any words noted on the form
- Use Part 6. Additional Information to provide all previously used SEVIS numbers and evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

IESC will take approximately 3 weeks to review and process the request. Please call 818-677-3053 to ask if the I-20 is ready for step 2.

❖ STEP 2: The student must return to IESC to pick up the New I-20 and Evidence Letter from Foreign Student Advisor. You will bring the following:

- Two passport photographs with small envelope. Photos must meet U.S specifications (not taken in home country). Refer to I-765 instructions on page 20 for photograph requirements. The student must write his/her name and A-Number (if any) on back edge of each photo lightly in felt pen or pencil.
- Copies of passport pages showing passport number, expiration date, and full name
- Copy of most recent I-94
- Copy of any previously issued EAD(s)
- Completed Form I-765 - USCIS will consider a photocopied, faxed, or scanned copy of the original, handwritten signature valid for filing purposes. The photocopy, fax, or scan must be of the original document containing the handwritten, ink signature
- Completed [Form G-1145](#) - Please download the form at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)
- Original student letter explaining the circumstances that caused the economic need
- Original letter from financial sponsor explaining circumstances that caused the economic hardship
- Original documents proving the circumstances that caused the economic need
- The filing fee for Form I-765 is \$410.
  - Payments by check or money order - \$410.00 payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" from a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and must be payable in U.S. currency.
  - Payments by credit card - Please see Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions, at [www.uscis.gov/G-1450](http://www.uscis.gov/G-1450) for more information. (Do not submit this form or any payment to the IESC)

### APPLICATION MAILING INSTRUCTIONS

The Foreign Student Advisor will put together the packet and then the student is required to mail it to the appropriate USCIS lockbox.

When mailing documents by U.S. Post Office--Use Certified Mail Return Receipt and mail to:

USCIS  
PO Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036

When mailing documents by Express Mail or Courier Service, mail to:

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

If you are currently working and living outside of California, your application should be mailed to a different address. Please refer to the I-765 instructions at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- ❖ IESC does not require ANY fees for the services it provides to international students. No fees, under any circumstances, shall be submitted to IESC. If a student is submitting an application to USCIS, a check payable to "Department of Homeland Security" will accompany the student's application.
- ❖ Advisors' responsibilities are limited to reviewing the check for accuracy and returning to the student who will mail the application directly to USCIS.
- ❖ The CSC currently takes 90 to 120 days to process all application.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to work prior to receiving employment authorization.
- ❖ Students are required to submit a copy of the EAD to IESC as soon as they receive it.

### IESC/FSA CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact IESC at (818) 677-3053 or email a Foreign Student Advisor (FSA) for questions and/or clarifications.

College	FSA	Email
Engineering & Computer Science and Science & Mathematics	Brenda Acosta	<a href="mailto:brenda.acosta@csun.edu">brenda.acosta@csun.edu</a>
Business & Economics and Health & Human Development	Cynthia Alvarez	<a href="mailto:cynthia.alvarez@csun.edu">cynthia.alvarez@csun.edu</a>
Arts, Media, & Communication, Education, Social & Behavioral Sciences, and Humanities	Michelle Garcia	<a href="mailto:michelle.garcia@csun.edu">michelle.garcia@csun.edu</a>

For processing times please visit: <http://www.csun.edu/international/current-students-forms>. Processing times may vary during peak times. For additional information, please contact us at (818) 677-3053.