

## Severe Economic Hardship Employment for F-1 Students

- [Overview](#)
- [Eligibility Criteria](#)
- [Documentation Needed to Apply](#)
- [How to Apply for Severe Economic Hardship Employment](#)
- [Submitting Your Severe Economic Hardship Application to USCIS](#)
- [Employment Authorization Card](#)

### Overview

If other employment opportunities are not available or are otherwise insufficient, an eligible F-1 student may request employment authorization based on severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control. These circumstances may include a loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and /or living costs, or unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses. *Source: [8 C.F.R. 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(C)-(D) and (F)]*

### Eligibility Criteria

You are eligible to apply for employment based on severe economic hardship if:

- You have been in F-1 status for one full academic year
- You are in good academic standing and are taking a full course load
- Employment will not interfere with your studies
- You can demonstrate that the employment is necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen economic circumstances beyond your control

### Documentation Needed to Apply

- A completed and signed [Severe Economic Hardship Request Form](#) [1].
- A personal statement describing the unforeseen hardship situation and, if possible, attach backup documentation; for example, news articles, a letter from home telling of a change in family circumstances or proof of a currency devaluation in your country, etc.
- Completed [Form I-765](#) [2], using the code (C)(3)(iii) at item 16. **Do not** date the form until you are ready to send the application to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
- Copies of your current and previous I-20s

- Copy of paper or print-out of electronic [Form I-94](#) [3] (please click on the link for instructions)
- Copy of your F-1 visa page (except Canadians) or I-797 (approval of change of status to F-1), if applicable
- Copy of your unofficial transcript available from [Wolverine Access](#) [4]

## How to Apply for Severe Economic Hardship Employment

1. Schedule an appointment with a U-M International Center advisor, and bring the documents listed in [Documentation Needed to Apply](#) to your appointment.
2. The U-M International Center advisor will review your documents.
3. The U-M International Center advisor will send your request to SEVIS electronically, and generate a new SEVIS I-20. The recommendation will be written on page 2 of the new I-20.
4. The U-M International Center will notify you when your new I-20 is available.
5. Bring your U-M ID to the U-M International Center front desk to pick up your new I-20.
6. Sign your name on the I-20 immediately.
7. Send your request to USCIS. Refer to Submitting Your Severe Economic Hardship Request Application to USCIS below.

## Submitting Your Severe Economic Hardship Application to USCIS

Once you have requested a Severe Economic Hardship Employment recommendation and received your new I-20 from the U-M International Center, you will need to prepare and submit the following list of items to USCIS:

- A copy of the new I-20 with employment recommendation
- Copies of your previous I-20(s)
- Copy of paper or print-out of electronic [Form I-94](#) [3] (please click on the link for instructions)
- Copy of your passport page showing your biographical information and the expiration date
- Copy of your F-1 visa page (except Canadians) or I-797 (approval of change of status to F-1), if applicable
- Form I-765 and the [base fee](#) [5]
- Two full-face passport style photos. The photos must be identical and in color with a plain background. They must be no more than 30 days old when the I-765 is filed to USCIS. Photos can be obtained at [U-M Photo Services](#) [6]. Put photos in an envelope. You should attach the fee and the photo envelope on top of the entire application (on the upper left-hand corner). Please do not staple the fee and the photos.
- The personal statement along with any other supporting documents, if available.

## Mailing to USCIS

Send your complete request to USCIS at the following location:

USCIS Service Center  
 P.O. Box 87765  
 Lincoln, NE 68501-7765

**NOTE:** *The U.S. Postal Service is the only service that delivers to a P.O. Box address. You may want to send your application via express (next day) mail.*

## Employment Authorization Card (EAD)

If the application is approved, USCIS will issue an EAD (Employment Authorization Document) to you. If the application is denied, you will be notified by USCIS in writing.

You may not begin employment until you have received the EAD and the dates are valid. **Authorization is granted in one-year intervals up to the expected date of completion of studies. You may work part time while school is in session and full time during official university holidays.**

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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/f1-students/severe-economic-hardship-employment>

### Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/econhardship.pdf>

[2] [https://www.uscis.gov/system/files\\_force/files/form/i-765.pdf](https://www.uscis.gov/system/files_force/files/form/i-765.pdf)

[3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/i-94>

[4] <http://wolverineaccess.umich.edu/>

[5] <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

[6] <https://photography.umich.edu/services-pricing/passport-photos/>