

To be eligible for this permission you need to demonstrate eligibility by answering 'yes' to the following questions:

- Have I been in F-1 status for one academic year (fall, winter and spring quarters or fall and spring semesters)?
- Am I in good academic standing and registered as a full-time student?
- Have I made a serious attempt to find on-campus work?
- Can employment off-campus earn more money than on-campus work?
- Can I demonstrate that my changed circumstances are unexpected, beyond my control, and are causing financial hardship?



Common Unexpected Circumstances

These circumstances may include but are not limited to: Loss of financial aid., loss of 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, unexpected changes in the financial conditions of the student's source of support, medical bills, and other substantial and unexpected expenses. Suggestions for the types of appropriate documentation are described below.

- The financial problems must be due to unforeseen circumstances beyond your control. The financial problem must be documented and show a substantial need. For example, "fees are too expensive" or "My sister is studying in the USA also and I don't want to be such a burden on my parents," will not be accepted by USCIS. On the other hand, " My father had a heart attack and has not worked for 6 months. His hospital bills were over \$10,000 at home. My family cannot send me as much funding as before," or "My sponsor was laid off from his job" will be seriously considered by USCIS.
- Documentation should be included to support the application. For example, copies of medical bills, news articles about your country's economy/crisis, letters from sponsors, etc.
- A letter from you requesting work authorization and explaining the unforeseen 'event' that has occurred since your arrival to the U.S. that requires you to seek employment authorization and that other employment options are unavailable or insufficient.
- A notarized letter from your sponsor, explaining the reasons he/she cannot fully support you at this time and why the situation was unforeseen, if applicable. In the case of death of a sponsor, a letter from another family member or friend explaining this situation must be supplied. (Faxes of these letters are sufficient)
- Any other documentation, which supports your case proving that the 'event' happened, when it happened, and that it was beyond your control.

What Is EH?

Economic Hardship is off-campus work permission authorized by Immigration for F-1 students who have proven that they are experiencing severe financial problems caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control. These circumstances may include: 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, unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.

The Economic Hardship application is authorized by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for work authorization based on "severe economic hardship", which is permissible for students who suffer unforeseen financial difficulties to remain in status and continue their education. Severe economic hardship could include the loss of a scholarship, the substantial fluctuation in the value of foreign currency or exchange rates, tuition increases, medical bills, sponsor's inability to fully support, and other unforeseen hardships.

See the back of this folder for eligibility information and a list of more possible circumstances

Additional materials to be enclosed in this folder:

- Supplement paper for ISSS use (required)
- I-765 instructions
- I-765 form (<http://uscis.gov/graphics/>)
- USCIS photo information

Information in the brochure will be made available in alternative format, such as large print or cassette tape, upon request.
Minnesota State University, Mankato is an affirmative action/equal opportunity
educator and employer

This form was reformatted and updated by Sarah Anderson Graduate Assistant and Intern for the MSU International Center.

Saved under: ISO/Staff/Brochures/OPT,CPT,EH instructions: as EH Folder

Updated as of 3/20/2008

Economic Hardship (EH)

The Application Procedures

Step 1

Application materials may be picked up at the International Center in CSU 250. The student should arrange an appointment with an International Student Advisor to discuss Economic Hardship and application procedures. **Please bring the following documents:**

- Copy of your Passport
- Copy of both sides of the I-94 card
- SEVIS I-20
- Original and copy of completed I-765 form—on line 16 put (C) (3) (iii) See examples for instruction
- Unofficial Transcript
- Proof/documentation of financial difficulty (see description below)
- Copy of current and previous I-20's

Documentary proof of economic hardship (A letter written by you addressed to USCIS in which you describe in detail the circumstances that support your request for hardship employment authorization and the statement explaining why other employment options are unavailable or insufficient)

The application and renewals can take approximately 60-90 days.

Step 2

If you meet all eligibility requirements, the IC will issue you a SEVIS I-20 recommending you for EH and update your record in the SEVIS database. Then you will paper clip (do not staple) the following documents in the order shown and send to the USCIS:

- A check for \$340 payable to USCIS, put your I-94 number on the check
- Two identical color photos with your name and I-94 number on the back of the photos
- Completed I-765 form
- Photocopy of new SEVIS I-20 with EH recommendation and your signature
- Photocopy of both sides of I-94 Card
- Copy of Unexpired Passport (including photograph, and visa stamp pages)
- Copies of previous I-20s
- A copy of previous Employment Authorization Document EAD (if issued)

Mail to USCIS using the address on the following page —————>—————>

Mail Documents from step two
To:
USCIS
Nebraska Service Center
850 S. Street
P.O. Box 87765
Lincoln, NE 68501-7765

Note: For overnight delivery, express or courier mail makes sure to include 850 S. Street . (Submit to the address above if you are residing in this Minnesota area. Check www.uscis.gov for other locations for submitting documents out-of-state)

Important:

You can only begin your employment upon receiving your EAD card from USCIS and only on the dates authorized. USCIS grants the work permission in one year increments. It is your responsibility to reapply and explain the reasons for your continued need for off campus work permission.

NOTE: when you were accepted to MSU, you provided documentation to show you have sufficient funds to study. You must provide documentation/evidence of the reasons there has been a change in your individual circumstances.

Other Things to Keep in Mind About EH

Checking Your Status

To check your application status, use your LIN number which you will find in your receipt and check on the USCIS web-site www.USCIS.gov. You can also call the USCIS number 1-800-375-5283. After 90 days do the receipt, it may be possible to be issued a temporary EAD at a District office.

Social Security Number

Before you begin work you will need a valid Social Security Number (SSN) . Your MSU tech ID is not a valid SSN. If you do not already have one, please obtain the application instructions from the International Center. The Social Security Administration will process your application and a card will be sent to you.

Taxes

In general, F-1 students who have been in the U.S. in less than six calendar years are exempt from social security (FICA) and Medicare taxes. You should be sure to bring this to the attention of your employer because many employers are not familiar with this provision of the tax laws. If you need more information about the F-1 social security and Medicare tax exemption, please refer to IRS publication 519 (www.irs.gov).