

**Off-Campus Employment Due to Severe Economic Hardship  
For Students in F-1 Status**

**General Requirements**

F-1 students may be eligible for off-campus work authorization due to economic hardship if:

1. In the opinion of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the need to work is caused by **unforeseen circumstances not within the student's control** such as
  - Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student;
  - Substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or in the exchange rate;
  - Unusually high medical bills;
  - Other substantial and unexpected expenses; **AND**
2. The student has been in lawful F-1 status for 9 months, is in good academic standing (2.0 GPA for undergraduates/3.0 GPA for graduates), and demonstrates that the employment will not interfere with his /her enrollment in a full course of study; **AND**
3. The student demonstrates that he/she has made a good faith effort to locate on-campus employment before applying for employment based on economic hardship.

**Approval Process**

1. **Authorization by USCIS.** A student's application for employment based upon economic hardship must be approved by USCIS before the student can begin the employment. If the USCIS determines that your case meets their criteria for employment based on economic hardship, the approval will be in the form of an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by USCIS. The EAD will contain the student's photograph and will also indicate the exact dates of the authorized employment.
2. The employment will be granted for a maximum of 12 months or up to your expected date of completion of your academic program, whichever is earlier. Students may re-apply for employment authorization before the 12 months expire. Employment based on economic hardship can be renewed only by USCIS and only if the student is maintaining full-time status and is in good standing.
3. Employment authorization is automatically terminated if a student fails to maintain full-time student status, is no longer in good academic standing or transfers schools.
4. Employment is authorized for 20 hours per week or less while school is in session; full-time while school is not in session or during summer session if the student is not enrolled full time.

**How do I prepare my application?**

- Gather all documentation that will demonstrate economic need for employment which is caused by a situation beyond your control. Include a detailed list of assets and expenses.
- **Complete and email a CIE advisor your Economic Hardship I-20 Request Form (last page in handout)**
  - Your requested dates on the I-20 can be changed/alterd by the adjudicator approving your application.
  - Since the application can take about 3 months to process, we recommend you use a future date.

## Submitting your documents to CIE via Email

- Submit the completed/signed Economic Hardship I-20 Request Form
- Submit the completed I-765 form for review.
  - Please type and print. CIE advisor will make any recommended corrections
- Submit any documentation you would like reviewed
- CIE will review your request and documents, make any suggested changes and prepare your Economic Hardship Request I-20.
- CIE will then send you a scanned copy of your I-20. You will need to print the scanned copy and **SIGN IT** before mailing it as part of your Economic Hardship application

## Sending Your Completed Economic Hardship Application to USCIS

Once you have received your Economic Hardship request I-20 from CIE, you will need to prepare and submit the following list of items to USCIS:

- **Notification-** [G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance](#). This should be first page
- **Payment- Fee for I-765** (\$410), payable to US Department of Homeland Security. Personal check, cashier's check or money order is acceptable.
  - Please note you do not have to pay the biometric services fee
- **Photos-** Two full-face passport style photos. They must be taken in the USA and within the past 30 days. Put the photos in an envelope with your payment (check) and attach with a paperclip on top of the entire application. Do not staple the fee and the photos.
- **I-765-** Original [USCIS Form I-765](#). Make sure it is signed. Include all pages (7), even if they are blank
- **Economic Hardship I-20-** photocopy of your new signed Economic Hardship Request I-20 from CIE
- **Previous I-20-** photocopies of your previous I-20's at this degree level
- **Letter-** Write a letter describing your financial difficulties and why on-campus employment opportunities are unavailable or insufficient; include support evidence.
  - We recommend you type the letter and hand sign it. Include your full name, SEVIS number, when you started studying at CSUEB, what you are studying and the reasoning
- **I-94-** Photocopy of paper or printout of electronic [Form I-94](#)
- **EAD-** Photocopy of any previous EAD cards (if applicable)
- **Passport-** photocopy of Bio Page, most recent entry stamp, and photocopy of F-1 visa page.
  - If you changed your status in the USA and do not have an F-1 visa, please include a copy of your I-797 approval notice
- **Supporting Materials-** send copies of all your supporting materials and translations.

## Mailing your application to USCIS

- We recommend you mail your application using a trackable method and keep a record of your application's delivery
  - At this time, Economic Hardship applications cannot be filed online
- We recommend that your application is received by USCIS less than 30 days after your Economic Hardship I-20's issuance date.
- We recommend you make a copy of your complete application before mailing
- Do NOT use any staples in your application
- Mail your application to a USCIS Lockbox. After the Lockbox facility processes the check and mails you a receipt notice, the application will be forwarded to the appropriate USCIS Service Center for adjudication.
- Direct Filing Addresses are listed on the [USCIS I-765 Lockbox](#) website

**Then What?**

Once USCIS receives the application, a receipt will be processed and sent to the address on the I-765 (this normally takes 3-5 weeks). USCIS's average processing time for an I-765 is between 3-4 months. Submission of an application for employment based on economic hardship does not guarantee approval. The USCIS has launched a system for checking the status of a case pending at a Service Center online: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard/CaseStatus.do>

**Social Security and Other Taxes**

In general, F-1 students who have been in the U.S. less than five years are exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A.) taxes. Their earnings are subject to applicable federal, state and local taxes. Students must file a tax return on or before April 15 each year, which will determine if any of the withheld taxes can be refunded.

**A Note of Caution**

While USCIS regulations provide a variety of opportunities for F-1 students to be employed, working without authorization is a serious violation of F-1 status. Students should consult their International Student Advisor before beginning any employment. It is the student's responsibility to comply with all immigration regulations which apply to F-1 students. If students fail to comply with their responsibilities, they may not be eligible for benefits normally granted to F-1 students.

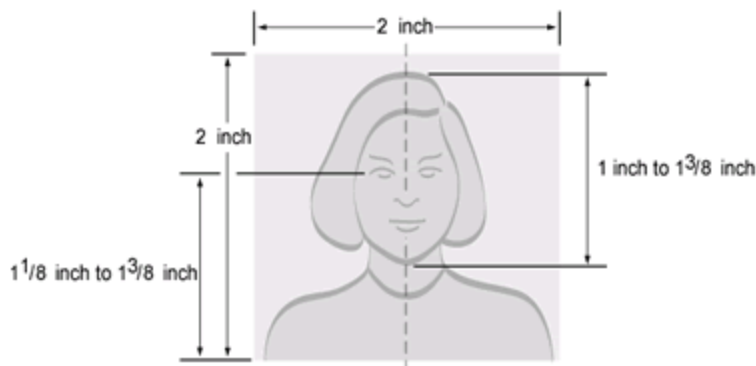
NOTE: Employment authorization granted under 8 CFR 214.2 (f) (9) is terminated when the student transfers from one school to another or completed all degree requirements before the EAD expires.

# Passport Photo Requirements

Your photo is a vital part of your application. To learn more, review the information below on how to provide a suitable photo. We recommend you use a professional passport photo service to ensure your photo meets all the requirements.

All photos must be no more than 30 days old when an application is filed and must meet the specifications for full frontal/passport photos as stated on the US Department of State website:

- In color
- Printed on matte or glossy photo quality paper
- 2 x 2 inches (51 x 51 mm) in size
- Sized such that the head is between 1 inch and 1 3/8 inches (between 25 and 35 mm) from the bottom of the chin to the top of the head.
- Taken in front of a plain white or off-white background
- Taken in full-face view directly facing the camera
- With a neutral facial expression and both eyes open
- Taken in clothing that you normally wear on a daily basis:
  - Uniforms, clothing that looks like a uniform, and camouflage attire should not be worn in photos except in the case of religious attire that is worn daily.
  - You may only wear a hat or head covering if you wear it daily for religious purposes. Your full face must be visible and your head covering cannot obscure your hairline or cast shadows on your face.
  - Headphones, wireless hands-free devices or similar items are not acceptable in your photo.
  - If you normally wear prescription glasses, a hearing device or similar articles, they may be worn for your photo. Glare on glasses is not acceptable in your photo.
  - Dark glasses or non-prescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons (a medical certificate may be required).



For more information on photo standards visit the Department for State website at <http://travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html>.

**Economic Hardship I-20 Request Form**

Student Information	
Family/Last Name:	First Name:
NETID:	SEVIS Number: N
Degree/Major:	Level of Study: <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's
Telephone:	Email:

Economic Hardship Request Dates	
*Economic Hardship can be authorized up to one year (12 months) at a time or until program end date, whichever is shorter	
Requested Start Date:	Requested End Date:

Applicant Requirements and Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have reviewed the Economic Hardship handout and confirm I have met the requirements</li> <li>I understand that I must enroll full time during Fall and Spring semesters</li> <li>I understand I cannot start working before the date authorized on my EAD</li> <li>I understand that I can only work part time during the semester and full time during breaks</li> <li>I understand that my EAD will be terminated if I fail to maintain good academic standing, fail to enroll full time, once I complete all my degree requirements or transfer to another school.</li> <li>I will email CIE (<a href="mailto:cie@csueastbay.edu">cie@csueastbay.edu</a>) a copy of my EAD upon receiving it</li> </ul>

Acknowledgement and Signature		
<p>I have read and now understand the above requirements. It is my responsibility to abide by the regulations governing Economic Hardship and to maintain F-1 status. Failure to abide by the requirements is failure to maintain my F-1 status and my result in termination of my SEVIS record and thus my ability to work. In addition, failure to abide by the requirements may could potentially affect any future immigration benefit applications filed with USCIS such as H-1B or Permanent Residency.</p> <p>CIE is able to provide you with general guidance. However, any advice provided to you by our office, as well as the information in this packet, should not be construed as legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, the USCIS may change its interpretation of these immigration laws/regulations and eligibility requirements for benefits, at any time. We will do our best to provide you with the most current guidance. Each case is fact-specific and it is advised that you contact an experienced immigration attorney if you have questions regarding your situation.</p>		
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Student Signature:</td> <td>DATE:</td> </tr> </table>	Student Signature:	DATE:
Student Signature:	DATE:	

**Economic Hardship Request I-20**

Your new Economic Hardship Request I-20 will be sent to you electronically. You must print the I-20 and sign it on page 1 before including it in your application.