Off-Campus Work Permission for F-1 Students

Under what circumstances can students apply for off-campus work permission?
Students can apply for off-campus employment if they are able to demonstrate severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances. These circumstances include the following:

- Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment through no fault of the student,
- Substantial fluctuations in the value of exchange rates or national currency
- Inordinate increase in tuition and/or living expenses, and/or
- Unexpected and substantial change in the financial conditions of the student’s source of support, medical bills, or other unusual expenses.

Who is eligible?
Students who have been in F-1 status for nine months, are in good academic standing, can demonstrate that acceptance of employment will not interfere with the ability to carry a full course of study, and have not been able to find on-campus employment may apply for off-campus work permission.

Who authorizes off-campus employment?
Iowa State University students must file an application with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

How many hours per week can students work?
- Students may work a total of twenty hours per week when school is in session. All on- and off-campus employment is counted toward the twenty hour limit.
- Students may work full time during vacation and summer periods, provided they intend and are eligible to register for the next school term.

How long is the work permission valid?
USCIS may grant employment permission in one-year intervals. Renewals may be authorized by USCIS if students remain in good academic standing. Employment authorization is automatically terminated if students fail to maintain status.

What documentation do students receive to show approval of work permission?
USCIS will issue an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to document off-campus work permission.

When can students begin to work?
Students can begin to work only after the EAD is received from USCIS.

How long do students wait before they obtain the EAD card?
You will receive a case number and instructions from USCIS that you can use to track estimated processing times via the USCIS Website. Note that estimated processing times are subject to change.

Do students need a job offer before USCIS will authorize work permission?
No.

If students lose their EAD, how can they obtain a replacement?
Students must request a replacement EAD by completing a new Form I-765 and sending it along with a fee of $380, two photos and photocopies of the Form I-797 Receipt Notice and/or of the lost EAD.

Can F-2 dependents (spouses and children of the F-1) apply for employment?
No, F-2 dependents are not allowed to work under any circumstances.
Procedures for Off-Campus Employment Permission

Please read these procedures and complete the forms before visiting with an International Student Adviser (ISA).

1. Obtain Form I-765 in 3248 Memorial Union or fill it out online at: www.isso.iastate.edu/forms/I-765.pdf


3. Write a letter to explain your reasons for requesting off-campus employment and your inability to find work on campus.

4. Obtain, if possible, supporting documentation showing an unforeseen change in your financial circumstances. For example:
   - a letter from your sponsor which shows your funding has been discontinued,
   - copies of medical bills, or
   - newspaper articles discussing currency fluctuations in your home country

5. Make an appointment with an ISA in 3248 Memorial Union. Bring with you the completed:
   - Form I-765,
   - Form G-1145
   - letter and supporting documentation of unforeseen circumstances, and
   - your Form I-20.

6. If you have all the necessary papers, the ISA will request an I-20 for you containing a recommendation for off-campus employment.

7. Send the following documents to USCIS:
   - A check or money order payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $380 (place the check on top of your application).
   - Completed Form G-1145
   - completed Form I-765,
   - the letter you have written and supporting documentation,
   - a photocopy of your I-20,
   - photocopies of the identity pages from your passport (picture, number and expiration date),
   - a photocopy of the U. S. visa page of your passport,
   - photocopies of both sides of your Form I-94 (or electronic print out), and
   - two color photos
     - with a white background
     - taken no earlier than 30 days before application submission
     - unmounted
     - printed on thin paper, glossy and unretouched
     - showing a three-quarter front profile of the right side of your face
     - with right ear visible
     - with head bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order
     - no larger than 2 x 2 inches, with the distance from the top of the head to just below the chin at 1.25 inches
     - with name and “A” number (if one has been assigned to you) lightly printed on the back of each photo with a pencil
     - photocopies of any previously issued EAD cards

Send all the documents by certified mail requesting a return receipt to:
USCIS
P. O. Box 21281
Phoenix, Arizona  85036

8. If employment is authorized, USCIS will send the EAD to you at the address indicated on the Form I-765.

If you have questions, please contact an ISA.

Important: You must inform USCIS in writing of any address change while your application is pending.
Below is a statement that you must read and sign before the ISA can complete your application for off-campus work permission.

I, ________________________________, have tried to find work on campus under the applicable F-1 employment regulations. I have not been able to locate employment.

Student Signature

______________________________________

Date

______________________________________