Work Permission for J-2 Nonimmigrants

J-2 nonimmigrants (dependents of J-1 nonimmigrants) may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for permission to work. When granted, this permission is valid for on- and off-campus work and may be full or part time. This permission is obtained by mailing certain documents to USCIS. It may take 90 days or more for the application to be approved. When approval is granted, you will receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). You must have the EAD before you begin work.

**To apply for J-2 work permission, complete these steps:**

3. Write a letter requesting work permission (a sample is attached), including:
   - the names of the J-1 and J-2 nonimmigrants
   - the reasons for employment
   - the source and amount of support for the principal J-1
   - a specific statement saying that any income derived from employment will be used to support you and your children and not to support the J-1 principal.
4. Prepare a yearly budget (a sample is attached) that shows the total income and expenditures for the family.
5. Make an appointment with an International Student Adviser (ISA) if you want to have your application reviewed before you send it to USCIS. Bring to the meeting:
   - completed Form I-765
   - letter and budget you prepared in steps 2 and 3, above
   - your J-2 DS-2019 form
6. Send the following to USCIS:
   - check payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for $380
   - completed Form G-1145
   - I-765 form, completed and signed
   - your letter and budget
   - photocopies of the following for the J-1 and all J-2 visa holders
     - both sides of the I-94 forms (or print out of electronic I-94)
     - passport pages showing number, name, photo, and expiration date
     - U.S. visa stamp
     - the J-1 and J-2’s DS-2019 forms
   - two recent color photographs (taken within 30 days of sending to USCIS). You may have the photos taken at the Study Abroad Center during regular office hours or elsewhere by following the “work permission photos” directions on the back of this page.
7. Send everything listed in step 6 by certified mail (request a return receipt and keep the receipt) to:
   - USCIS
   - P. O. Box 21281
   - Phoenix, Arizona  85036
If work permission is authorized, USCIS will notify you by
- E-mail or text message if you completed Form G-1145.
- A Notice of Action letter with the LIN tracking number. If you do not receive a Notice of Action letter within 30 days, please contact an ISA.
- Your Employment Authorization Document, which USCIS mails to the address on your I-765. The Postal Service will not forward your card if you move to a new address.

The card is valid for one year. You must reapply for work authorization each year. You should begin the renewal process at least 90 days before your current card expires. Bring your card to 3248 Memorial Union and complete Form I-9 if you work on the Iowa State University campus.

Work Permission Photos

If you decide to have the photos taken somewhere other than the Study Abroad Center, be sure the photos meet the following USCIS specifications.

The photos must be:
- in color, but on a white background
- not mounted
- printed on thin, glossy paper
- show full face, front view, centered within frame
- the correct size:
  - total size 2.0 inches by 2.0 inches
  - distance from top of head to just below chin 1 – 1 3/8 inches
  - eye height is between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches from bottom of photo
  - lightly print name and “A” number (if one has been assigned to you) on the back of each photo with a pencil or felt pen

More information on photos can be found at:
**Sample Letter**

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am the J-2 dependent of a J-1 exchange visitor, Mr. John Peters. I am writing to request permission to work. My husband receives a stipend of $12,000 per year from an Iowa State University assistantship sufficient to provide for our basic family expenses. I want to be employed to provide for my additional expenses and those of my child. Any income from my employment will be used exclusively for the support of my child and myself and not to support my spouse. If you have any questions regarding my request for work permission, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Peters

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**Sample Budget**

*(Yearly)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse’s stipend</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse’s tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>$1,367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional family expenses:
- Clothing, travel, cultural events $6,000