

## SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

### APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS

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If you are suffering a severe economic hardship due to unforeseen changes in your financial situation, you may apply to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for authorization to work off campus only if on-campus employment opportunities are not available or insufficient. Reasons that can cause an economic hardship 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 have been in F-1 status for one full academic year.
- You are in good academic standing and are taking a full course load.
- You can demonstrate that the employment is necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen economic circumstances beyond your control (***see above paragraph for explanation***).
- Employment will not interfere with your studies.

#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- **Do not** work off-campus until you receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and the start date is effective.
- A job offer is not required to apply for severe economic hardship.
- Students must maintain their F-1 status.
- Students may not work more than 20 hours per week when school is in session and may work more than 20 hours per week during school breaks (spring, summer, and winter).
- Severe economic hardship work approval is granted for 1 year. Reapply if you need to continue employment.
- Employment authorization is automatically cancelled if you: complete your program, do not maintain your status or transfer to a different institution.
- Employment authorization will not affect your eligibility for post-completion Option Practical Training.
- International students are exempt from paying Social Security and Medicare taxes for the first 5 years in the U.S but are required to pay all federal and state taxes.
  - ***Before you begin work you will need a valid Social Security number***
  - ***See an International Student Advisor for instructions about making application for a social security number***

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308.865.8946 / 308.865.8873 / FAX 308.865.8497

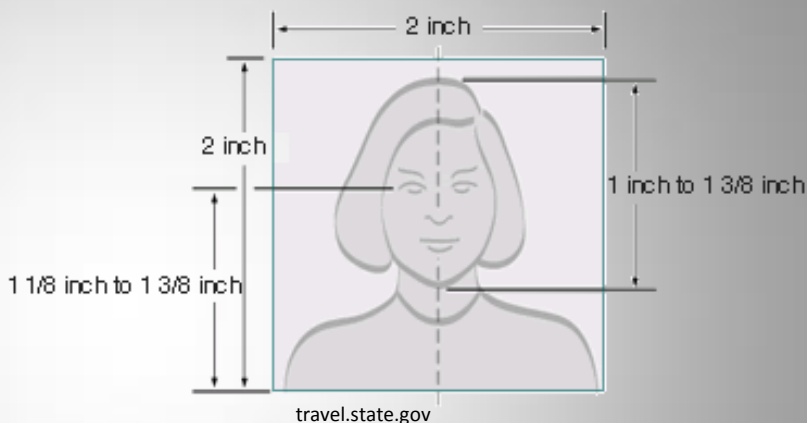
## PROCEDURE TO APPLY:

Meet with an International Student Advisor to determine if you are eligible to apply for severe economic hardship. If the advisor determines you are eligible **to apply**, gather the following documents:

- A **personal statement describing the reasons** you are applying for employment because of unplanned severe economic hardship. Make sure to include **supporting documentation**.
  - See *Sample Letter* at the back of this packet.
- Completed Severe Economic Hardship form, use ISS address on page 3.
- Copies of your current and previous I-20's.
- Copy of your F-1 Visa.
- Printout of your I-94.
  - You will need to go to: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/request.html> to request your I-94 number and print the form.
- 2 identical passport photos (2" x 2") taken within 30 days of filing your application with your name and I-94 number written on the back of the photos.
  - See below for guidelines on passport photos.
- Completed **Form I-765** 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.
  - If you wish to receive electronic notification of the receipt of the application from USCIS, complete **Form G-1145**. This form is **optional** and there is no cost.
- Personal check or Money Order in the amount of **\$380** for the filing fee payment.
  - Checks/Money Orders must be payable to: U.S. Department of Homeland Security
  - *Severe Economic Hardship Filing Fee* must be in the memo line

### Steps to Successful Photos

- Make sure the photo presents the full head from the top of the hair to the bottom of the chin
- Center the head with the frame
- The person in the photo should have a neutral expression and be facing the camera



- Photo must be 2 inches by 2 inches
- The height of the head (top of hair to bottom of chin) should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches (25 mm - 35 mm)
- Make sure the eye height is between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches (28 mm – 35 mm) from the bottom of the photo

Once all the above documents have been collected bring everything to the International Student Services Office and present them to the Student Advisor. At that time, the advisor will compile and review all of your material and make copies for your file. The advisor will also make a new I-20 for you to sign and mail with the other paperwork.

It is then **the student's responsibility** to mail all paperwork **in a traceable manner** to:

**USCIS**  
**P.O. Box 21281**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85036**

**If employment is authorized**, USCIS will issue and mail an **Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** to Welch Hall. An Advisor will then contact you of the EAD arrival for you to pick up. If the application is denied, you will be notified by USCIS in writing but you may not appeal. The fee is nonrefundable.

**DO NOT BEGIN WORK UNTIL YOU HAVE THE EAD IN YOUR POSSESSION.**

Authorization is granted in one-year intervals up to the expected date of completion of studies. You are allowed to work part time with the EAD when school is in session but you must be enrolled as a full time student. You may work full time with the EAD during vacations. The employment does not have to be related to course of study and it does not count towards the 20-hour on campus maximum. The EAD may be renewed only if you are maintaining status and are in good academic standing. The employment authorization is automatically terminated if you transfer from one school to another or if you fail to maintain status.

If you have any questions contact an International Student Advisor in the International Student Services Office.

**Contact Information:**

UNK International Student Services  
Welch Hall  
2504 19<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Kearney NE 68849-5221

Corliss Sullwold:	<a href="mailto:sullwoldc@unk.edu">sullwoldc@unk.edu</a>	865-8946
Tracy Falconer:	<a href="mailto:falconerts@unk.edu">falconerts@unk.edu</a>	865-8873
Fax:		308-865-8467

# SAMPLE LETTER

Below is a sample letter to give you an idea of the type of information needed to request permission to work because of economic necessity. **You must write your own letter.** This letter is just an example to give you a general idea of what information should be included.

If you have a sponsor, your sponsor must also write a letter explaining the changes in his or her financial circumstances. If he or she cannot write in English, a foreign language translation of the letter is acceptable. If you have any **supporting documentation** to the claims you make in your letter (medical bills, newspaper clippings or web printouts about the economic or political situation in your country, etc.) **Please attach them to the letter.**

Your Name  
Today's Date

To Whom it May Concern:

I hold an F-1 visa and I am required by financial necessity to request permission to work off campus. As indicated on my I-20, I am supported by *(fill in your support as indicated in #8 on your I-20)*.

I have had a change in my financial situation due to *(in this paragraph you must explain in detail what has happened that has caused your need to work. Ex: how devaluation of your country's currency has personally affected you, explanation of medical bills that are not covered by your insurance, explanation of the change in a the financial situation of your family or sponsor, etc.)*

The following lists my assets, income, and expenses: *(You must honestly estimate your own assets, income, and expenses. Do not use the below numbers—they are only an example.)*

Assets/Income	\$6,000 in bank accounts \$6,000 from my parents \$2,000 from my brother
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>

Expenses	\$13,916 for tuition, fees, and health insurance \$7,270 for room and board \$ 900 for books and supplies \$2,150 for personal expenses
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$24,236 (be sure your total equals the amount listed on your I-20)</b>

I would really like to complete my studies here at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. I appreciate your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,  
*(your signature)*

**Please read all of the attached documentation on Severe Economic Hardship before completing the request form. You must set up an appointment with an International Student Advisor in Welch Hall to review and submit your application.**

- ☐ Attach a copy of your personal statement and any supporting documentation
- ☐ Attach copies of your current and previous I-20's
- ☐ Attach a print out of your I-94
- ☐ Attach a copy of your F-1 visa page

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

UNK ID # \_\_\_\_\_ SEVIS ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Loper email \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Completion Semester and Year \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Start Date for Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Have you applied for on-campus employment or are you currently employed on campus?

☐ YES ☐ NO

- ☐ **I certify that I understand the responsibilities required for maintaining F-1 status during my Severe Economic Hardship authorization as stated on the previous pages.**
- ☐ **I certify that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate.**
- ☐ **I understand that OIE will open my mail from USCIS and notify me when it arrives.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR USE ONLY**

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Approved

Advisors Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Denied

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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10/3/2013