

**J-1 Off Campus Employment  
Due to Economic Hardship  
International Student Center  
San Diego State University**

**Background**

J-1 students sponsored by San Diego State University may be eligible to engage in off campus employment unrelated to their field of study due to unforeseen severe economic hardship. The financial need must have arisen after the student's program began and must be thoroughly documented. J-1 students issued a DS-2019 by another agency must check with their sponsor for employment eligibility.

Students must try to find employment on campus before they are eligible to apply for this type of employment. Work through this program is limited to 20 hours per week during school, but may be full time when school is not in session.

**Eligibility**

Students must be currently enrolled full time and be in good academic standing. Students on a one or two semester exchange program will seldom be granted this type of employment since their funds for the program have just been guaranteed. It is only in the case of an extremely drastic change in the student's financial circumstances (such as the death of a sponsor or a sudden political or economic upheaval in the student's home country) that the student will be considered eligible for this type of employment.

J-1 students studying in a long term program at SDSU may be eligible depending on their source of funding. Students fully funded by SDSU who lose their entire sponsorship may not be eligible for this type of employment because a part time job would not be sufficient to fund these students on a full time basis. Partially funded students may be eligible for this type of employment if they lose their other source of funding due to the following possible circumstances: loss of a scholarship, death or severe illness of the sponsor, bankruptcy or other financial disaster of the sponsor, retirement or illness of the sponsor, student's excessive medical bills, substantial devaluation of the currency of the student's home country, political or economic upheaval in the student's home country.

**Documentation**

It is important to provide substantial documentation as proof of the change in economic circumstances. Documentation may be provided in the original language, but must have

a translation attached. Students may translate documents themselves, and must write on the translation that they are fluent in both languages and that it is a true translation.

Types of documentation may vary. Some examples may include but are not limited to: a letter documenting the loss of a scholarship, personal letters from the student's sponsor describing the situation, a legal document from the sponsor's attorney or company, a death certificate, a document from the student's medical doctor, copies of magazine articles or newspaper articles which show changing circumstances in a student's home country, including currency fluctuations, or copies of a student's excessive medical bills.

Students are not always sure if their circumstances meet the eligibility requirements for this type of employment. These students are welcome to make an appointment with the International Student Advisor who handles J-1 advising to discuss their particular situation and to see if it indeed qualifies.

### **Application Procedures**

Students should make an appointment with the International Student Advisor who handles J-1 advising and take the following documents to the appointment: 1) valid passport, 2) DS-2019 Form, and 3) written proof of the reasons for the financial difficulties.

If the Advisor determines that the student is eligible, the student will be given a letter of employment authorization. This letter is the required written documentation that the student is legally authorized to accept employment.

The authorization will terminate either on the ending date of the DS-2019 Form, or at the end of one year, whichever is sooner. It may be renewed if documentation shows that the need still exists, but it is automatically terminated if the student fails to maintain J-1 status or completes the J-1 program.