

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

Background

Off campus employment is available to students who are faced with severe economic hardship due to an unforeseen change in their financial circumstances. Application for this work authorization must be made to the US Citizenship and Immigration Bureau (USCIS), and they only authorize this type of employment in cases where students have clearly documented severe need.

Students are encouraged to 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 have been in F-1 status for one full academic year. Students who have been in F-1 status more than one year, but are in their first or second semester at SDSU, are generally not eligible unless the changes in their financial circumstances are extreme. Students must be full time and in good academic standing. Students on probation are not eligible. Students must first try to find employment on campus before applying.

Students must be able to demonstrate that off campus employment is necessary due to unforeseen financial circumstances. The possible circumstances could include: the loss of a scholarship or assistantship, the death or severe illness of the sponsor, bankruptcy or other financial disaster of the sponsor, retirement of the sponsor, student's excessive medical bills, a 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 for the USCIS. 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 depending on whether it is from the US or from the student's home country. Some examples may include but are not limited to: a letter from a sponsoring agency or professor documenting the loss of a scholarship or assistantship; personal letters from the student's sponsor describing the situation; a document from the sponsor's attorney, or accountant, a letter from the sponsor's company, a death certificate, a document from a student's medical doctor, copies of the sponsor's medical bills, copies of magazine, newspaper or internet 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 one of the International Student Advisors to discuss their particular situation and to see if it indeed qualifies.

Application Procedures

All employment applications must first be submitted to the International Student Advisor before being sent to the USCIS. Students will need to apply to the USCIS for the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) on Form I-765. Students should make an appointment with the International Student Advisor. The Advisor will determine if the financial need has been adequately verified with substantial documentation. After the Advisor determines that the student is eligible, the paperwork will be completed and sent to the CA Service Center office of the USCIS for adjudication and issuance of the Employment Authorization Document (EAD). It takes approximately 90-100 days for the application to be processed.

Document Checklist - Take the following documents to the appointment:

- Valid passport with I-94 card
- I-20 form
- Check for \$340, made out to "Department of Homeland Security"
- Written proof of the reasons for the financial difficulties
- A letter addressed to the USCIS explaining the situation and summarizing the written documentation
- 2 photos that meet the specifications outlined below.

EAD Photo Requirements

Two photos must be submitted with all mail-in EAD applications. The photos must be US style passport photos. Passport photos you had taken in your country are not acceptable. The photo must have been taken within the past 30 days. Lightly print your name on the back of each photo.

Refer to this website for exact specifications:

http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/composition_checklist.html

The following stores do photos to the required specifications:

Ritz Cameras, 6083 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego 619/484-5319

Cost for 2 photos = \$ 11.99

Fromex Photo Systems, 6325 El Cajon Blvd., 619/287-5346

Cost for 4 photos = \$ 10.95

A-1 Broadway Foto, 148 W. Broadway, San Diego, 234-5876

Cost for 2 photos = \$ 11.95

Costco (must be a member):

Fletcher Parkway- 619/661-8504 & Mission Valley 619/358-4003

Cost for 2 photos = \$ 4.99

Cal Copy, 5131 College Ave, Suite E, 619/582-9949,

Cost for 2 photos = \$ 8.57

