



## Severe Economic Hardship (SEH) for F-1 Visa Students

### What is Severe Economic Hardship?

Severe Economic Hardship is an employment authorization granted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to an F-1 student who has suffered severe economic hardship due to unexpected economic problems. You must have been enrolled for at least one academic year as full-time F-1 student and on-campus job is not sufficient or not available for you.

### Choosing Date of Employment

This type of application could take up to 3 months to process and issue a card. You should file for economic hardship at least 3 months before your desired start date. If granted, the EAD card will last for one year. You must be approved and received an EAD card before you start working.

**STEP 1:** To get recommendation from DSO for severe economic hardship, you must submit the following:

- ❑ Copy of the completed **Severe Economic Hardship Request** form
- ❑ Copy (digital) of completed I-765 ( <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-765.pdf> )
- ❑ Copy of all I-20 forms.
- ❑ Copy of passport, F-1 visa, I-94 and Approval for Change of Status to F-1 (if applicable).
- ❑ Letter of explanation detailing the need for employment authorization and why on campus is not sufficient or not available.
- ❑ Supporting evidence of economic hardship (example; newspaper articles documenting an incident in your home country devaluating currency, pictures, letters from relatives/ sponsors, medical bills, etc.)
- ❑ Photocopies of passport, visa, all I-20's issued to you and most recent I-94 card (back and front or printed from the internet). If you have been issued an EAD card in the past, provide a copy of this as well.
- ❑ Copy of most recent AACC transcript.

### AACC Process:

After receiving the complete request form for Severe Economic Hardship, the DSO will process your request within 2-3 business days and will issue a new I-20 form for employment recommendation. You are responsible for submitting the entire application to USCIS online or mailing the complete application to USCIS.

## **STEP 2: File your I-765 Employment Authorization Request form to USCIS**

Submit the following documents to USCIS:

- a. Completed Form [I-765, \(instructions\)](#) Basis of eligibility – (C) ( 3 ) ( iii )  
Additional information on [how to apply for work authorization due to severe economic hardship](#)
- b. Completed Form [G-1145](#)
- c. Two 2x2 color passport photo that meets USCIS specifications
- d. Photocopy of the following:
  - i. Passport Identification page
  - ii. F1 visa stamp
  - iii. Approval Notice of Change of Status ( if applicable)
  - iv. Most recent I-94
  - v. Previous I-20's
  - vi. Previous EAD card (if applicable)
  - vii. Any other documents supporting surrounding your circumstances
- e. Personal statement that necessitate employment. Explain why on-campus job is not sufficient or not available.
- f. Current I-20 form with employment recommendation due to Economic Hardship
- g. Check or Money order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security". Ensure to include [appropriate filing fees](#)

**File I-765 by Mail:** <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses>

**Mail I-765 Form, Filing fee and supporting documents to:**

*USCIS  
ATTN: I-765 C03 (Box 805373)  
131 South Dearborn -3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603-5517*

### **USCIS Process:**

You should get a receipt notice from USCIS within two to three weeks. The receipt will include a case number that allows you to check its status online at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). Please note: this type of request could take several months to process. When your work permit is approve, you will receive a wallet-sized plastic card called Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card in the mail with your photo on it. You can only work during the dates on the card, and you cannot start work until you receive the card and the start date of work in the card is reached. If the request for employment authorization is denied, the denial may not be appealed. Learn more about filing I-765 from this link: <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-opt-for-f-1-students>

**Important Note:** If you apply to USCIS for a work permit, DO NOT leave the U.S. until it is approved. The USCIS may take several months to reply. If you leave the U.S. your work permit application for will be canceled automatically (abandonment of application) with no refund.

**\* Students who work off campus without prior authorization will be terminated and can not be reinstated.**



SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP REQUEST FORM FOR F-1 VISA STUDENTS

Severe Economic Hardship is for students who have experienced financial problems due to unexpected circumstances (such as death of the sponsor, war in home country, severe economic inflation in the home country, etc) may request employment authorization from USCIS. If approved, an Employment Authorization Card (EAD) will be issued for one year maximum. Students may work off-campus for no more than 20 hours per week, however you must maintain full-time enrollment at all times until the completion of your program. Job offer is not required and may work any type of job.

You are eligible to apply for employment based on severe economic hardship if:

- You have been in F-1 status and enrolled full-time for one full academic year
You are in good academic standing and are taking a full course load
Employment off campus will not interfere with your studies.
You have tried and applied for job on campus.
You can demonstrate that the employment is necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen economic circumstances beyond your control

Instructions: Complete the form below and email it to the DSO ebthompson@aacc.edu

STUDENT:

Last Name First Name Middle Name

AACC St.ID # SEVIS ID No: Expiration date of I-20

Address

E-mail Phone

Program of Study

Number of Dependents (if any) SEVIS No. of dependent

Request Employment Dates: Beginning End

I hereby certify that:

- I have read the severe economic request instructions and information.
The information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge is accurate.
I must report any address changes to the DSO.

Signature Date