

**OFF-CAMPUS
EMPLOYMENT DUE
TO SEVERE
ECONOMIC HARDSHIP**

**International Student & Scholar Services
Florida International University**

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Having been admitted to the University and issued a Form I-20, you have shown that you have sufficient financial funding (provided through family funds, financial sponsors, etc.) to cover your education expenses throughout your studies at Florida International University. As an F-1 student, you are fully aware that your employment options are *very limited*. However, an F-1 student who suffered a **SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP** or a serious and extreme financial emergency **that is 1. UNFORESEEN and 2. BEYOND THEIR CONTROL** may be eligible to apply for **Off-Campus Employment Due To Severe Economic Necessity**.

ISSS recommendation is required and an application is submitted to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services-Texas Service Center (USCIS). Official authorization is granted by USCIS.

You **MUST** meet the following qualifications to be eligible to request this off-campus employment:

- ☐ You have been enrolled and completed **AT LEAST ONE FULL ACADEMIC YEAR AT FIU**.
- ☐ You are **maintaining your legal F-1 non-immigrant status**.
- ☐ You are in **good academic standing**. Your cumulative G.P.A. must be at least a 2.00 if you are an undergraduate student or a 3.00 if you are a graduate (Master's, Ed.D, or PhD) student. **No eligibility if you are on academic warning, probation, or dismissal.**
- ☐ The factors which caused your severe economic hardship developed **AFTER you acquired F-1 status UNDER FIU I-20. You MUST be able to document and/or prove existence of these factors.**
- ☐ Your severe economic hardship was caused by **factors which were unforeseen at the time you acquired F-1 Status and beyond your control. NOTE: Increase of tuition fees is NOT an unforeseen circumstance.**
- ☐ The proposed employment will **NOT** interfere with your studies and will **NOT** cause you to reduce your course load below the full-time requirement.
- ☐ **You were unable to secure any on-campus employment.**

Although the USCIS regulations establish eligibility for off-campus employment based on your initial acquisition of F-1 status, FIU ISSS advisors generally evaluate your situation based on the date of initial entry into FIU. Since you were required to document finances before you received your FIU I-20, ISSS advisors assume that any severe economic hardship or extreme emergency must have occurred **AFTER** you submitted the financial documents to the FIU Office of Admissions. ISSS advisors will **NOT recommend** to USCIS that you be authorized to continue off-campus employment which was authorized at your previous school.

If you believe you may qualify for off-campus employment due to severe economic necessity, you **MUST SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH AN ISSS ADVISOR** to further determine eligibility and clarify related issues. Access <https://go.fiu.edu/appointment> to schedule your appointment.

One of the required documents that you will need to submit is your **PERSONAL STATEMENT**:

In a separate letter, explain clearly the unforeseen severe economic hardship you currently face. In this letter, be sure to answer the following:

- What is the hardship and when did it start?
- How is this hardship unforeseen?
- How is it beyond your control or beyond your sponsor's control?
- How much funding support can your parents or sponsor continue to provide you?
- Would being allowed to work off-campus affect your academic studies?

NOTE: ISSS will NOT recommend any off-campus employment for students who are under academic warning or probation. Students who are put on academic dismissal are out-of-status and not eligible for any F-1 benefits.

If your funding comes from your parents or other sponsor(s), they will have to write a separate letter to confirm the economic hardship and detail the ability and or extent of their continued financial support for your studies.

Also attached a monthly expenses budget to the Personal Statement.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: You must attach documents that support your claim on an unforeseen severe economic hardship. Such documents may include academic department's letter termination assistantship or scholarship, sponsor's employment termination letter, news articles (in English) relating to the unforeseen situation, etc.

REMINDERS:

1. **Retirement** of a parent or a sponsor is **NOT considered unforeseen**.
2. Parents' or sponsor's financial burden incurred due to educational expenses of your sibling(s) or sponsor's children will **NOT constitute an unforeseen situation**.
3. Any authorized off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship will be for **part-time** employment (**maximum of 20 hours/week**) while school is in session (**fall/ spring**). Full time is **ONLY** allowed during official school breaks (summer/ winter)
4. Authorization for off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship precludes you from accepting any on-campus work. **Should you begin any on-campus work, your off-campus employment authorization is immediately invalidated and any continued employment under that authorization will be considered illegal employment, a deportable offense under the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).**

-----**STUDENT'S CERTIFICATION** -----

Please read the statement before signing:

I certify that I have read the eligibility requirements for off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship and that I meet those requirements. I also certify that any authorized off-campus employment will not impede my continued satisfactory progress towards completion of my degree. I also certify that I read and understood the reminders listed above and aware of restrictions on this employment.

I understand that if I cease to maintain my legal F-1 status in the U.S. or if, in any way, I no longer qualify for this off-campus employment, I will immediately be ineligible to engage in employment event if the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) expiration date has not been reached. I also understand that even with the off-campus employment authorization, I must continue to abide with the employment restrictions in accordance with the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations. I also certify that should I begin any on-campus employment, I am aware that I am not eligible to continue any off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship.

Finally, I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that information I provided and statements I made are true and correct.

Student's Signature

Date (mm/year)

Check List

Please make sure you have all these documents when you meet with your advisor.

- ☐ Completed **Form I-765** (download at <http://www.uscis.gov>) **Category Code is (c)(3)(iii)**
- ☐ Personal check/money order in the amount of **\$410.00** (**Payable to: US Department of Homeland Security**)
- ☐ 2 passport/immigration photos
- ☐ 1 copy of the biographical page of your passport
- ☐ F-1 visa or USCIS F-1 Approval Notice
- ☐ Electronic form I-94.
- ☐ 1 copy of (OPT Card) and previous EADs if applicable
- ☐ 1 copy of unofficial transcript
- ☐ 1 copy of bank statement or bank letter
- ☐ Personal statement / monthly budget
- ☐ Sponsor Letter
- ☐ On campus job applications (if any)
- ☐ Supporting documents (any other document that you may want to bring- i.e. newspaper cutouts about situation in your country)
- ☐ Others_____