



East Central University Severe Economic Hardship Benefit Checklist

- **What is Severe Economic Hardship?**
 - This F-1 employment benefit is intended to address situations where a financial need beyond the student's control arises, which was unforeseen at the time the student applied to the school he or she is currently attending and after all other potential employment opportunities have proven to be insufficient. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(C)
 - **Does the student have to explain and show documentation of the hardship to USCIS?**
 - Yes. The student must document the circumstances causing the economic need. The student can write a statement describing the unforeseen hardship situation and, if possible, should attach backup documentation; for example, a letter from home telling of a change in family circumstances or proof of a currency devaluation in the student's country.
 - **What are some examples?**
 - Off-campus employment is a case-by-case exception made for students who can show that new, unexpected circumstances beyond the student's control have created severe economic hardship. These may include: "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, unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses."
- 1) **Preconditions:** Must have been in F-1 status for at least one full academic year. Must prove to USCIS that employment is necessary due to severe economic hardship caused by circumstances beyond his or her control that arose after obtaining F-1 status.
 - 2) **Location:** Is designed for off-campus employment but can be done on-campus
 - 3) **Duration:** Granted by USCIS in increments of one year at a time, or until the program end-date, whichever is shorter. Authorization ends if a student transfers schools
 - 4) **Hours per week:** Limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session; can be full-time during official school breaks
 - 5) **Field/level of work:** Can be in any job. Does not have to be related to course of study.
 - 6) **Offer of employment:** Not required as a condition of eligibility
 - 7) **Effect on other work:** Use of this category of employment does not count towards the 20-hour on-campus maximum, nor does it affect eligibility for practical training.
 - 8) **Approval process:** Must apply for EAD (Employment Authorization Document) from USCIS after Designated School Official (DSO) updates SEVIS with recommendation
- **What are the limitations of the EAD process?**
 - The student cannot begin employment until he or she receives the EAD from USCIS. Processing times for EAD issuance vary greatly from Service Center to Service Center, and a student applying for economic necessity work authorization must often wait several weeks or even months before the EAD actually arrives.
 - Authorization is granted in one-year intervals, up to the expected date of completion of studies. Students must reapply to USCIS each year to renew this work authorization. If a student needs uninterrupted work authorization he or she must apply early enough so that the EAD is received before the expiration date of the prior one, since continued employment past the prior expiration date during the pendency of an EAD extension request is not authorized. It is suggested to apply "at least ninety days - and not more than six months - before their current authorization expires."

➤ **Where can I get more information?**

- For more information about and for detailed instructions on how to complete the Form I-765 please visit www.uscis.gov and www.ice.gov.

➤ **What are the procedures for applying?**

- Schedule an appointment with the Director of the ISPS Office via email intlstu@ecok.edu
- Form I-765, completed by the student, marked with the code "**(c)(3)(iii)**" at item 16
- I-765 processing fee in a check or money order payable to "**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**"
- Copy of the newly issued student's Form I-20 with page 3 including the DSO recommendation for economic hardship employment
- 2 Passport style photos
 - ☐ Write your full name and Date Of Birth on the backside of each photo
- Copy of the student's I-94 (FRONT & BACK)
- Letter of Explanation from Student
 - ☐ Explaining the circumstances of the hardship. Some USCIS Service Centers also require the student to submit supporting materials documenting the unforeseen nature of the economic hardship and, to the extent possible, the unavailability of on-campus employment to meet the need
- Copy of the ID pages from the student's passport, or, for applications for renewal of work authorization, a photocopy of the previously issued EAD
- Filing locations can vary based on the volume of applications. Always, check the [USCIS Direct Filing Address](#) webpage for the most current location.

➤ **USCIS Adjudication:**

- If employment is authorized, USCIS will issue the student an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). If the application is denied, USCIS will indicate the reason for the denial in writing. A denial may not be appealed, although if the circumstances warrant, a motion to reopen or reconsider could be filed.

I have read and understand this information and my responsibilities.

Print Name_____ Student ID#:_____

Signature_____ Date:_____