



Severe Economic Hardship

Any F-1 student suffering “severe economic hardship” as defined by USCIS is eligible to work off-campus for up to 20 hours per week while school is in session, and full-time (over 20 hours) during breaks.

Definition:

Severe Economic Hardship means any “unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control.”

These circumstances may include circumstances, such as:

- 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 conditional of the student’s source of support
- Medical bills or other substantial and unexpected expenses

Eligibility:

To be eligible under “severe economic hardship,” a student must:

- Be in valid F-1 status for at least one academic year at the current institution of study
- Be in good academic standing
- Provide evidence (written, official documentation, or by whatever other means the International Student Office deems worthy) of economic hardship based on unforeseen circumstances beyond the student’s control
- Make a good faith effort to locate employment on campus before applying
- Show in writing that on-campus employment is neither available nor sufficient
- Notify the International Student Office of his or her intentions in order to start the process
- If approved by the institution, most of the elements to apply for economic hardship must be completed by the student through an external government agency (USCIS) and require additional fees