Severe Economic Hardship (F-1 Status)

Under limited circumstances, an F-1 student may apply for off-campus employment based on severe economic hardship. Conditions creating this severe economic hardship include loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without the fault of the student, unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and fees, and medical bills or other substantial and unexpected expenses. The above circumstances must be documented. To be eligible, a student must be in F-1 status for one full academic year, must be maintaining lawful F-1 status and must be carrying a full course of study as defined by USCIS.

Severe Economic Hardship Application

To apply for off-campus employment authorization, you need to obtain a severe economic hardship packet from ISSIS. Our offices are in the Office of International Education Building, 1324 South Lumpkin St., Athens, GA 30602. The packet will provide instructions and forms needed to complete the following tasks. An appointment with the F-1 advisor is required. The application requires the following:

1. Provide supporting materials which detail the unforeseen circumstances requiring the student to seek employment authorization and the unavailability of on-campus employment.
2. Complete items 1 through 15 on Form I-765, and sign the form.
3. Provide two photographs of yourself that meet the USCIS photo specifications.
4. Provide a photocopy of your I-94 card (front and back) and valid passport pages showing the passport expiration date, passport photograph, and your entry visa. (If re-applying, provide previous EAD card.)
5. Write a check or money order for $380.00 made payable to "Dept. of Homeland Security."

6. Complete the expense worksheet and note your income (through employment and sponsor) and your expenses in order to make a case to immigration about your financial situation.

Note: The Office of International Education will process these forms within one to two weeks and will contact the student to pick up the complete application. The student is responsible for submitting the application to USCIS using the mailing label included with the complete application and waiting for the EAD to be issued before beginning work. If the request for employment authorization is denied, the denial may not be appealed. If you need additional assistance, please contact (706) 542-2900 to make an appointment to meet with an advisor.