

EMPLOYMENT on SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

F-1 Visa Students

What is Severe Economic Hardship (SEH) Work Authorization?

Based on federal statute 8 CFR 214.2 (f)(9)(ii)(C)-(D) and (F), SEH is permission from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for an F-1 student with an economic hardship to legally work off campus. SEH authorizes the student to work 20 hours off campus while school is in session and 40 hours off campus during summer or breaks between semesters. SEH is given in one-year periods of time.

Who is eligible to apply for SEH?

USCIS approves SEH when two conditions are present. One, the student has severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control. Two, the student's other on-campus employment opportunities are not available or are not sufficient to meet the student's financial needs. These unforeseen circumstances may include:

1. Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without any fault of the student.
2. Large changes in the value of currency or the exchange.
3. Unreasonable increases in tuition and/or living costs.
4. Unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support.
5. Unexpected medical bills or other expenses.

What are the requirements for SEH?

1. The student must have been in F-1 status for one-full academic year (at least 9 months at their current degree level).
2. The student must have made sincere efforts to locate on-campus employment.
3. The student must be in good academic standing and carrying a full course of study.
4. The student must show that accepting employment will not interfere with carrying a full course of study.
5. Employment may not begin until the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) has been received.

How does a student apply for SEH?

A student applies by sending the following information to USCIS:

1. Letter from the student (and perhaps the International Office) thoroughly explaining the circumstances causing the economic hardship. This letter should include a detailed explanation of the financial difficulty, efforts the student has taken to gain other employment, and reasons why present employment is not sufficient.
2. Documents and/or other information which demonstrate and provide evidence of the student's economic hardship. This evidence may include:
 - a. Medical bills.
 - b. Letters from family members about a change in the family's situation (illness in the family, destruction of the family business, natural disaster, etc.).
 - c. Bank statements, newspaper or magazine articles, bank verifications of a significant devaluation of the home country's currency, photographs, and any other supporting documentation.
 - d. Statements concerning the student's loss of financial aid or sponsorship.
3. USCIS immigration form I-765. *
4. USCIS immigration form G-1145**

5. Two color passport photos. ***
6. Copy of SEVIS I-20 (Issued by International Programs & Services).
7. Copies of valid passport, visa, and I-94.
8. List of financial assets, monthly income, expenses, etc.
9. Fee of \$340 (check or money order made payable to USCIS).
10. Previous EAD card (if there is one).

After you get the needed documents, make an appointment with Jeff Hashman, jhashman@pittstate.edu, 235-4383, or contact International Programs & Services to make an appointment.

Mail the application by certified mail to:

For US Post Office (USPS) deliveries:

**USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036**

For Express Mail and courier service deliveries:

**USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034**

* Form I-765 may be downloaded and completed from <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

** Form G-1145 email notification Form may be downloaded and completed from
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/g-1145.pdf>

*** Photos may be obtained at Pittsburg Post Office, 702 North Locust, Pittsburg, KS, 66762, 231-6000, hours are M-F 9-11 a.m. & 2-4 p.m., cost \$15.