

On-Campus Employment:

Enrolled F-1 students may work on the campus of their educational institutions. If you are in F-1 status, when classes are in session or if you are registered with the Graduate School for the summer, you may work **ONLY** 20 hours per week so long as the job does not interfere with your ability to continue as a full-time student. During your vacation periods (winter breaks and 2-3 weeks at the end of the summer prior to fall registration) you may work full time.

Advantages:

- no need for an Employment Authorization Document
- no special application procedure required
- is not subtracted from your 12-month practical training after completion of study
- does not need to be related to your field of study
- you may begin working as soon as you are a student

Disadvantage:

limited to on-campus employment opportunities

Off-campus Employment

After having been in F-1 status for at least 9 months, you are eligible for off-campus employment in your field of studies. This could be full-time during the summer and the winter semester break, or part-time (limited to 20 hours of total employment per week, including any on-campus work) during the academic year. There are two types of off campus work authorization called "practical training": Curricular Practical Training and Optional Practical Training.

Curricular Practical Training:

Curricular practical training is for work in your field of study for which you receive academic ("curricular") credit. This employment may be an internship, cooperative education job, a practicum, or any other work experience, provided it is either for credit or required for your degree. Students may work part-time (20 hours per week or less) during the academic year or full-time during semester breaks. To be eligible, you also need to have been enrolled for a full academic year.

Any student who works accumulatively for one year or more in full-time or 23 months or more in part-time curricular practical training, however, loses eligibility for any practical training after completion of studies.

Advantages:

- Employment Authorization Document from BCIS is not required
- is not subtracted from your 12-month practical training after completion of study, unless you work cumulatively full-time 12 months or more or part-time 23 months or more

Disadvantages:

- you must either receive academic credit for your work experience or it must be required for your degree
- you are not eligible for curricular practical training until you have been in F-1 status for at least one academic year

To apply for this type of work permission, follow the instructions here:

[Curricular Practical Training Procedures](#)

Optional Practical Training

Optional practical training is work in your major area of study which is authorized by the Bureau of Immigration and Citizenship Services (BCIS). After having been enrolled for a full academic year, you are eligible for OPT in your field of studies. You may receive one 12-month period of optional practical training for each higher degree you receive (talk with the Advisor at the ISSO if you have been outside the US for 5 months or more). It may be used before or after completion of studies. OPT can be used full-time during the summer and the winter semester break, or part-time (limited to 20 hours of total employment per week, including any on-campus work) during the academic year. However, the time spent with this type of employment authorization before you graduate will be reduced from your 12-month practical training after completion of studies. After graduation, OPT is authorized for full time only (not part time).

To apply for this type of work permission, follow the instructions here:

[Optional Practical Training Procedures](#)

Advantages:

- does not have to be for-credit nor required for your degree program
- little paperwork for the employer (just a job offer letter)

Disadvantages:

- must mail in your application to the BCIS with \$120 fee
- it takes about two to four months to get the approval
- time spent for this practical training will be deducted from your 12-month practical training after completion of study

Working for International Organizations:

To do an internship with certain international organizations, F-1 students need to apply for an employment authorization document through BCIS.

Requirements:

- The employment is for an internship with a recognized international organization and is within the scope of the organization's sponsorship.
- The student has been in F-1 status for at least 9 months and is in good academic standing.
- The employment must be within the field of study
- To apply for EAD send the following to INS
- a written certification from the organization stating that the proposed employment is within the scope of the organization's sponsorship
- an I-20 with signature by the ISSO staff within the last 30 days
- a completed Form I-765
- application fee \$120 (payable to BCIS)

Advantages:

- does not have to be for-credit nor required for your degree program
- does not take away from your 12-month practical training after completion of studies

Disadvantages:

- must mail in your application to the BCIS with \$120 fee it takes at least 2-3 months to get the approval

Severe Economic Hardship

According to the Immigration regulations, an F-1 student may apply for off-campus employment work authorization based upon "severe economic hardship due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control." [8 CFR 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(C)]