



## EMPLOYMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

For international students who hold an F-1 visa (non-immigrant student visa), there are specific guidelines and restrictions which regulate employment. Please see below for the several categories of employment that an F-1 student may utilize.

### ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT

During the first year in the U.S. as an F1 student, employment on-campus is authorized. International F-1 students are allowed to work on campus as long as the employment is performed on the educational institution's premises, with on-location firms that provide services for students on campus and any off-campus locations which are *educationally affiliated* with the educational institution. These types of employment cannot exceed twenty (20) hours per week while classes are in session.

### CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

International F-1 students are allowed to engage in employment through academic internships for credit. To be eligible, an F-1 student must have been enrolled in school full-time for one year on valid F-1 status. Graduate students may engage in CPT immediately **if required for program**. In order to do so, the student must provide the following information to the International Students Office *before* engaging employment:

- Letter from the academic program director stipulating that *the internship is part of the curriculum*; name and location of the company or agency, and start and end dates of such internship;
- Letter from the employer with job description and start and end dates of such internship;
- Certification by the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS); and,
- Endorsement of the SEVIS I-20 form (new copy).
- If student will be receiving academic credit for the internship, student must be registered for that class that will be connected with the internship

### ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

When you requested an application for your F-1 visa at the United States consulate or embassy in your country, you were asked to show the ability to pay for your educational program and living expenses. However, there are times when USCIS *may* recognize unforeseen or unexpected circumstances which may affect you economically. If you are experiencing such circumstances, you may be required to work off-campus in order to pay your tuition and living expenses. In order to engage in this type of employment condition, you *must* first obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) through USCIS.

In order to obtain such permission you must demonstrate that your financial circumstances are beyond your control, and that employment on campus is not available and/or unsuitable.

You must also:

- a) have completed at least *one full academic year as an F1 student* in the United States
- b) *be in good academic standing and be in lawful status*; and,
- c) file the following documentation:



- Certification by the Designated School Official (DSO) in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS);
- Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization) and its fee (\$380 check or money order made to the Department of Homeland Security);
- Recommendation from the Designated School Official (DSO) at the International Students Office in SEVIS;
- Endorsement of the SEVIS I-20 form (new copy);
- Copy of I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record);
- 2 Passport photos (2"x2"); and,
- Any previous EAD (Employment Authorization Document), if applicable.

All documentation must be mailed to the appropriate USCIS filing facility.

## **OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING**

As part of your program, practical training employment authorization may be given with the purpose of acquiring experience in your field of study. This type of employment is given during or after completion of studies, and for a period of time not to exceed one year (12 months).

The employment is granted to eligible students for not more than twenty (20) hours per week while school is in session or on a full-time basis if students request this authorization during vacation periods and after completion of studies.

In order to engage in Optional Practical Training before or after completion of their academic program, students must have completed at least *one full academic year as F1 students* in the United States, be in good standing and in status. Note carefully that part-time Optional Practical Training employment will be deducted from the twelve (12) months at a half-time rate. For example, if you have been employed for six (6) months during the academic year, then three (3) months will be deducted from the total. In order to seek Optional Practical Training, after completion of studies, you must have completed all the requirements for your academic program and be in lawful status.

In addition, you must file all documents in a timely manner. Please note that the graduation ceremony *is not* part of the academic program. Therefore, you complete your academic program on your last day of classes.

In order to engage in this type of employment, you must file the following documentation with the Designated School Official (DSO):

- Certification by the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS);
- Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization) and its fee (\$380 check or money order made to the Department of Homeland Security);
- I-20 (new copy);
- Copies of previous school's I-20;
- 2 passport photos (2"x2");
- Copies of previous I-20(s), visa, I-94, and passport; and,
- Any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) if applicable.

All documentation must be sent to the designated USCIS filing facility.

*NOTE: If you accept employment under other circumstances not listed above, this is considered breaking the law and you will be in violation of your F1 status.*