

Severe Economic Hardship

Who can apply for permission to work based on economic hardship?

To be eligible to apply you must meet all of the following requirements:

1. F-1 status as a full time student for at least one academic year (two semesters)
2. Currently in good academic standing
3. On-campus employment is unavailable to you or otherwise insufficient to meet your current needs
4. Off campus employment is seen as necessary to avoid severe economic hardship due to unforeseen circumstances beyond your control.

What is a “severe” economic problem? A “severe” economic problem is one that would prevent you from completing your educational program.

What does “unexpected” economic problem mean? An unexpected problem is one that you could not have predicted when you provided the financial documents for the I-20. This might include sudden and significant changes in exchange rates, natural disasters that result in loss of business or family income, war, political change which freezes bank accounts, etc.

What is not considered an unexpected financial problem? Uninsured medical bills, brother or sister starting college, shift in exchange rate which is part of a long-time pattern, parent’s retirement, etc., are not unexpected financial problems.

How much can I work? You will be eligible to work off campus up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and more than 20 hours per week during the summer and when school is not in session. Approvals are given for one year and then a renewal is required.

Do I have to register as a full-time student? Yes, although you have financial difficulty, you must register for at least 12 credits in the fall and spring semesters. If you transfer to another school your off campus work approval will become invalid.

HOW TO APPLY

1. **Gather documents and write a letter** explaining how your situation is unexpected and beyond your control. You will need to provide supporting evidence (news articles, bank statements, letters from sponsors, etc.) Your application is decided based on the documentation you provide. You need to give as much supporting evidence as possible and explain your situation clearly.
2. **Make an appointment with your International Student Advisor** to discuss the situation and review the documents you plan to send to USCIS. Although the International Student Office cannot give the work permit, we are required to review your application and determine whether the application is valid. (See page 2 for list of items to send and address)
3. **Mail the application to USCIS; it may take three to five months or in some cases longer** to receive an answer.

Office of International Student Services

8333 Little River Turnpike, Bldg CA, Suite 112
Annandale, VA 22003 Phone: 703-323-3423
Email: oiss@nvcc.edu • www.nvcc.edu/international

DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE AND SEND TO USCIS

- Make sure to sign the form in ink.
- **7-9** **Wfcb** **WBch** **Z** **5 dd** **Wfcb** **5 WVDHUbW** **Z** **fa**
- **7** **YW** **cf** **Acb** **Ym** **Cf** **XYf** **k** **f** **HYb** **lc** **í** **8** **Yd** **Uf** **fa** **Ybhc** **Z** **<** **ca** **Y** **Ub** **X** **G** **YW** **f** **jmí** **Ö** **[** **Á** **[** **á** **à** **^** **ç** **æ** **Ë**
For the exact and correct application fee (find current fee amount under section-
Filing fee)
 - To request a : **YYK** **Ujj** **Yf** **fl** **cfa** **í** **4** **-** **%** **L** Note: **G** **Á** **^** **b** **&** **c** **á** **Á** **[** **~** **Á** **]** **á** **^** **á** **Á** **Á** **^** **~** **à** **{** **á** **Á** **á** **[** **&** **{** **^** **}** **á** **á** **Á** **Á** **È**
- **@HYf** **Z** **ca** **nci** **Yl** **d** **Ujb** **b** **[** **your** **situation** **and** **supporting** **documentation.**
- **@ghj** **b** **[** **cZnci** **f** **W** **ff** **Ybh** **Ugg** **Yrgz** **]b** **W** **ca** **Y** **Ub** **X** **Yl** **d** **Ybg** **Yg** **"** Include copies of recent bills, receipts and bank statements (ask your adviser for a personal budget table to use)
- **7** **cd** **Yg** **c** **ZH** **Y** **Z** **b** **Ub** **W** **U** **X** **c** **W** **a** **Yb** **U** **H** **j** **c** **b** you provided to NOVA for your I-20 (OIS has this information in your file)
- **GHU** **Ya** **Ybh** **Z** **ca** **nci** **f** **gdc** **bgcf** explaining the events which have occurred and why these are unexpected. Provide evidence of their current financial status and level of support they can provide you. (show current bank statements)
- **H** **ja** **Y** **]** **b** **Y** **c** **Z** **U** **Y** **d** **U** **f** **h** **f** **Y** **g** **Z** **ca** **U** **b** **X** **U** **f** **f** **j** **U** **g** **lc** **h** **Y** **I** **"** **G** since your initial arrival. Include the dates and reasons for travel.
- **@HYf** **Z** **ca** **h** **Y** **b** **HYf** **U** **H** **j** **c** **b** **U** **G** **h** **XYbh** **5** **Xj** **g** **g** **c** **f** explaining the recommendation for work and confirming that you have been unable to find sufficient on campus employment.
- **7** **cd** **mic** **Z** **d** **U** **Yg** **%** **Ub** **X** **&** **c** **Z** **W** **ff** **Ybh** **4** **&** **\$**
- **7** **cd** **m** **both** **pages** **(ID** **and** **travel** **history)** **cZnci** **f** **4** **-** **(** **df** **]b** **h** **c** **i** **h**
- **7** **cd** **mic** **Z** **d** **U** **gg** **d** **cf** **h** **8** **d** **U** **Yg** **k** **h** **g** **h** **U** **a** **d** **(unexpired)**
- € **Two** **passport** **style** **photographs** (cannot be same ones from your passport)

MAIL DOCUMENTS TO USCIS

We recommend that you make a copy of all pieces of the application for yourself. Send the application by **certified mail** and request a **return receipt** so it can be tracked.

For the most up to date mailing instructions see the I-765 Filing address page found here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses>

United States law requires you to obtain written authorization before starting any type of compensated employment. Beginning work without authorization from the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) or NOVA's Office of International Students is a serious violation of your F-1 status.

You may not begin working until you receive a work permit!