

Severe Economic Hardship Application Checklist

Below is a checklist of the items you need to submit to ISSS before you may file an application for severe economic hardship to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). ISSS must issue a new Form I-20 indicating a recommendation for severe economic hardship, which you will need before sending your application to USCIS; please allow 2-3 weeks from when a completed application is submitted to issue a new Form I-20. You will be contacted by email when the I-20 is ready and then will be given further instructions. **Issuance of a new Form I -20 recommending severe economic hardship employment authorization is not an approval and does not guarantee employment authorization will be approved by USCIS.**

To apply for OPT you will need to bring the following items to ISSS:

- Completed [Form I-765](#).** It is *strongly recommended* that you TYPE information into the form, check carefully for errors, then print and sign it. If you choose to complete it by hand, print neatly in BLOCK letters using blue ink.
 - Complete item #16 with the code for economic hardship: (c)(3)(iii)
- Personal Check or Money Order for \$380.00**, payable to “**U.S. Department of Homeland Security.**” A personal check is recommended for tracking purposes.
- Two (2) photographs.** These must meet both USCIS and Department of State (DOS) passport color photograph specifications (visit the [Photo Instructions](#) on the DOS website).
 - It is recommended that students write their **full name, date of birth and I-94 number** in pencil or felt pen on the back of each photograph. The photos should be cut by the photo establishment.
- Two photocopies of each of the following:**
 - Form I-94 (I-94 card copied front and back OR I-94 electronic record printed from www.cbp.gov/i94)
 - F-1 visa stamp (OR I-797 Approval Notice from USCIS if applicable)
 - passport personal information page
 - passport validity page showing expiration date, if separate from personal information page
 - previous Employment Authorization Documents (EADs), front and back, if applicable
 - all previously issued Forms I-20
- Documentation explaining the circumstances causing the economic need, which can be a letter from the student along with additional supporting documents. This document should also explain why other employment options are unavailable (such as on-campus employment options).
- Optional:* Completed [Form G-1145](#) (E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance).