

# EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP APPLICANTS

## **Definition**

Only students whose financial situation has changed unexpectedly and/or beyond their control may apply for Economic Hardship.

Applicable Examples: loss of financial aid, unexpected loss of sponsorship (partial or total), substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rates, large increases in tuition, medical bills, living costs, and/or other substantial unexpected expenses.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

- ❑ Student must have been in lawful F-1 student status for at least one academic year.
- ❑ Student must demonstrate that employment on campus is not available or is insufficient to cover costs.
- ❑ Student must be in good academic standing.
- ❑ Student must be in full-time status.
- ❑ Student should demonstrate that employment would not interfere with studies.

## **Application Procedure**

1. Complete form I-538, Section A.
2. Complete form I-765.
3. Submit a letter detailing the unforeseen circumstance of the hardship.
4. Provide two photographs of yourself. Photos must meet USCIS specifications.
5. Make a check payable to: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, for \$340.00 USD (fee subject to change).

## **Important Information**

- ❑ Employment Authorization based on Severe Economic Hardship does not affect eligibility for Optional Practical Training (OPT).
- ❑ Employment authorization is granted in 1-year intervals up to the expected day of completion of the student's course of study/degree.
- ❑ You may work full-time during vacations and part-time when school is in session.
- ❑ You may **not** travel outside of the United States **until** your application has been approved by the Department of Homeland Security.

*NOTE: Keep this handout with you for future reference. Remember that USCIS is constantly changing the regulations; therefore you should check with the International Student Advisor at 401-874-2395 or check our website at <http://www.uri.edu/iss>*