



**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS**

**International Student Services Office (ISSO)**

**Economic Hardship**

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For Assistance  
Review this guide and then call 972-883-4189 to schedule an appointment or come to the ISSO see a walk-in advisor.

*This guide is provided by the UT Dallas International Student Services Office to prospective and current UT Dallas students considering an application for an economic hardship authorization. The information is not intended as legal advice. For legal issues, please consult an immigration attorney.*

## DESCRIPTION

Economic Hardship is an F-1 work exception reviewed by USCIS on a case-by-case basis for students who experience a severe financial hardship caused by circumstances beyond their control after obtaining F-1 status. Some examples of circumstances beyond the student's control:

- Unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's sponsor.
- Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment if the loss is not the student's fault.
- Unexpected medical bills in the U.S. not covered by insurance.
- Large increases in tuition or living costs.
- A substantial fluctuation of currency in the student's home country.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- The student must be in F-1 status for at least one academic year and be in good academic standing.
- The student is unable to obtain on-campus employment or the pay from available on-campus employment must be insufficient to meet the student's financial needs.
- The student must be able to prove to USCIS that employment is necessary due to a severe economic hardship.
- The student is not required to have a job offer to apply for Economic Hardship.

## DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT TO ISSO

- Economic Hardship Request Form.
- A letter explaining the unforeseen circumstances beyond your control that led to the need for off-campus employment.
- Evidence supporting your case for Economic Hardship.
- A budget for the coming year, including the approximate amount of money needed to meet your financial obligations.
- I-765 form.
- Copy of passport identification page (photograph and expiration date).
- Copy of F-1 visa.
- Copy of front & back of I-94 card.
- Copy of any previously issued EAD cards.

## DOCUMENTS TO MAIL TO USCIS

- Two passport photos (No glasses allowed)
- A check for the USCIS application fee.
- Original I-765 form.
- Copy of Economic Hardship I-20, pages 1 and 2. The issue date on the I-20 must be less than 30 days old.
- Your letter explaining the need for Economic Hardship and any additional evidence.
- Copy of passport.
- Copy of I-94, front and back.
- Copy of F-1 visa
- Copy of previously issued EAD cards, if applicable.

## HOW TO APPLY

- Obtain an Economic Hardship Guide from the ISSO in person or through [ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu](mailto:ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu).
- Schedule an appointment with the Senior International Advisor to review the process.

- Submit all required documents to the ISSO.
- If the application is complete, the ISSO will issue an Economic Hardship I-20 within 3 business days.
- Come to the ISSO to sign the I-20 and receive mailing instructions.
- Mail the application to USCIS with a check for the USCIS application fee.
- The student will receive a receipt notice from USCIS within 2-3 weeks after mailing the application.
- Approval can take 2-4 months. If approved, the student will receive an EAD card.

## TYPE OF WORK ALLOWED

- Approval of Economic Hardship allows the student to work off-campus in a job that is not related to the student's course of study.
- Work is limited to 20 hours per week while school is in session but can be full-time during official school breaks.
- The student is not authorized to work until the EAD card is received.

## LENGTH OF WORK AUTHORIZATION

- Economic Hardship is granted for one year or until the program end date.
- Approval for Economic Hardship is not limited to one year and can be renewed. If applying for a renewal, the student must repeat the same application process and show a new unforeseen circumstance or explain why the same unforeseen circumstance continues.

## ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- The student must remain enrolled in a full course of study while on Economic Hardship.

## FAQs

- There is a high rate of denial for economic hardship, even for students who seem to have a valid reason for applying. For example, saying that your parents are having difficulty paying can be viewed as an invalid reason. A more valid reason would be a parent losing a job and not being able to find employment.
- The Economic Hardship is no longer valid if the student transfers to another school.

## ISSO CONTACT INFO

- Website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/isso/>
- Email: [ISSOcurrent@utdallas.edu](mailto:ISSOcurrent@utdallas.edu)
- The ISSO international advisors are available on a walk-in basis Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. or you can call 972-883-4189 to speak to an advisor.