

STEP 1

1. Meet with an ISSS advisor to confirm your eligibility and review the conditions and procedures for applying.
2. It is recommended that you bring a draft of a letter explaining your economic need and supporting evidence that documents this.
3. If you are eligible to apply for economic hardship, the advisor will request a new SEVIS I-20 with a recommendation for economic hardship.

STEP 2

1. Once your application is complete, you should immediately mail it to USCIS.
2. For additional instructions, refer to Mailing Your Application to USCIS.

Mail the following items to the USCIS Service Center that has jurisdiction over the address listed on your I-765:

- a letter written by you addressed to USCIS in which you describe in detail the circumstances that support your request for hardship employment authorization and a statement explaining why other employment options are unavailable or insufficient
- supporting documentation confirming these circumstances (for example, a letter from your department to document the loss of a scholarship, or exchange rate data showing a currency devaluation, or a letter from an accountant confirming unexpected business losses).
- **completed USCIS Form I-765**
 - Write "**(c)(3)(iii)**" in item 16 of Form I-765
 - use an **address where you can receive mail over the next two to three months**
 - Type or print legibly as USCIS uses optical character recognition (OCR) technology
 - Be sure to **check off the purpose** ("I am applying for:") of the form
 - **Sign in blue ink**
 - **Signature should be within the box**
- **two US passport-style photos** (Photograph instructions are found on the Form I-765 instructions under Required Documentation. Also, lightly print your name on the back of each photo with a pencil.)
- a personal check or money order for the **I-765 Application Fee** payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" (A personal check is preferable because, if necessary, you will be able to determine if it has been cashed).
- **new I-20** issued by ISSS with recommendation for economic hardship
- photocopies of **all I-20s previously issued**

- photocopy of **your I-94** card (front and back if issued paper I-94) or US entry/admission stamp in passport (if issued electronic I-94)
 - Refer to the [automated I-94 process](#)
- photocopy of the **US Entry Visa for last entry into the US** (citizens of Canada and Bermuda exempt)
- photocopy of **passport** (photocopy of photo page, renewal page if original has expired, and pages showing amendments such as name changes, corrections etc.)
- photocopy of **any previously issued employment authorization documents** (EAD cards), if applicable

IMPORTANT:

- Please **consult ISSS prior to e-filing I-765** via the USCIS website.
- Check all documents for completeness and accuracy.
- Be sure to **sign I-20 and I-765**.
- Make a **complete copy of your application** for your records. ISSS does not maintain copies of your application.
- We suggest you **meet with an ISSS advisor to have your application materials reviewed**.

Application Mailing Instructions

The USCIS “Chicago Lockbox” filing location is applicable to the following states and territories:

Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia.

US Postal Service Address	Express Mail & Courier Services
USCIS	USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03	Attn: I-765 C03 (Box 805373)
P.O. Box 805373	ATTN: AOS
Chicago, IL 60680-5374	131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
	Chicago, IL 60603-5517

If the state you put on form I-765 in item 3 is not in this list, refer to the mailing instructions in the [I-765 Instructions](#).

People filing at the lockbox can **sign up to receive an email and/or text message confirming that the application was accepted** by adding [Form G-1145](#) as the first page of the Economic Hardship application.

Finally, we recommend that you mail your application by express mail such as Federal Express or

UPS, or by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, so you will have a record of its delivery.

Within a few weeks of sending your application, USCIS will mail you a receipt.

- The **receipt and final decision will be sent to the address you wrote on the I-765.**
- Please note that **USCIS processing usually take about 60-90 days.**
- You **may not begin employment before you receive your EAD**; working prior to that time constitutes illegal employment that renders you illegally present in the US.