



Information for J-2 Dependents Employment Authorization

A J-2 visa holder may work in the U.S. as long as the employment is not intended to financially support the principal J-1 visa holder. In order to legally work while in the U.S., the J-2 visa holder must apply for permission to seek employment from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) by filing [Form I-765](#). Once permission is granted, the J-2 visa holder may work for any employer, either full-time or part-time. There is no legal limit to what they can earn. The application process takes an average of 3-5 months. The application process for an extension/renewal of your EAD card is the same as the initial application. USCIS recommends that individuals seek a timely renewal of their EAD by properly filing a renewal application up to 180 days before their EAD expires.

Before You Apply

Applying for employment authorization to USCIS is a personal matter. This guide is for informational purposes only. You are solely responsible for the filing of your application and maintaining your J-2 status.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Currently, J-2 employment applications can only be submitted with the paper Form I-765 **by mail**.
- Applicants must file [Form I-765](#) while being physically in the U.S.
- If you do not completely fill out [Form I-765](#) or file it without the required initial evidence or valid signatures, you will not establish a basis for your eligibility and USCIS may deny your application. Digital signatures (stamped or typewritten names) are not accepted.
- Employment may not begin until you have received the work permit, called the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card.
- Starting Oct. 28, 2025, USCIS no longer accepts paper checks and money order payments. You must pay the fee via ACH debit transactions using [Form G-1650](#) or credit card payments using [Form G-1450](#). Review the [USCIS Filing Fees page](#) for more information.

Collect Required Documents

Submit the following ORIGINALS documents:

- Completed and **signed** [Form I-765](#) – sign in black ink
TIP: The J-2 eligibility category for #27 is **(c) (5) ()**.
- Two US passport-style photos – see [instructions on USCIS website](#).
- Filing fee – either completed and **signed** [Form G-1450](#) or [Form G-1650](#). Check the [USCIS Filing Fee](#) page for current filing fee.

Submit the following PHOTOCOPIES:

- Form DS-2019s for both the J-1 principal and the J-2 dependent
- [Electronic I-94 record](#) or paper Form I-94 (front & back) of both J-1 principal and J-2 dependent
- Passport biographical pages and visa stamps of both J-1 principal and J-2 dependent

- Marriage certificate or other legal proof of marriage to the J-1 principal – attach English translation if written in a language other than English
- Previous EAD card (front & back), if any
- Financial Statement – see example on page 3

Take Note

- Do not use binders or folders that cannot be easily disassembled.
- Avoid using heavy-duty staples; instead, use ACCO fasteners or heavy clips.
- Two-hole punching at the top of the materials for easy placement in the file is appreciated.
- Avoid submitting oversized documentation when possible.
- Make a copy of your application before mailing the original to USCIS.

Submit Your Application by Mail

[Check the USCIS website](#) for the current filing address – click the tab “Foreign Students” and find your eligibility category (c)(5). Make sure to choose the correct address based on the type of mailing service you use. We recommend that you use a service that includes tracking and guaranteed delivery.

You may request an E-Notification that your application has been accepted by attaching [Form G-1145](#) to your application. The E-Notification is NOT the official USCIS receipt notice.

Your Receipt “Notice of Action”

You will receive a "Notice of Action" from USCIS, usually within 2-6 weeks. This is an important document that can help track the status of your application. You may use the receipt number to check the status of your case online. To check the status of your case, please visit the USCIS web site [Case Status Service Online](#).

EXAMPLE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[Your Phone or Email]

[Date]

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the J-2 dependent of the J-1 Exchange Visitor [*insert J-1's name*] and I wish to apply for permission for employment authorization. My [*insert spouse or parent*] receives a [*insert stipend or salary or grant*] from [*insert name of funding source*] sufficient to provide for [*insert his/her*] expenses. I wish to be employed to provide for my expenses (*if you have minor children in the US include: and those of my children*), and to pursue my interests in [*insert subject of interest*]. Any income I earn will be used for family recreational and cultural activities and related travel, among other things, and not for the support of my [*insert J-1's name*]. Please grant me permission to be employed.

Enclosed are all required documents for my application:

- **List all documents**

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

[Print Your Name]