



# International Student Employment Fact Sheet

## **F-1: Employment Information**

Types of Employment Available to F-1 Students

- On-Campus Employment
- Off-Campus Employment
  - Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
  - Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- Severe Economic Hardship

### **On-Campus Employment**

**On-campus employment** is defined as employment which provides a paycheck from Jackson College. F-1 students are restricted to the amount of hours per week they may work:

Fall/Winter academic semesters: maximum of 20 hours per week.

Semester breaks, official school/summer vacation: full-time on campus. (Exception: if a student is required to register for summer (if that is there starting semester), only 20 hours per week maximum permitted).

Upon completion of degree, on-campus employment permission ends.

### **Off-Campus Employment**

F-1 students must be in full-time student status for one full academic year to be eligible for off-campus employment. Below are listed the various types of off-campus employment: Curricular Practical Training (CPT), Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Off-campus Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship.

### **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

CPT is employment authorization for an integral part of an established curriculum and must be directly related to a student's major area of study. It may be defined as: alternate work/study, internship, or other type of internship practicum (required or optional). Students must also register for a specific course in their department. CPT can be full-time (>20 hours per week) or part-time (20 hours or less per week). Students registered for part-time CPT during a fall/spring semester must also be registered for a full course of study. Students engaged in part-time CPT during summer vacation do not need to be registered full-time for classes.

Students must be in legal status which includes, but is not limited to:

- Possess a valid passport
- Be registered as a full-time student each fall/spring semester
- Have been in F-1 student status for at least one full academic year.

### **How to Apply for CPT**

To apply for CPT you must be able to respond, "Yes," to the following:

1. Is your I-20 valid and unexpired?
2. Does it list your current field of study and educational level?
3. Do you have a valid, unexpired passport?
4. Have you been a full-time student for one full academic year?
5. Have you been registered full-time every semester you attended JC:
  - Undergraduate students: 12 credit hours

If you answered "yes" to all the questions: Please contact the International Student Institute (ISI) for more information.

### **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

OPT is available to students in F-1 status who are lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis and have been so for at least one full academic year. An eligible F-1 student may request OPT in order to be employed in a position which is directly related to the major area of study. A total of twelve (12) months of OPT is available for qualified students to use after each degree level completion as an F-1 student.

The USCIS office in Phoenix, Arizona must grant an employment authorization document (EAD) before a student may commence employment. Processing times for EAD cards can be checked at the following USCIS website: [https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard.do?jsessionid=cabyv6QuBliUP\\_5alhACs](https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard.do?jsessionid=cabyv6QuBliUP_5alhACs)

### **How to Apply for OPT**

In order to apply for optional practical training, you must be able to respond, "Yes," to the following questions:

1. Is your I-20 current? Does it reflect your current field of study and educational level?
2. Do you have a valid, unexpired passport?
3. Have you had **less than** 12 months of full-time curricular practical training (CPT)?
4. Have you been a full-time student for one full academic year?
5. Have you been full-time as an F-1 student every semester you attended JC?

If you answered "yes" to all the questions, Please contact the International Student Institute (ISI) for more information.

### **Off-Campus Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship:**

Employment authorization due to severe economic hardship is difficult to obtain. It is a very limited option for students who can prove extreme unforeseen economic conditions. The application must be submitted to and approved by USCIS. Students interested in this option should contact the International Student Institute (ISI) for more information.