



## J-2 EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may grant an individual in J-2 status (dependent of a J-1) permission to accept employment in the United States. Once the J-2 has entered the United States they can initiate a request for employment authorization (by mail) with USCIS. Individuals in J-2 status are not eligible to be employed until they have received employment authorization from USCIS and have been issued an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Authorized employment for individuals in J-2 status is limited to the dates documented by USCIS on the EAD and the end-date usually matches the expiration date on the DS-2019. Once the application has been received by USCIS, it may take three months or more to be approved.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

In order for an individual in J-2 status to apply for permission to accept employment in the United States and to be issued the EAD, they must submit an application (by mail) which includes the following required documents to the appropriate USCIS office:

- Completed Form I-765

*Always download and use the most recent I-765 directly from the [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). Using an outdated form will result in your application being returned or rejected*

- Check or money order payable to the *Department of Homeland Security* in the amount listed for I-765 processing

*If using a check for payment, name and address must be printed on the check. Temporary checks are not accepted.*

- Letter to USCIS explaining reason requesting employment authorization

*Sample letter included in this J-2 Employment Authorization Guide*

- Copies of both J-1 and J-2 DS-2019's

*Do not send the originals*

- Copy of J-2 visa stamp in passport

- Copy of J-2's biographical page in passport

- Copies of both front and back of J-1 and J-2's I-94 card's

*Do not send the originals*

- Two U.S. passport style photos

*Two passport-style photos (photos can be obtained at the Wildcard office for a fee). Print your name and I-94 card number on the back of each photo.*

- Copy of Marriage Certificate

*If the certificate is not in English, please provide a translation. You can translate it yourself or have someone else do it. Include a statement to the effect that the person translating the document is fluent in both English and the language of the original certificate and that they certify that the translation is true and accurate.*

- Copies of any previously issued EAD cards (if re-applying for J-2 employment authorization)

Prior to mailing the application, be sure to make photocopies of your entire application for your records. Mail all of the required documents to the appropriate USCIS Service Center (this information can be found in the I-765 Instructions. It is advisable to mail the application from a U.S. Post Office by "certified mail/return receipt requested". Consult with an advisor at the International Office if you have questions or require assistance with this application.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How long may I work?

*J-2 dependents with employment authorization may work until the date on the EAD card or until the J-1 principal visitor completes his or her program, whichever is earlier. J-2 dependents may apply to renew work authorization, as long as the J-1 visitor remains in status. If the J-1 receives an extension of stay, the J-2 dependent must re-apply for work authorization once the extension has been granted.*

### May I still work if the status of the J-1 ends?

*If the J-1 visitor discontinues their program at Northwestern University or changes to another visa category, the work authorization for the J-2 dependent will be made invalid. Legal work authorization for J-2 dependents is always dependent on the status of the J-1 principal.*

### When should I renew my employment authorization document (EAD)?

*It is recommended that you renew your EAD at least three months in advance of the expiration date of your current EAD due to the processing time at USCIS. If you are applying for a renewal of your EAD, you cannot work beyond the previously authorized date until you receive a new EAD. To prevent a gap in your employment, it is recommended that you apply as early as you can for the renewal of your EAD.*

### What is the process for renewal of my EAD?

*J-2 dependents may apply to renew work authorization, as long as the J-1 visitor remains in status. If the J-1 receives an extension of stay, the J-2 dependent must re-apply for work authorization once the extension has been granted. The J-2 should follow the same process of application as they did for their initial application.*

### Can I work full-time?

*Yes, J-2's who have a valid EAD can work full-time or part-time.*

### Where can I work?

*Not limited.*

### Do I have to pay taxes?

*Yes, J-2's are subject to social security taxes, federal income taxes and, where applicable, state and local income taxes. It is advised that you consult with a qualified tax consultant.*

### Do I need a social security number?

*Yes, anyone who earns wages in the United States must have a social security number for taxpayer identification purposes. J-2's are not eligible to apply for a social security number until they have received their EAD.*



## SAMPLE J-2 EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION LETTER

Your name

Your address

Your phone or email

USCIS

(see I-765 Instructions for exact address)

Date

To Whom it May Concern:

I am the J-2 dependent of the J-1 Exchange Visitor **J-1's name** and I wish to apply for permission for employment authorization. My **spouse or parent** receives a **stipend, salary, or grant** from **source** sufficient to provide for **name of spouse or parent** expenses. I wish to be employed to provide for my expenses (**add "and those of my children" if applicable**), and to pursue my interests in **topic**. Any money which I earn from such employment will be used for my family's customary recreational and cultural activities and related travel, among other things, and not for the support of my **spouse or parent**. Please grant me permission to be employed.

Enclosed are all required documents for my application:

(List documents included)

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Your Signature

Your Name