



Employment Options – An Overview

Anyone on an F-1 or J-1 student visa who wants to work in the US ***must seek permission from the Office of International Students before starting work!*** We offer regularly scheduled On-campus and Off-campus employment seminars – be sure to attend one BEFORE looking for work. Make sure any employment you consider is legal (or authorized) because illegal or unauthorized employment will jeopardize your stay in the United States. Generally, employment is limited to 20 hours a week during the fall and winter term and full-time during spring and summer term or during official school breaks (with permission of the Student Employment Office).

Employment is any type of work performed or services provided in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room food ***or any other benefit.***

The topic of employment options is covered in great depth during our OIS International Student Orientation and during our off-campus employment seminars.

On-Campus Employment

Both F-1 and J-1 students may engage in on-campus employment at EMU. To be eligible you must:

- ▶ be “In-status”
- ▶ be pursuing a full-time course of study
- ▶ be in good academic standing
- ▶ not have reached your program end date
- ▶ F-1 students must get the permission of OIS
- ▶ J-1 students must get the permission of their responsible officer ***and*** OIS

Once employment is authorized, you must maintain your eligibility or you will lose your right to continue working.

Jobs Which Qualify as "On-Campus Employment"

1. Employment by EMU

On-campus work for which you receive a paycheck (or other compensation) from EMU, is usually acceptable, whether it is employment in the library, the computer lab or the housing office. Work required by a scholarship, fellowship or assistantship is also acceptable.

2. Other Employment on EMU's Premises

This includes work on EMU's campus for an outside contractor, if this work provides direct services to students; the bookstore and franchised food outlets may qualify here. Please check with an OIS advisor if you plan to work for an on-campus contractor.

3. Work Off Campus Which Qualifies as On-Campus Employment

Immigration regulations allow you to work at an off-campus location provided (1) the location is educationally affiliated with EMU, (2) the educational affiliation is associated with EMU's established curriculum or is related to a graduate level research project which EMU has contracted to perform, and (3) the work is an integral or important part of your graduate level program of study. For example, if your field of study is marine biology and your school has an off-campus (legally affiliated) marine biology research facility, you may work there and that employment will be defined as "on campus".

If you are unsure whether a job would qualify as "on-campus", please consult with an OIS advisor before starting work.

Off-Campus Employment - Practical Training

An **F1 student** may wish to engage in temporary employment to gain practical experience in his or her field of study. This type of work is called *Practical Training* and there are two types:

- ▶ Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
 - employment must be an integral part of your current major field of study
 - takes place prior to the student's program completion date
 - a job offer is required for authorization
 - authorization for employment must be obtained from OIS **prior** to the commencement of employment
- ▶ Optional Practical Training (OPT) –
 - work must be directly related to the student's current major area of study
 - work must be at a level commensurate with the student's degree level
 - can take place either after program completion or before
 - students do not need a job offer in order to be authorized for OPT
 - must be applied for prior to completing your degree program
 - Authorization for employment must be obtained from OIS (and USCIS) **prior** to the commencement of employment
 - USCIS authorization may take more than 3 months – apply early!

Don't Forget!

- ▶ A new I-20 will need to be issued with the CPT or OPT employment notation

A **J-1 student** may engage in *Academic training*, an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to a practical work experience off campus. It is available for full or part-time employment to those in both degree and non-degree programs. Academic training can be paid or unpaid, and can be used before or after the completion of the academic program. Please schedule an appointment with Mr. Webb if you desire more information.

Off-Campus Employment - Economic Need

A student may qualify for off-campus employment if they experience a serious economic hardship due to a severe, unforeseen economic necessity and have been in school full-time for one academic year. Some examples include an unexpected loss of scholarship, significant currency devaluation or large business loss by a financial sponsor. Students must be able to document this change in financial situation and prove that it was caused by circumstances beyond their control. Please call to schedule an appointment with an advisor if you are in this situation.

Employment Opportunities for Spouses

The **F-2 spouse** (of an F-1 visa holder) is **not** permitted to engage in any employment for **any** form of compensation whether it is monetary or other (room and board, etc.).

J-2 spouses (of J-1 visa holders) are permitted to seek employment if their income will not be used to support the J-1 visa holder. Authorization for J-2 employment must be granted by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), only after entry to the US in J-2 status. Application instructions can be obtained from OIS upon arrival on campus.

Social Security Number

In order to work in the US, you will need a valid social security number (SSN). Students may apply for an SSN only after they have been offered a job. See <http://www.emich.edu/ois/intnlstudents/forms.php> for detailed information on obtaining an SSN.

Taxes

Social Security (FICA) & Medicare Taxes

F-1 & J-1 students are required to file tax forms for each year (or part thereof) they are in the USA. In general, most students who have been in the US for no more

than five calendar years, are exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare taxes. Be sure to make your employer aware of this at the beginning of your employment!

Federal, state & local taxes

However, students **are** subject to all other taxes that may apply unless you qualify under a tax treaty between the US and your home government.

Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9)

On, or before the first day of starting legal employment, you must complete an I-9 form. See <http://www.emich.edu/ois/intnlstudents/forms.php> for detailed information on completing the I-9.

Further details regarding Employment Options are available on the OIS web site.