



WORK AUTHORIZATION GUIDELINES FOR J-2 DEPENDENTS

OVERVIEW

J-2 visa holders may be authorized to work in the U.S. as long as they obtain an EAD (Employment Authorization Document) card from the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#). Currently, EAD cards are taking up to 90 to 120 days to process. J-2 EAD authorizations are generally granted for one-year intervals or for the remaining validity of the DS-2019, whichever is shorter. Employment (paid or unpaid) may not begin until the EAD is issued and in possession of the J-2 applicant.

GUIDELINES

- J-2 dependents may work only after they have obtained their Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS.
- J-2 work authorization allows for part-time or full-time work at any job and for any employer.
- Extension of the EAD card validity is possible up to the end date of the DS-2019. Please note that the extension process also takes 90-120 days, so it is important to plan ahead for employment to be continuous (without any gaps between work authorization periods).
- After receiving the EAD packet, USCIS will mail a receipt (I-797C - Notice of Action) in approximately two - four weeks. The receipt will confirm the date the EAD packet was received, contain a receipt number, and confirm the payment was received. Keep this notice of receipt to track your application on the [USCIS case status website](#)

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for an EAD card, the following documents are required:

- [Form I-765 "Application for Employment Authorization"](#).

This form must be typed or be handwritten in black ink. Please note the following:

- Make sure to mark one of the boxes where it asks, "I am applying for..."
- #1. Enter the J-2 dependent's entire name as it appears on their passport and DS-2019
- #5. Enter the J-2 dependent's address in the Santa Cruz area. If they might be moving and decide to use a friend's address where their name is not on the mailbox, write the friend's name in #5.a. Make sure the J-2 dependent's name (or their friend's name) is on the mailbox.
- #21.a. Enter the eleven-digit number from the J-2 dependent's electronic I-94 record or paper I-94 card.
- #24 and #25. Enter "J-2 dependent"
- #26. Enter the J-2 dependent's SEVIS ID from their DS-2019, which is located in the top right corner
- #27. Enter (c)(5)()

J-2 Applicant Supporting Documents

- Photocopy of J-2 dependent's electronic I-94 Form
- Photocopy of J-2 dependent's passport
- Photocopy of J-2 dependent's visa in passport (not applicable for Canadians)
- Photocopy of J-2 dependent's DS-2019
- Photocopy of previously issued EAD cards, if any

J-1 Exchange Visitor Supporting Documents

- Photocopy of J-1 Exchange Visitor's electronic I-94 Form
- Photocopy of J-1 Exchange Visitor's passport
- Photocopy of J-1 Exchange Visitor's visa stamp in passport (not applicable for Canadians)
- Photocopy of J-1 Exchange Visitor's DS-2019

- Money order, personal check, or cashier's check for the filing fee payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

NOTE: U.S. Department of Homeland Security fees are subject to change. Visit the [USCIS website](#) for current fees.

- 2 [passport photos](#). Print your name and I-94 number lightly in pencil on the back of each photo.
- A letter ([see sample on next page](#)) from the J-2 applicant to the USCIS Service Center requesting work permission.



[Your name]

[Your address]

[Date]

[USCIS address - refer to the address under Mailing Instructions below]

Dear Sir or Madam:

With this letter, I am applying for employment authorization on the basis of my J-2 status. I am the dependent of [name], a J-1 [student or scholar] at the University of California, Santa Cruz. I want to work because [reason for employment] and to experience the workplace and culture in the United States. I declare that the money I earn will be used for cultural, recreational, and related travel activities and will not be used to support the principal J-1 visa holder.

Sincerely,

[J-2 signature]

[J-2 name]

MAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Once the packet is complete, send your application to the USCIS address listed below.* We strongly recommend you use a service that includes tracking and delivery confirmation.

If sending via express (e.g. FedEx, UPS):

USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

If sending via the United States Postal Service via certified mail:

USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

*If you live outside California, please contact an ISSS advisor to determine where you should submit your application.