

Employment Options for J-1 Students

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Overview

Employment is any type of work performed or services provided in exchange for money, tuition, fees, books, supplies, room or for any other benefit or compensation. J-1 students are required to have authorization to work from the J-1 program sponsor (i.e., U-M International Center) for all types of employment. If employed without proper authorization, the student will have violated his/her J-1 status which may result in losing benefits of J-1 program and jeopardize his/her permission to remain in or reenter the U.S.

Obtaining Employment Authorization

The U-M International Center is designated by the U.S. Department of State as the J-1 program sponsor for the University of Michigan. The U-M International Center is obligated to evaluate the proposed employment in the context of your academic program and your personal circumstances. If your DS-2019 specifies the program sponsor (item #2) as "University of Michigan" and the exchange visitor category (item #4) as "student", you may apply for employment authorization at the U-M International Center. You may not begin employment unless you have obtained employment authorization from the U-M International Center and the begin date is effective.

Types of Employment

As a J-1 student, you may qualify for the following types of employment:

On-Campus Employment

- On-campus employment is defined as work done on the premises of the school.
- A J-1 student may be authorized to work up to 20 hours per week during the academic year and full time during summer and official University holiday breaks for on-campus employment. Students who already have assistantships considered to be equivalent to 20 hours a week are not eligible for additional on-campus employment.
- If the University of Michigan issued your DS-2019, use the [On-Campus Employment Authorization](#) [1] form to obtain written approval from International Center.

- Once you complete your academic program, you are no longer eligible for on-campus employment unless you have obtained employment authorization based on academic training.

Source: [22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (g) (1) (i) - (ii)]

For more information, refer to [On-Campus Employment for F-1/J-1 Students](#) [2].

Academic Training in Your Field of Study

- Academic training is work, training, or experience related to a student's field of study.
- Although a J-1 student may work part-time or full-time, all academic training is counted full-time, even if the employment is on a part-time basis.
- You must have a job offer in the field of your study and obtained a written recommendation for academic training from your academic advisor in order to apply for academic training with the U-M International Center.
- The time you are authorized for academic training before your program completion will be subtracted from the total time of academic training for which you are eligible. Time allotted may not exceed “the period of full course of study” or 18 months, which ever is shorter. If you received a Ph.D., your post-doctoral training may last as long as 36 months. Completing more than one degree program does not increase your academic training period.

Source: [22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (f) (2)]

For more information, refer to [Academic Training in Your Field of Study](#) [3].

Off-Campus Employment Due to Unforeseen Economic Circumstances

- A J-1 student may be authorized to work off-campus if “serious, urgent, and unforeseen economic circumstances” have arisen since acquiring J-1 status.
- This type of employment requires U-M International Center approval and authorization in writing before employment begins.
- As a J-1 student, you may not be employed for more than a total of 20 hours per week for both on-campus and off-campus locations during the academic year. However, you may be employed full-time (more than 20 hours per week) during summer and official University breaks.

Source: [22 C.F.R. § 62.23 (g) (1) (iii)]

For more information, refer to [Off-Campus Employment Based on Economic Hardship](#) [4].

Employment and Volunteering

While the issue of volunteering may seem simple (“I’m not getting paid, therefore I am volunteering”), it is actually a complex area in which immigration regulations and labor laws intersect. If you are interested in volunteering, you must be aware of the relevant regulations so that you and the organization for which you are volunteering do not inadvertently violate any laws and don’t get penalized for unauthorized employment.

For more information, refer to [Employment and Volunteering](#) [5].

Related Topics:

- [Important Information about J-1 Exchange Visitor Status](#) [6]
 - [Taxes and Social Security](#) [7]
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Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/j1-students/employment-options>

Links

- [1] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/J1_OnCampusEmploy.pdf
- [2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/campus-employment>
- [3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/j1-students/academic-training>
- [4] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/j1-students/campus-employment-based-economic-hardship>
- [5] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/students/employment-volunteer>
- [6] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/important-information-about-j1-status>
- [7] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax>