



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Special Situations

Natural catastrophes and other extreme situations can sometimes affect the processing of your USCIS application, petition, or immigration request.

USCIS has discretion to take the following measures on a case-by-case basis upon request, if you have been affected by a natural catastrophe or other extreme situation:

Extensions and Changes of Status

When applying for an extension or change of status due to a special situation that prevented your planned and timely departure, we may take into consideration how the special situation prevented your departure. If you do not apply for the extension or change of status before your authorized period of admission expires, we may excuse the delay if it was due to extraordinary circumstances beyond your control.

Fee Waiver

If you are unable to pay the fee for a USCIS service or benefit, you may request a fee waiver for certain forms by filing [Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver](#).

Employment Authorization

Severe Economic Hardship to F-1 Students Caused by Unforeseen Circumstances

If you experience severe economic hardship because of unforeseen circumstances beyond your control, you may request employment authorization to work off-campus (if you meet certain regulatory requirements). See [8 CFR 214.2\(f\)\(9\)](#). Examples of unforeseen circumstances include (but are not limited to):

- Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment (through no fault of your own);
- Substantial fluctuations in currency value or exchange rate;
- Inordinate increases in tuition or living costs;
- Unexpected changes in the financial condition of your source of support;
- Medical bills; and
- Other substantial and unexpected expenses.

To apply, you must submit [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#), along with a copy of your [Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status](#), and any other supporting materials to USCIS.

Your Form I-20 must include the employment page completed by your Designated School Official, certifying your eligibility for off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond your control.

If your request is approved, you may be able to work off-campus in one-year intervals up to the expected date of completion of your current course of study. See [8 CFR 214.2\(f\)\(9\)\(ii\)](#).

Special Student Relief

Special Student Relief is the suspension of certain regulatory requirements by the secretary of Homeland Security for F-1 students from parts of the world that are experiencing emergent circumstances. Examples of emergent circumstances include natural catastrophe, war and military conflicts, and national or international financial crises.

You may be eligible to apply for off-campus employment authorization if you:

- Are the citizen of a country specified in a Federal Register notice;
- Have been lawfully present in the United States for the period indicated in the Federal Register notice;
- Have reported on time to your Designated School Official and been enrolled in a Student and Exchange Visitor Program-certified school since the special situation;
- Are currently maintaining F-1 status; and
- Experiencing severe economic hardship.

To apply, you must submit [Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#), along with a copy of your [Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status](#), and any other supporting materials to USCIS.

Employers

All requirements for [Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification](#), completion and E-Verify remain in place. [E-Verify](#) remains available to employers affected by special situations, both directly through the E-Verify web portal and E-Verify employer agents. If you have any questions or issues about using E-Verify from a remote location, please contact E-Verify Support at 888-464-4218 (for employers) or 888-897-7781 (for employees).

Employees

All Form I-9 requirements remain in place. If your documents were lost, stolen, or damaged, see the list of [Form I-9 acceptable documents and receipts](#) for more information on how to complete the Form I-9. You may also visit [I-9 Central](#) for more information.

Document Replacement

To replace a/n...	You must file a...
Green Card	Form I-90, Application to Replace Permanent Residence Card , or request interim evidence of permanent residence stamp (I-551 stamp) from a USCIS Field Office. You may file Form I-90 online .
Form I-94	Form I-102, Application for Replacement/Initial Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Document
Employment Authorization Document	Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Failure to Appear for an Interview or Biometrics Appointment, or Failure to Respond to a Request for Evidence

If you did not appear for a scheduled interview or appointment, or did not submit evidence or respond to a notice or request in a timely manner for reasons directly tied to the special situation, you may show how the disrupting event affected your ability to appear for interview or submit documents as required.

Expedited Processing

If you need USCIS to consider your request for a service or benefit more quickly, you may make that request when filing or after you file. Read more about [expedited processing](#) on our website.

To learn how to request any of the above immigration services, visit the [USCIS Contact Center](#) webpage.



Last Reviewed/Updated: 10/25/2019