

F-1 and F-2 Information

Description

Individuals who pursue a full course of academic study at a U.S. college, university, high school, primary, or elementary school.

Basic Requirements Summary

Applicants must show that:

- They have been accepted by an approved school in the United States, as evidenced by the certificate of eligibility (Form I-20A-B), signed by the applicant;
- Possess sufficient funds or have made other arrangements to cover expenses;
- Have sufficient scholastic preparation and knowledge of the English language to pursue a full course of study, or if the student's knowledge of English is inadequate, the approved school has accepted him or her for a study in a language with which the student is familiar, or has made special tutoring arrangements that are adequate to enable the student to pursue a full course of study.

The full course of study is defined to mean:

- Postgraduate study or postdoctoral study or research at a college or university, or undergraduate or postgraduate study at a conservatory or religious seminary,
- Undergraduate study at a college or university, certified by a designated school official to consist of at least 12 semester or quarter hours of instruction per academic term, except when the student needs a lesser course load to complete the course of study during the current term.
- Study for at least 12 hours weekly, or its equivalent, in a postsecondary language, liberal arts, fine arts, or other non-vocational training program, certified by a designated school official to consist of at least 18 hours of classroom attendance a week if the dominant feature of the course is classroom attendance, and 22 hours weekly if the dominant feature is laboratory work.
- Study in a primary or secondary school for not less than the minimum number hours prescribed by the school for normal progress towards graduation.

Employment

An F-1 student may accept employment under the following **limited** circumstances:

On-campus employment

Student may engage in on-campus employment provided:

- The on-campus employment is performed on the school's premises or at an off-campus location affiliated with the school and is an integral part of the school's educational program;
- The on-campus employment must not exceed 20 hours a week while school is in session and full time when school is not in session; and
- Authorization for employment may continue for the duration of the student's F-1 status.

Pilot program employment

Student must:

- Be in good academic standing;
- Have been in F-1 status for 1 academic year; and
- Demonstrate that accepting employment will not interfere with her or his ability to carry a full course of study.

Off-campus employment due to severe economic hardship

- Student may be authorized for off-campus employment based on severe economic hardship under the following conditions:
- The student must be in good academic standing for at least one academic year and must be carrying a full course of study.
- The student cannot work more than 20 hours a week when school is in session, but can work full time during holidays or school vacations.
- Cases which would be considered include:
 - Loss of financial aid;
 - Loss of on-campus employment;
 - Substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate;
 - Inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs;
 - Unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support, medical bills, or other unexpected and substantial expenses.

International organization internships

Student may request employment authorization as an Intern with an International Organization.

Curricular practical training

The training must be either:

- An alternate work-study;
- An internship;
- Cooperative education, or
- Any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by a sponsoring employer through a cooperative agreement with the school.

A F-1 student must satisfy two general qualifications for curricular practical training:

- Lawful enrollment on a full-time basis in a Service approved college, university, conservatory, or seminary for at least 9 consecutive months; and
- Request for authorization for practical training in a position that is directly related to the student's major field of study.

Optional practical training

This type of training refers to practical training in two time periods

- Before the completion of the student's course of study; and
- After completion of degree requirements or the course of study.

This type of training may be authorized in the following situations:

- During vacation periods when the school is not in session if the student is currently enrolled, and intends to register for the next term or session;
- While school is in session, provided that practical training does not exceed 20 hours a week;
- After completion of all requirements for the degree;
- After completion of the course of study (within 14 months).

Optional practical training after completion of studies is authorized for up to 12 months, to take affect after the student has completed his or her course of study.

Validity Term

F-1 students are admitted for duration of status and are required to maintain a valid passport at all times for at least six months beyond the expiration of the status. Duration of status is defined as the time necessary to pursue a full course of study at any educational level in the same school as stated on the I-20 form, plus any authorized practical training, and plus 60 days thereafter.

F-2 Visa

Description

The F-2 visa is issued to the spouse and/or child of an F-1 applicant.

Basic Requirements Summary

A spouse and/or child of an F-1 applicant are eligible for an F-2 visa provided they can show:

- Proof of the relationship (e.g. Marriage or Birth Certificate);
- That sufficient funds are available to cover their expenses in the United States; and,
- That they intend to leave the United States upon the termination of the status of the F-1 student.
- The F-2 visa holder is not permitted to work.

Validity Term

An F-2 visa is valid for as long as the F-1 student's visa is valid.