J-2 Work Permission

J-2 visa holders (the spouses, partners, and dependent children of J-1s) may apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for permission to work in the United States (Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization [1]). This work authorization is called an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

This type of application is routinely approved as the regulation states that "income from the spouse's or dependent's employment may be used to support the family's customary recreational and cultural activities and related travel, among other things." However, please note that employment will not be authorized if this income is needed to support the person who holds J-1 status.

Important Notes about Employment with an EAD

- Employment will not be authorized if this income is needed to support the person who holds J-1 status.
- You cannot begin your employment until you have received the EAD card from USCIS.
- You can only work within the dates of validity on the EAD.
- If you begin working, note that you will be subject to social security taxes, federal income taxes and, where applicable, state and local income taxes.
- Anyone who earns money in the U.S. must have a social security number (SSN) for taxpayer identification purposes. OISS has instructions for how to apply for a SSN [2].
- Remember to apply to extend your EAD at least four months prior to the expiration of the card.
- If you are applying for a renewal of your J-2 work permission you cannot work beyond the previously authorized date until you receive a new EAD.

Steps to Apply for an EAD

1. **J-1 Principal Extends Their DS-2019**
   We recommend your J-1 spouse extend their DS-2019 out as far as as possible as your EAD end date will match the DS-2019 end date. For example, if the DS-2019 is two years long, you get a two-year EAD. The Yale appointment can be for multiple years even if the appointment process is annual. Please ask OISS if you have questions about this.
2. **Prepare all Necessary Materials**
   Prepare the materials listed in the below section. When you apply for work permission you must pay the Form I-765 fee as well.
3. **Mail the Application**
   Read the section below for mailing instructions.

EAD Processing Time

USCIS normally takes an average of 90 days to process the request and issue the EAD. It is strongly advised to apply as early as possible as USCIS processing time can vary greatly. Once you receive the card, you can work for anyone (as long as you qualify and meet any licensing requirements) full-time or part-time.

Receiving or Replacing an EAD Card

Read this page for instructions on how to receive your EAD card by mail, and how to replace it if lost in the mail or it contains incorrect information [3].

Application Materials

- A letter to USCIS explaining the reason for requesting employment authorization. ([See sample below](#))
- Completed [Form I-765](#) [4]. You should read the [USICS I-765 Instructions](#) [5]in addition to our tips below.
  - Part 2: Question 27: (C) (5) ( )
  - Part 2: Questions 28 - 31b: Leave blank
  - Part 3: Question 7a: Applicant's Signature: Sign in blue ink and make sure your signature does not touch any lines.
  - Part 4: Leave this entire section blank if an interpreter did NOT help you complete this form.
  - Part 5: Leave this entire section blank if someone did NOT prepare this form on your behalf.
  - Part 6: Indicate here if you have been previously authorized J-2 employment. Include copies of the EAD, DS-2019s, passport, and J-2 visa stamp for the period of employment authorization.
- [Form G-1145](#) [6] (optional) to request that they email you when approved.
- Copies of all previous DS-2019 forms, visa stamps and [I-94 records](#) [7] for both J-1 and J-2 visa holders.
- A copy of your passport ID page with your photo and information.
- A personal check or money order for $410 payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**.
- Two identical passport-style [color photographs](#) [8]. You should print your name lightly in pencil on the back of the two photographs (include the number on your previous EAD if you have one)
- If you have applied for an EAD before, a photocopy of your Employment Authorization Document (back and front)
- Marriage certificate or other proof of marriage to the J-1 visa holder

Sample Request Letter

You can model your request letter after the sample below. The letter is very simple and does not need to be more than several lines of text.

USCIS
Address
[Insert the correct filing address based on your preferred mailing method. [You can find the filing addresses here](#) [9] (look under "Foreign Students", category (c)(5)]

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to apply for employment authorization on the basis of my J-2 status in the U.S. I am the dependent (husband/wife) of (name) who is a (student/scholar) on a J-1 visa at Yale University.
I would like to apply for work permission because (write whatever is truly your situation)

- I would like the opportunity to further my career as a (name a field of work) while in the U.S., or
- I want to be prepared just in case there is an employment opportunity for me in the future, since it takes so long to get the work permit, or
- The extra income could pay for personal recreational expenses (my education, my children's expanded learning, additional trips to explore the U.S., other…), or
- Other…..

I declare that the money I earn will not be used to support my (husband/wife.)

Sincerely,

Sign Name
Print Name

Where to Mail the Application

Before mailing, please make copies of all of your materials. We recommend that you mail your application via certified mail with a return receipt or tracking number. Your application and all of the required documentation above must be sent to the USCIS Lockbox facility. [Find the correct lockbox and the relevant address here](#) [9] (look under "Foreign Students", category (c)(5) for "Spouse/dependent of J-1 exchange visitor (J-2 nonimmigrant status)"). Please note that the address of the lockbox facility is slightly different depending on your mailing method (via USPS

or courier service).

After mailing in the documents, you will receive a notice (Form I-797) stating you need to wait for about 90 days to receive your EAD. You can track your case with the receipt number on the USCIS website [10]. Be sure to keep this receipt for your files.

Source URL:https://oiss.yale.edu/employment-taxes/employment-for-spouses-partners-and-children/j-2-work-permission

Links
[1] https://www.uscis.gov/i-765 [2] https://oiss.yale.edu/employment-taxes/social-security-number-itin/how-to-apply-for-an-ssn [3] https://oiss.yale.edu/employment-taxes/employment-for-spouses-partners-and-children/j-2-work-permission/receiving-or-replacing-an-ead [4] https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-765.pdf [5] https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-765instr.pdf [6] https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145 [7] https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home [8] https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos.html [9] https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses [10] https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do