J-2 Employment Information

Who is eligible to apply?
J-2 dependents may apply for permission to accept employment, provided the income from such employment will be used solely for the benefit of the dependent(s). The earnings may be used for such activities as recreation, cultural enrichment, travel, education, or any other purpose not related to the needs of the principal J-1 visitor. “Employment will not be authorized by USCIS if this income is needed to support the J-1 visitor.”

In addition to having the appropriate intent for application, the following additional requirements must be met:
- The J-1 visitor must be maintaining a legal status at the time of the application. This includes having an unexpired passport, an I-94 card which is marked as “D/S” or with a date of expiry in the future.
- The J-1 visitor must also be pursuing the objective for which he/she was admitted (i.e., research, teaching, etc.)
- The J-2 dependent must have an unexpired passport, an I-94 card which is marked as “D/S” or with a date of expiry in the future, and not be or have been engaged in any unauthorized employment while in the United States.

What is the maximum time period that I will be allowed to work?
The Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be issued for the period up to the expiration date of your I-94 card. If D/S appears on your I-94 card, the expiration date is usually regarded as the end date of the current DS-2019 form. USCIS will not issue an EAD for more than 1 year, and in no case will J-2 employment authorization exceed the program duration indicated on the J-1 principal’s DS-2019.

What is the application procedure?
Residents of Wisconsin may request J-2 work authorization from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) by following the directions listed below. You must apply for the EAD and receive it before beginning the employment; you must have this document in your possession to be legally employed in the U.S.

To apply, collect the following documents:
- Completed Form I-765 (Download from USCIS website, http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis, and click on Immigration Forms to find Form I-765) Answer question #16 by writing: (c)(5)
- Make check payable to the “U.S. Department of Homeland Security” (view fee on form website).
- A letter, addressed to USCIS, which includes the following:
  - Your name, visa type, your date of arrival in the U.S., your expected duration of stay, and a statement that you are requesting J-2 work permission.
  - Breakdown of living expenses. State source and amount of J-1’s principal’s income, and show how income is adequate for basic living expenses – rent, food, J-1’s tuition (if any), insurance, local transportation, books/supplies, clothing, etc. Show expenses by means of any average monthly budget.
  - Reasons for applying for J-2 work permission. Reasons may include further education for self, children’s music, dance or other lessons, entertainment, travel within the U.S., etc.
  - Statement that your employment is not for support of the J-1, but for other purposes.
- Photocopy of both sides of your I-94 card.
- Photocopy of both sides of the J-1’s I-94 card.
- Photocopy of your passport identity, expiry, visa pages and any previously issued EAD card (s).
- Two passport photos that have been recently taken. (See attachment or see link on the IFSS website).
Where do I mail the application materials?

For residents of Wisconsin, the completed application and materials should be sent to:

For regular mail: USCIS Phoenix Lockbox
POB 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For express mail: USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Phoenix, AZ 85034

- For regular mail you should mail your application “certified mail, return receipt requested”. Certified mail means that the U.S. postal service will assign an identifying number to your piece of mail. Return receipt requested is a postcard that is attached to your piece of mail. This postcard is then signed and mailed back to your home once the person addressed has received your mail. You can ask for this special type of handling in person at any U.S. post office.
- With either choice for mailing your documentation, please save your return receipt as proof of mailing.

It is strongly suggested that you make photocopies of the entire application that you will be mailing to USCIS for your personal records, along with the receipt(s) which USCIS will return to you.