



International Student & Scholar Services

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EMPLOYER GUIDE FOR HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) advises international students on the F-1 (*degree-seeking*) and J-1 (*exchange*) visas, and helps them maintain a legal status while in the U.S. *Please note that this guide should be used for informational purposes only; it is NOT a substitute for professional legal advice.*

BENEFITS OF HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Our international students bring a unique, well-rounded global perspective to complex issues, making them an asset to our academic programs and to the companies that hire them. They often have been exposed to multiple cultures and models, have country-specific knowledge, speak several languages, are highly adaptable, and deal well with ambiguity.

MYTHS ABOUT HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Myth: Hiring an international student is complicated and costly.

International students can work without sponsorship and at no additional cost to the employer during their program, and for at least 12 months following graduation. F-1 (degree-seeking) students at NKU can work under *Curricular Practical Training* (CPT) during their degree (full-time or part-time), depending on their needs, and *Optional Practical Training* (OPT) immediately following graduation. J-1 (exchange) students can work under *Academic Training* (full-time or part-time), during or after their degree. There is NO cost to the employer for either of these work authorizations.

Myth: There is too much paperwork involved in hiring an international student.

International students pursuing an internship or employment during their degree under *CPT* or *Academic Training* only require an offer letter from the employer, and the position must relate to their current field of study. ISSS provides the I-20 (for F-1) or DS-2019 (for J-1) as proof of work authorization, which they bring to the employer to complete the I-9 form. International students pursuing OPT do not require anything from their employer, and will present an *Employment Authorization Document* (EAD) issued by the Federal Government in order to complete the I-9 form.

Myth: International students can only work in my company on a short-term basis.

F-1 students can work under CPT full-time for 11 months and 29 days, or unlimited part-time, while pursuing their degree. F-1 students can work under OPT for 12 months following graduation, and for an additional 24 months of STEM OPT if the employer is enrolled in the E-verify program through the Department of Homeland Security. J-1 degree-seeking students can work for up to 18 months (or 36 months for Ph.D.) during and/or after their degree. Therefore, F-1 students can work up to 3 years full-time if they are in a STEM degree, or 2 years for all other majors, before needing H-1B sponsorship to continue work (combining full-time CPT and OPT time).

Myth: Employers must prove that U.S. citizens cannot fill a role before they can offer to international students.

When hiring an F-1 or J-1 international student worker, the U.S. government doesn't require employers to search or interview U.S. workers before making an offer to an international person.

OTHER VISA OPTIONS

There are other visa options should you want the international student to work longer than the above options. For inquiries on H-1Bs, TN, Permanent Residency (green card) and other visa options, please consult with an immigration attorney.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

Social Security Numbers (SSN) are generally assigned to people who are eligible to work in the US. If an international student has never worked in the US prior to your job offer, they will need to obtain their SSN but they are not required to have it before beginning to work. You (employer) can use a letter from SSA stating the employee has applied for the SSN.

More information can be found here: www.ssa.gov/pubs/10181.html

TAXES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Students with F-1 and J-1 immigration status earning income under practical training are subject to applicable, federal, state, and local income taxes, unless exempt by a tax treaty. Generally, F-1 and J-1 students are exempt from Social Security and Medicare tax requirements. However, if F-1 students are considered "resident aliens" for income tax purposes, Social Security and Medicare taxes should be withheld.

For more information on taxes, please visit this website:

<http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/International-Taxpayers/Foreign-Students-and-Scholars>

Find an immigration attorney in the area: AILA – www.aila.org