Working in the US

Berkeley International Office

On-Campus Employment

On-campus employment basics

- F-1 students do not need work authorization to work on-campus, but J-1 students do.

- Employment is limited to 20 hours per week during the academic year (Fall/Spring), but during vacation periods there is no limit (with exception of summer if it is your *first* or *final* semester).

* Did you apply for a change of visa status to F-1 or J-1? You have to wait for your COS approval from USCIS!

- When can you start on-campus employment?

    - F-1: 30 days before program start date

    - J-1: After the start date of your DS-2019 (during dates of authorization)

    - F/J Transfer Students: Once your record has been released to UCB

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J-1 On-Campus Work Authorization

1. Apply through BIO at least 5 business days in advance of when you would like to start work, using the J-1 On-Campus Work Authorization Form: https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/j_on-campus_employment.docx

2. Within 5 business days, you will receive the signed form via email.

3. Apply for an SSN using the signed form along with other required documents.

For more details:

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/oncampus

Off-Campus Employment

Off-campus employment basics

- Any job/internship MUST be related to the student's major field of study.

- Students must receive authorization BEFORE beginning employment.

F-1 Off-campus employment options

	CPT	OPT	STEM OPT
When can I use it?	Before graduation	After graduation	Directly after 12-month OPT
Who authorizes it?	BIO	USCIS *3 – 5 months*	USCIS *3 – 5 months*
Do I need a job offer to apply?	Yes	No	Yes* *Employer must be registered in E-Verify, have EIN.*
How many hours/week can I work?	Max. 20 *except vacation periods*	Min. 20	Min. 20
Is self-employment allowed? Unpaid employment?	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No
Can I work for more than one employer at a time?	Yes *each employer needs to be authorized*	Yes	Yes* *All employers must be authorized on I-20 and meet all STEM OPT criteria.*

F-1
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

CPT Basics

What is it?

- F-1 pre-graduation off-campus employment authorization.
- Proof of authorization: CPT I-20

Eligibility

- Completed two full-time semesters in Active F-1 status (unless graduate student completing a degree requirement that must occur prior to 1 academic year)
- Received an internship offer in a field related to major and must be approved by academic department.
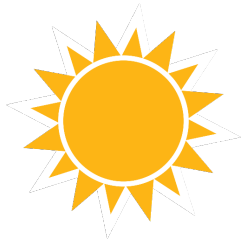
Authorization

- Approved on a semester-by-semester basis.
- Students must receive authorization BEFORE beginning employment.
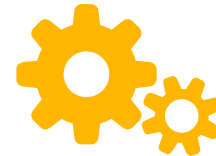
How many hours can I work?
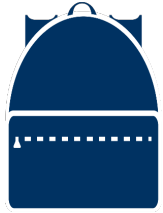
Fall and spring semesters:

Part-time (max. 20 hours/week).

Summer:

No limit. (Exception if summer is first or final term.)

CPT Application Process

Secure a job or internship.	Complete CPT form with academic advisor.	Enroll in appropriate course (unless degree requirement).
Submit complete CPT app form to BIO with Employment verification letter, proof of CPT course enrollment.	Obtain new I-20 from BIO. CPT info will be on page 2.	Begin work after authorized.

✓ A separate application is required for each additional job/internship or semester.

For more details…

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/cpt

F-1
Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OPT Basics

What is OPT?

- post-graduation employment authorization - 12 months

Eligibility

- Graduating upon completion of at least 2 full-time semesters.
- No previous OPT for same degree level.

Type of work

- Internship or job related to major field of study.
- At least 20 hours/week.
- Paid or unpaid.

When you can start

- Once you have received Proof of authorization - Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and start date has been reached.

Reporting requirements

- You are responsible for reporting your contact and employment information to BIO.

More details for OPT, STEM & Cap Gap:

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/opt

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/stemopt

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/cap-gap

J-1
Academic Training (AT)

AT Basics

What is it?

- J-1 off-campus employment authorization: pre-completion and post-completion.

- Proof of authorization: DS-2019.

Type of work

- Internship must be related to major field of study.

Authorization

- Authorization is required for each job/internship.

When you can start

- Only begin employment after you have received AT DS-2019 and start date has been reached.
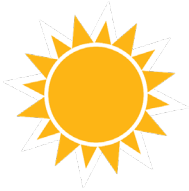
AT Eligibility

- Must be a J-1 degree-seeking or EAP student.

- Must have completed 1 semester.

- Must have a job offer before obtaining authorization. Job must be related to major field of study.

- Must have health insurance for duration of AT.
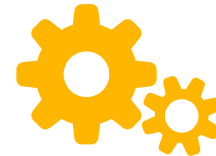
How many hours can I work?

Fall and spring semesters:

Part-time (max. 20 hours/week).

Summer:

No limit. (Exception if summer is final term.)

After graduation:

Must be at least 20 hours/week.

AT Application Process

Secure a job or internship.

Complete AT application form.

Request approval from academic adviser.

Submit to BIO with supplementary documents*.

Obtain new DS-2019 & AT Verification letter.

Begin work after authorized start date.

*Employment verification letter. In addition, processing fee and proof of funds are required for post-completion AT.

For more details:

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/employment/at

Social Security Number (SSN)

Social Security Number basics

What is it?

- SSN is a Tax ID number, it is NOT work authorization.

Do I need SSN to begin work?

- You do not need the SSN before STARTING work, but most employers will want the SSN before they pay you.

Instructions to apply for the SSN:
https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/living/ssn

Who needs an SSN?

J-1:

- Receiving a fellowship or stipend from the university (with or without employment)
- Working on campus
- Working off campus

* Prior authorization is required for all of the above.

F-1:

- Working on campus
- Working off campus jobs (e.g. CPT, OPT)

* An F-1 student who is not working but receiving a non-service fellowship, scholarship, or grant in excess of tuition and fees must apply for an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).

https://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/living/itin

Berkeley Career Engagement

Berkeley | Career Engagement

Career Services for International Students

Handshake

Your career platform for job/internship searches and access to BCE services at Cal, including career appointments, events, and resources.

Career Events

Career workshops and events designed to help you develop essential job search skills, forge meaningful connections, and discover opportunities. Details and RSVP on Handshake.
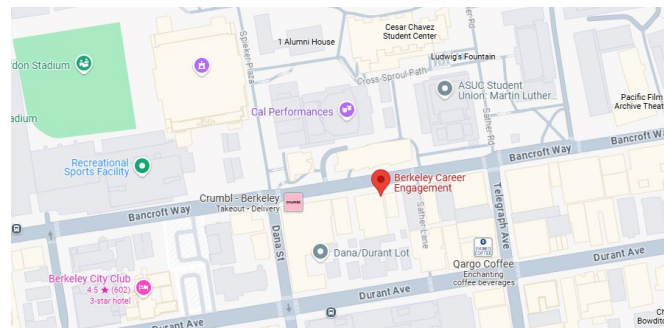
Career Mails

BCE's Newsletters offering information about jobs, employer events, and other career resources. Sign up for the Career Mails for International Students.

International Student Webpage

Your one-stop resource for accessing BCE's tailored career services for international students.

Connect with Berkeley Career Engagement
career.berkeley.edu
510.642.1716
2440 Bancroft Way
(across from Lower Sproul)

Career Appointments

Make a 1:1 appointment on Handshake with Jing Han, the Career Counselor for International Student.

Select "International Student Counseling" as the type.