

ISSS Application for Special Student Relief (SSR)

SUMMARY

An ISSS adviser will make a determination as to whether a student meets the eligibility criteria to apply for SSR.

If a student is unable to document that their primary source of financial support comes from the affected country and is not sufficient for their current expenses, their application may be denied either by ISSS or USCIS.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (GENERAL)

A student must be:

- A citizen of an appropriate country who was lawfully present within the United States on an F-1 visa on the designated start date (for more information, review z.umn.edu/ssriss).
- Have an I-20 from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus
- Currently maintaining F-1 status
- Enrolled at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- Able to document that they are experiencing severe economic hardship as a direct result of the current crisis in their country of citizenship.

DIRECTIONS FOR ON-CAMPUS WORK AUTHORIZATION

To request ON-CAMPUS work permission over 20 hours per week and a reduction of the minimum credit hours:

- a. Meet the eligibility criteria listed above
- b. Complete a budget worksheet (last page of this packet)
- c. Gather supporting evidence about the crisis in your country of citizenship. You should gather more than one example. Examples of supporting evidence include but are not limited to
 - i. an article describing the disaster in your country that negatively affected your parent's business,
 - ii. an article or report about the decreased value of your country's currency,
 - iii. a letter from your scholarship provider saying that they are going out of business and can no longer support you, etc.
 - iv. All documentation must be in English, or have an English translation
 - v. Write a statement to explain the unforeseen change(s) in your financial circumstances which arose as a result of the crisis in your country of citizenship. Be specific. Refer to your evidence.
 - vi. Brief introduction about the crisis in your country
 - vii. Detail why parents, family, or other sponsors are unable to give you the previously promised support.
 - viii. Your economic hardship as a result of the crisis and how the funding on your I-20 has changed as a result of the crisis
 - ix. Your academic and living expenses
- d. If your sponsor(s) are withdrawing support, obtain a letter from them which explains the situation. If you are not able to get this letter, please explain why in your statement.
- e. Submit the worksheet, documentation, and statement to an ISSS advisor (or iss@umn.edu if you are not already working with an advisor).

An ISSS advisor will review your documents and contact you for an appointment to discuss your case.

Upon review of the application, ISSS will make a final eligibility determination. If ISSS determines you are eligible, we will authorize full time on-campus work permission and a reduction of your course load on a new I-20.

ISSS Application for Special Student Relief (SSR)

DIRECTIONS FOR OFF-CAMPUS WORK AUTHORIZATION

To request OFF-CAMPUS work permission over 20 hours per week in any field and a reduction of the minimum credit hours:

- a. Meet the eligibility criteria listed above
- b. Complete a budget worksheet (last page of this packet)
- c. Gather supporting evidence about the crisis in your country of citizenship. You should gather more than one example. Examples of supporting evidence include but are not limited to
 - i. an article describing the disaster in your country that negatively affected your parent's business,
 - ii. an article or report about the decreased value of your country's currency,
 - iii. a letter from your scholarship provider saying that they are going out of business and can no longer support you, etc.
 - iv. All documentation must be in English, or have an English translation
- d. Write a statement to explain the unforeseen change(s) in your financial circumstances which arose as a result of the crisis in your country of citizenship. Be specific. Refer to your evidence.
 - i. Brief introduction about the crisis in your country
 - ii. Detail why parents, family, or other sponsors are unable to give you the previously promised support.
 - iii. Your economic hardship as a result of the crisis and how the funding on your I-20 has changed as a result of the crisis
 - iv. Your academic and living expenses
- e. If your sponsor(s) are withdrawing support, obtain a letter from them which explains the situation. If you are not able to get this letter, please explain why in your statement.
- f. Complete Form I-765 (available [here](#))
- g. Submit the worksheet, documentation, statement, and I-765 to an ISSS advisor (or iss@umn.edu if you are not already working with an advisor).

An ISSS advisor will review your documents and contact you for an appointment to discuss your case.

NOTE: If ISSS recommends you for SSR and off-campus work permission, you will need to pay an application fee to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Students may request that the fee be waived, however, USCIS rarely approves such requests.

Upon review of the application, ISSS will make an eligibility determination. If ISSS determines you meet the eligibility criteria, we will recommend off-campus work permission and a reduction of your course load on a new I-20.

After you receive the I-20 from ISSS, mail your application to the address identified on the [USCIS website](#). On the envelope, bottom right side, write SPECIAL STUDENT RELIEF.

PLEASE NOTE: For off-campus work authorization, recommendation by ISSS is not an approval and does not guarantee USCIS approval. A student cannot begin off-campus employment until they receive approval from USCIS in form of an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

