INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT BASED ON UNFORESEEN ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES FOR J-1 STUDENTS

J-1 registered students may be authorized for off-campus employment when necessary because of serious, urgent and unforeseen economic circumstances that have arisen since acquiring exchange visitor status. This means that the financial support for the J-1 student has dramatically changed based on the funding that is noted on their current DS-2019.

Conditions of Eligibility for Employment based on Unforeseen Economic Circumstances:
1. Must be in good academic standing
2. Must be maintaining valid status, that is,
   - your passport is valid at all times
   - the expected completion date on your DS-2019 has not expired
   - you have been authorized by the USCIS to attend Rutgers
   - you continuously pursue a full course of study
   - you follow all federal and university regulations pertaining to your legal and academic status
   - you limit your total hours of on-campus employment to 20 hours per week while school is in session
   - you refrain from off-campus work without authorization
3. Must show evidence of severe economic hardship (see below for details). However, this financial need cannot be so great that it will prohibit you from continuing your studies at Rutgers.

What are “unforeseen economic circumstances”?
Unforeseen economic circumstances would indicate a serious shortage of money to meet basic educational and living expenses which is caused by circumstances beyond the student’s control. These circumstances may include loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the part of the student, substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate, inordinate increases in tuition and/or living costs, unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student’s source of support, medical bills, or other substantial and unexpected expenses.

How many hours per week can I work?
Employment is strictly limited to part-time, defined as 20 hours or less per week, while school is in session. You may work full-time between semesters when school is not in session. On-campus employment is included in the 20-hour total.

How do I apply?
1. You must make an appointment to meet your International Student Adviser at the Center for Global Services. Your adviser will evaluate your situation based on evidence and information presented by you, to help determine if Employment Authorization based on Unforeseen Economic Circumstances applies to you and if so, you will be encouraged to apply.
2. Bring the following documents with you when you meet with your International Student Adviser to submit a complete application:
   - A personal statement from you explaining the “unforeseen economic hardship”
   - Job offer(s) letter and/or the Employer Certification form for J-1 Economic Hardship
   - Copy of unofficial transcript with your name on it (https://sis.rutgers.edu/tags/)
   - Copies of your passport, copy of paper/printout of electronic I-94, & most current visa used to enter the U.S.
   - Copies of all DS-2019s issued to you
   - Supporting materials which demonstrate the unforeseen circumstances. For example, you should include documents like newspaper articles, bank statements, medical or hospital bills, accident records, etc. that support your economic hardship. Your finances should compare your current situation against your most recent affidavit of support or sources of funding listed on your DS-2019. Although it is important that you present your case clearly and thoroughly, do not exaggerate your situation. False or inaccurate statements or claims that you are extremely poor could damage your case.
What happens after I apply?
Your international student adviser will review your documentation of financial need, application materials and your overall financial plan. If your application meets regulatory criteria, your adviser will issue a letter granting you authorization to work off-campus for specific employer(s) based on the information collected on the job offer letter/Employer Certification form. The authorization period will be valid for up to 12 months or the validity of your DS-2019, which date occurs first. You must be issued the authorization letter before the employment begins. This process can take up to two weeks after submission of your application.

Special Asian Student Relief
A fourth category of employment is a modification of the on-campus and economic necessity categories of employment for J-1 students whose means of financial support, as reflected on their Form DS-2019, is from Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, or the Philippines.

Who is eligible?
Students in J-1 status whose means of financial support come from Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, or the Philippines, and whose financial support has been disrupted, reduced, or eliminated due to economic crises in that country may be authorized for full- or part-time employment on- or off-campus.

If a reduction in course load is necessary due to employment, such students will still be considered full-time if they are:

- Undergraduates enrolled in at least 6 credits, or
- Graduate students enrolled in at least 3 credits

What must my International Student Adviser do?

- Establish that applicant's funding comes from one of the 5 countries and document the specific individual's funding problems.
- Authorize on- or off-campus work by issuing a letter
- If a reduced course load is also authorized due to the employment, include in the letter the notation "reduced course load authorized."