



Myths about Employing International Students

1. International students aren't allowed to work.

Federal regulations permit the employment of international students on F-1 visas within certain limits. These visas allow students to work in jobs related to their major field of study (AKA “practical training”)

2. Hiring an international student is expensive and requires a lot of paperwork.

The only cost to the employer hiring international students is the time and effort to interview and select the best candidate for the job. The Center for International Studies handles the paperwork involved in securing the work authorization. In fact, a company may save money by hiring international students because the majority of them are exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare tax requirements.

3. International students need work authorization before an employer can hire them.

International students must have the work authorization before they begin actual employment, but not before they are offered employment. In fact, many F-1 students will be in the process of obtaining work authorization while they are interviewing for employment. Students can give employers a reasonable estimate of when they expect to receive work authorization.

4. An employer has to prove that international students are not taking jobs from qualified Americans.

U.S. employers are not required to document that a citizen of another country did not take a job from a qualified American if the employee is working under an F-1, J-1, or H-1B visa. Employers must document that they did not turn down a qualified American applicant for the position only when they wish to hire foreign citizens on a permanent basis and sponsor them for a permanent resident status (“green card”).

5. Employers need to sponsor an international student in order to hire them.

St. Cloud State University is the student’s sponsor—through CPT, OPT, and STEM OPT.

After STEM OPT, with a bit of planning ahead, an employer can hire international students to continue to work for them in the H-1B visa category for a total of six years (authorization is granted in two, three-year periods). The H-1B is a temporary working

visa for workers in a "specialty occupation." The application procedure to USCIS is straightforward. The job must meet two basic requirements:

- 1) The salary must meet the prevailing wage as defined by the Department of Labor
- 2) A bachelor's degree is a minimum normal requirement for the position

6. International students can't work remotely.

Remote work is perfectly fine for international students.

7. I can't hire international students as unpaid interns.

If the unpaid internship is related to their field of study, students just need CPT or OPT authorization before working.

8. Enrolling as an E-Verify employer is expensive.

Enrolling is free.