

# Career Readiness for Undocumented Students



Life after graduation can be difficult to navigate. It can be especially difficult for undocumented students because of the unique challenges you face. No matter what path you choose, take time to learn about your options.

## Job Search for Undocumented Students

**Before you begin your search**, you should familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations regarding your employment possibilities in the United States. Please seek out a qualified attorney if you have any questions about employment possibilities.

**It is highly recommended** that you develop skills and gain experience prior to graduation. The National Association for Colleges and Employers has identified 8 career competencies which are skills employers most value. There are many ways to develop these skills, some of which do not require traditional employment.

### 8 Career Competencies

- Career & Self-Development
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Equity & Inclusion
- Leadership
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Technology

### Ways to Gain Experience

- Clubs and Organizations
- Leadership Roles
- Class Projects
- Volunteering
- Research
- Internships
- Part-time Job

## UCI DREAM Center

**Overview:** The UCI DREAM Center's mission is to stand with and serve those impacted by immigration policy through advancing systemic change, deconstructing oppressive policies, and fostering community. We work towards personal growth, collective healing, and visible change.



**Website:** [dream.uci.edu](http://dream.uci.edu)

**Email:** [dream@uci.edu](mailto:dream@uci.edu)

**Address:** UCI DREAM Center  
(We are located in the R.I.S.E Suite,  
4th floor of the Student Center)  
G458 Student Center  
University of California Irvine  
Irvine, CA 92697

### Resources

- Academic Consultations
- Free Legal Services and Representation
- Financial Aid Guidance
- Graduate School Advising
- Student Wellness and Support
- Professional and Career Development
- Housing Relocations



## Frequently Asked Questions by Undocumented Students

### 1) Should I disclose my immigration status to an employer?

It is never mandated to disclose one's status. An employer is not allowed to ask for an applicant's citizenship status, and if the situation were to occur, the applicant has the right to not answer the question. Though an employer is not allowed to ask for status, employers are mandated to ask for a U.S. Work Authorization Permit through the Form I-9.

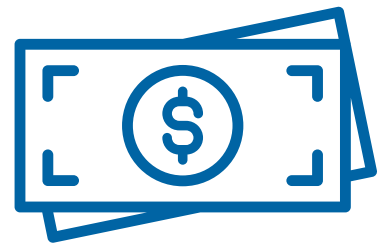
### 2) How should I answer the question "Are you authorized to work in the United States" in a job application?

Every application requires you to answer every question correctly and truthfully. If you are a DACA recipient, you may answer "yes" to the question and continue with the normal hiring process. If you are not a DACA recipient or do not have another work authorization status, you cannot answer "yes", but there may be other options available, such as seeking opportunities as an independent contractor (Refer to Question 3).

### 3) How do I earn money without a U.S. Work Authorization Permit?

There may be other legal ways to earn money in the United States aside from employment, which would require a U.S. Work Authorization Permit. Please be sure to consult your immigration lawyer first to see if any of these methods are available to you.

- **Independent Contracting:** An independent contractor is a self-employed person or business that provides a service to another entity as outlined by a contract.
- **Starting a Business:** A variety of different business structures are available for immigrant entrepreneurs. Business ownership provides income without the need of a Social Security number. Business owners must be aware of local business laws and tax requirements.



### How to Get Started:

- 1) Talk to your legal advisor about all the options you have for earning money in the United States.
- 2) Research job opportunities and companies that will best fit your career choice (talk to a career counselor and legal advisor if needed).
- 3) Prepare your application materials that may include a resume, cover letter or supplemental writing.
- 4) Prepare for the interview.
- 5) Follow-up with the employer with a thank you email and any remaining questions.

### Additional Resources...

#### [IMMIGRANTSRIISING.ORG](http://IMMIGRANTSRIISING.ORG)

Visit the Immigrants Rising website for more career and educational tools

#### [NACEWEB.ORG](http://NACEWEB.ORG)

Learn more about career development with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

#### [UNDOC.UNIVERSITYOFCALIFORNIA.EDU](http://UNDOC.UNIVERSITYOFCALIFORNIA.EDU)

UC Undocumented Student Resources

#### [ANTREPRENEUR.UCI.EDU](http://ANTREPRENEUR.UCI.EDU)

Visit the UCI Antrepreneur Center for tips on entrepreneurial work

#### [UCI.JOINHANDSHAKE.COM](http://UCI.JOINHANDSHAKE.COM)

Look for ways to gain experience on Handshake