



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Employment Authorization Document (EAD) What is it? How do I get one?

**Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** for NATO-2 Visa Holders, commonly known as a work authorization, is also referred to by some as Employment Authorization Card (EAC)

### What is an EAD?

EAD stands for Employment Authorization Document. Family members are permitted to be employed on the local US economy; however, US law requires that they have a US Visa, an Arrival/Departure record (an I-94), an EAD, and a Social Security Number (SSN) prior to commencement of employment including self-employment.

\*\*Listen to [How to Get an EAD WebEx](#)\*\*

### What is an I-94 and where do I get one?

Form I-94 is the Department of Homeland Security arrival/departure record issued to foreigners who are admitted to the U.S. U.S. Customs and Border Protection has automated Form I-94 at air and sea ports of entry. The paper form will no longer be provided to a traveler upon arrival, except in limited circumstances. To read more about what you need to know about your I-94, please see [I-94 Automation Fact Sheet](#).

You can look up your most recent I-94 number [ONLINE](#).

### Who do I need to contact to process the EAD?

In some cases, your local Orderly Room (OR) if you have one will assist in the early stages of the process. Please see them for further information. If you do not have a local OR, please contact your EAD Application point of contact (see box to right) depending on which unit does your administration. The member themselves does not have to contact CDLS(W) or CFSU(CS), as Protocol Coord and Misty will work directly with spouses. As the requirements are constantly changing, it is important to reach out to the appropriate people/departments, so you don't delay the process.

### When can I apply for the EAD?

Family members cannot apply for an EAD until they have crossed the border on posting (to live) and have received their I-94 Arrival/Departure number. Please make sure to verify your most recent I-94 number at time of application by visiting the website.

 **NOTE:** It is recommended to contact your support EAD process person to start the process as soon as possible after your HHT, if applying for EI or want to commence employment to avoid delays.

### What is the relationship between EADs, Social Security Numbers and Driver's Licenses?

An EAD is required if you plan to work or be self employed in the United States. An EAD is also required in order to get a US Social Security Number. A Social Security Number is required in many states in order to get a Driver's License. BUT, if the intention is for the family member not to work, therefore has no need for an EAD or SSN, but still needs a license, the SSA office can provide a letter providing you with an exemption from needing a SSN in order to get their license. Visit your [SSA office](#) with all your paperwork and IDs and request the letter.

### Does a Common Law partner qualify for an EAD?

 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **DOES NOT** recognize common law marriages for purposes of Employment Authorization and visas. Therefore, they cannot be processed through CAF support units. Common-law spouses who have elected to accompany spouses to post on a B-2 visitor visa will not be allowed to work and an EAD cannot be processed for them. Spouses can make alternative visa arrangements themselves and may be allowed to work but they will need to investigate that on their own. Only spouses with a NATO-2 visa (same visa class as their member) can have EADs processed through the support units.

### Our marriage certificate is written in French. Is this acceptable?

A translation to English of the marriage certificate must be provided if the surname is different than the members. It would be ideal to have these and other documents like your driver's license translated before you leave Canada.

### EAD Application Points of Contact

**CDLS(W):** Protocol Coordinator  
CAF (Washington) Canadian Armed Forces  
[cdlswprotocol@forces.gc.ca](mailto:cdlswprotocol@forces.gc.ca)  
Tel: 202-682-7697

**CFSU(CS)/NORAD:** Misty Baker  
CND Forces Support Unit Colorado  
Springs Peterson AFB, CO  
[misty.baker@forces.gc.ca](mailto:misty.baker@forces.gc.ca)  
Tel: 719- 556-8242.

### Do I need an EAD for:

- Employment Insurance (EI) benefits from Canada 
- EI Maternity benefits from Canada (for more information, call Service Canada at 1-800-206-7218) 
- Employment if I am a child born in the US to Canadian parents 

### I've heard that there is a cost for the EAD, is this true?

 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) authorities have waived the application fee for NATO family members. Make sure you go through the OR to ensure this fee is waived.

### How long does it take to receive an EAD?

 Applicants should allow at least 8-16 weeks for processing once the package is sent from your local OR or your home. The EAD card will be mailed directly to your US home address.

### How old does a child need to be to apply for an EAD?

16 years of age. However, a child who is 14 or 15 and has a job offer in hand, can apply and may be granted an EAD at the discretion of the US Government.

### The EAD is for my child; do they sign the forms or does the CAF member?

If the child is under the age of 18, the forms must be co-signed by the applicant and CAF member.

### What documents are needed to obtain the EAD?

For current information, please contact your EAD Application Point of Contact

### How long is an EAD valid for?

The issue period for an EAD is 3 years, no matter how long the duration of your posting is.

The "[NATO Dependent Employment Authorization Document Policy and Guidelines for Processing](#)" provides an overview of policy and regulations, eligibility requirements, application procedures and documentation requirements as well as sample forms to assist eligible individuals in their application for US employment authorization.



This information sheet is offered to you to help direct you and your family to the correct locations to find the benefits and services available during your OUTCAN posting.  
**Please be vigilant in doing the research appropriate for your situation, as each is different!**  
Your Support Unit (CDLS(W) or CFSU(CS)) website is full of great information to support you during your OUTCAN posting.

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