

Table of Contents

Preparing to Matriculate at Cooley 2

Accept Offer of Admissions:.....2

I-901 SEVIS Fee:2

Financing Your Education2

Student Loans.....2

Attending Law School 3

Merit Scholarships3

Maintaining Your Student Status3

 To maintain F-1 status, the student must:.....3

 Documents Required for Travel.....3

Employment4

 On-Campus Work.....4

 Off-Campus Work4

 Curricular Practical Training (CPT)4

 Optional Practical Training (OPT).....5

 Volunteering6

 Practicing in the United States After Law School.....6

Living in the United States.....6

 Housing6

 Health Insurance.....7

Social Security Number.....7

Obtaining a Driver’s License7

Car Registration.....8

Car Insurance.....8

Contact Information9

 Disability9

 Campuses Addresses:9

Canadian federal and private student loans..... 10

Federal Services10

 Canada Student Loans and Grants.....10

 Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities10

Private Loans10

 TD Canada Trust:.....10

 Bank of Montreal:10

 Royal Bank of Canada:10

 CIBC:.....10

Preparing to Matriculate at Cooley

Accept Offer of Admissions

Once accepted to Cooley, the student must obtain a valid immigration status. International students are classified under F-1 status and are governed by regulations of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), a branch of the United States Department of Homeland Security. Immigration laws require that an international student obtain I-20 approval from the school the student plans to attend in order to enter the United States.

To obtain an I-20 after the student has been offered admission to Cooley Law School, the student must submit the following to the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid.

1. The completed and signed Intent to Enroll Form;
2. The completed **I-20 Request Form** or the **I-20 School Transfer Form** (if the student is currently attending a U.S. school)
3. Proof of financial ability to support oneself for the first year (12 months) at Cooley. Signed letter from a bank certifying available funds, student loan approval letter(s), or a similar document to verify the student or sponsor's financial status. If the student is relying on a sponsor for support, a letter from the sponsor pledging their support is also needed. **The fund availability must be in U.S. dollars.**

I-901 SEVIS Fee

F-1 students are required to pay a SEVIS I-901 of **\$350.00**. This fee is mandated by Congress to support the Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS) that tracks students and exchange visitors in the United States. Information about the SEVIS I-901 fee can be found at <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901> and link to direct payment of the SEVIS I-901 fee is <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>.

Financing Your Education

Student Loans

International students are not eligible to receive United States federal student loans unless they are permanent residents of the United States. However, Canadian students may apply for Canadian federal and private student loans. For further information, please contact the offices listed on page 10.

Attending Law School

Merit Scholarships

Significantly reduce the cost of your education by securing a merit scholarship. Cooley has a very generous scholarship program that rewards excellence. Visit Cooley's website for the most up-to-date information on scholarships: [Merit Scholarships | Cooley Law School](#)

Maintaining Your Student Status

When the student enters the United States, the immigration inspector will ask the student to sign a statement on his or her I-20 form that states that they agree to abide by the conditions of F-1 status. Failure to comply may result in the termination of your F-1 visa and you will be required to depart from the United States immediately. The Department of Homeland Security requirements can found at this link <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/maintaining-status>

To maintain F-1 status, the student must

1. Remain enrolled full-time at Cooley. 6 credits per term is considered full-time for an international student. Do not drop a class without first speaking to your Designated School Official (DSO).
2. Have a current I-20 or a previously issued I-20 (Student Copy) endorsed on the back by for travel within the current academic year, or A new I-20 issued by the DSO.
3. Have your I-20 endorsed **each year** by the DSO by the deadline.
4. Maintain a current passport during your stay in the United States. A student may get an extension on their passport at the local Embassy or Consulate, if needed.
5. If working, or completing a clinical experience, have the appropriate authorization; Please visit [Working in the United States | Study in the States](#) for additional information.
6. If you change your permanent local address, you must update your information with the DSO.
7. If you decide to take a term off, you must inform the DSO of your decision prior to the term you plan to take a leave of absence.

Documents Required for Travel

The student should keep the stamped I-20 that is returned to the student at the port of entry into the United States. This is a permanent record of the student's F-1 nonimmigrant status. There are no special documents needed for travel within the United States. However, it is recommended that a student have a valid I-20, current passport, and I-94 card in case any problems arise.

Employment

International students are restricted to a maximum of 20 hours per week while taking classes and may work full-time during term breaks or if the student takes a term off.

On-Campus Work

While USCIS regulations automatically authorize a student in lawful F1 status to work at their educational institution, unless he or she is a border commuter, the student must also seek permission from the DSO. Students may begin working as many as 30 days before beginning classes.

The student will need certification letters from the designated school official and the employer. The student must present these letters to officials at the local Social Security Administration office to get a Social Security number.

Off-Campus Work

If employment opportunities are not available or insufficient, a student may apply for permission to work outside of Cooley after being enrolled for one academic year (three terms) at Cooley and must be in good academic standing. The student must demonstrate economic hardship caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond his or her control. Acceptable reasons for applications are:

1. Loss of financial aid or on-campus employment without fault on the student's part;
2. Large increases in tuition or living costs;
3. Substantial fluctuations in the value of currency or exchange rate;
4. Unexpected changes in the financial condition of the student's source of support;
5. Unexpectedly large medical bills not covered by insurance.

The student must file a form I-765 "Application for Employment Authorization" and pay a fee to USCIS. The DSO will provide a new I-20 to the student endorsed with the employment request. If approved the student will receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and may begin working. Approval for off-campus employment is good for one year. If the student needs to continue working, the student must reapply.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Work experience is an important part of a law school program and may be considered Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Work experience includes alternate work-study programs, internships, cooperative education programs, and practicum experiences. The practical training must be required for the student's program, or the student must be enrolled in an official practicum course where the student will receive academic credits for work experience. Students who have received one year or more of full time CPT are ineligible for post-completion OPT.

Cooley's externship program qualifies as Curricular Practical Training, and a separate request must be made and approved by the designated school official before the student can begin the externship. This request **must** be made at least 30-60 days before the student begins the Curricular Practical Training (Externship). Students who fail to make a request for CPT may jeopardize their legal status.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

International students may be eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Through this program, the student may be employed in a full-time or part-time job if it directly relates to the study of law. Internships, whether paid or not, self employment and volunteer legal work may be considered as employment and should be discussed with the DSO on your campus. The program allows for a period of up to 12 months of work at a full-time or part-time position in a field directly

If the student wishes to participate in an OPT program after completing their coursework, the student should submit the application to the DSO before the student completes their coursework for Cooley's Juris Doctor Program. The application can be **submitted no more than 90 days before or up to 60 days after they complete their program. Please note that the date when the student completes his or her coursework is the student's date of graduation.** If the Division of Enrollment and Student Services allows the student to participate in practical training and the student's application is approved by the USCIS, the student will receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) that will serve as the student's authorization card for OPT.

The EAD is a small laminated card, similar to a driver's license. You may not begin work until you receive it, and you must stop working by the expiration date indicated. However, you are allowed to stay 60 more days in the U.S. in F-1 status after that termination date.

This process is finalized when the student receives an EAD card from the USCIS. The estimated time for USCIS to process an OPT application is between **60 to 90 days**, and the student is advised to apply for an OPT early but no more than 90 days before their graduation date.

Students may apply and be authorized for OPT without securing employment at the time of their application. Students approved for OPT must not be unemployed for more than three consecutive months during their OPT. Volunteer work related to their program of study may count as being employed for this requirement. It is **illegal** to start work before the student receives the EAD card. When the student receives the card, the student is now authorized to work during the period indicated on the EAD card. The USCIS must receive the student's application during the required application period in order for the student to begin his or her OPT on the scheduled date.

Volunteering

What is the difference between an employee and a volunteer? A common misconception is that the only difference is that employees get paid and volunteers do not.

However, according to U.S. labor laws, there is more to distinguish between employees and volunteers than whether an individual receives a regular paycheck. **Work that is unpaid may still be considered employment that necessitates F-1 off-campus work or OPT authorization.** You can volunteer while an F-1 student, but you must maintain your nonimmigrant status by following the rules established by the Department of Homeland Security. Failure to comply, may result in the termination of your F-1 status. Please visit [Volunteering in the United States](#) for more information.

Practicing in the United States After Law School

If you want to remain and practice in the United States, please note that certain state bar associations have citizenship requirements and will not license students who fail to meet citizenship requirements. Students must contact each state bar for requirements to practice in that state. Please visit the following link for more information: [National Conference of Bar Examiners](#)

Living in the United States

Housing

Cooley does not provide any form of on-campus housing; therefore, students are responsible for securing their housing needs. However, many of Cooley's campuses offer housing options within walking distance. For more information on housing, please visit <https://www.cooley.edu/about/locations>.

Once accepted, the student will be granted access to the Cooley Portal, where students can view current listings on apartments and houses for rent. Students who are seeking a roommate(s) may access a roommate list posted on the Bulletin Board.

Many Canadian students fail to have American based credit; therefore, they may be required to pay a larger deposit for their selected housing. Furthermore, many apartment complexes require renter's insurance. Students are encouraged to consider the extra cost as part of their budget.

Health Insurance

The following are possible health insurance options:

HealthCare.gov

healthcare.gov

Ingham County Health Department

<http://hd.ingham.org/>

CAA Travel Insurance

caasco.com

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)

You may be eligible for continuous OHIP coverage during a long absence from Canada. Please visit the following link for more information:

health.gov.on.ca/en/public/publications/ohip/travel.aspx

Social Security Number

Students can apply for a social security number at the local Social Security office. Find the closest location at: [local SSA office](#). Usually, a number is provided for employment purposes and the student will be required to provide certain documents from the school and their employer as part of their application packet. The DSO can provide you more information regarding this process.

Obtaining a Driver's License

Applications for drivers licenses can be filed at the local Secretary of State office. Find the closest location at: [SOS - Michigan Secretary of State](#). They will require certain documents from you in order to process your application. The list of documents is available at michigan.gov/documents/DE40_032001_20459_7.pdf. If you already have an international driver's license in a foreign language and would like to have an American driver's license issued based on your existing license, your current license may have to be translated to English by a certified translator. Note that your international license has to be current.

Obtaining an American driver's license will void your Canadian driver's license. Therefore, you will be required to transfer your vehicle's registration and insurance to the appropriate state.

Car Registration

You must obtain a title and register your vehicle in the appropriate state. To register your car, you must provide proof of insurance and ownership documents. Specific information about required documents and fees, in Michigan, can be found here: michigan.gov/sos/0,4670,7-127-1585_1587-76278--,00.html.

This process is simple for vehicles purchased within the United States, however if you plan on importing your Canadian vehicle you must meet customs requirements. For further information please visit the following link: <https://www.cbp.gov/trade/basic-import-export/importing-car>

Car Insurance

All registered vehicles must be insured with no-fault insurance in the state of Michigan. There are a variety of choices for auto insurance in terms of cost, coverage, and carrier. Information on no-fault insurance and types of coverage you could obtain can be found here: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/cis_ofis_ip202_25083_7.pdf

Car Insurance Companies and websites	
Allstate Insurance Company	allstate.com
American International Insurance Company	aigdirect.com
Amica Mutual Insurance Company	amica.com
Cincinnati Insurance Company	cinfin.com
E-surance Insurance Company	esurance.com
Farmers Insurance Exchange	farmers.com
GEICO Indemnity Company	geico.com
Mercury National Insurance Company	mercuryinsurance.com
Metropolitan Property & Casualty	metlife.com
Nationwide Mutual Fire	nationwide.com
Progressive Marathon Insurance Company	progressive.com
Progressive of Michigan Insurance Company	progressiveagent.com
SafeCo Insurance Company of IL	safeco.com
Travelers	travelers.com
State Farm Mutual Auto	statefarm.com
Unitrin Direct Insurance Company	unitrindirect.com

If you plan on keeping your Canadian license, registration and insurance. Please contact your insurance provider regarding your coverage while living in Michigan.

Contact Information

For more information about Cooley Law School, or if you have more questions regarding admissions to the law school as a international student, please feel free to contact us by telephone at (517) 371-5140 ext. 2244 or by email at admissions@cooley.edu.

For additional information on **F- 1 Visas, International Student Employment**, contact the DSO:

Jacqueline Freeman, M.A., J.D.

Senior Director and Special Advisor to the President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

freemanj@cooley.edu

(517) 371-5140 Ext. 2843

Disability

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Cooley offers reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities who meet the requirements of the ADA and Cooley's Disability Policy. Disabilities include, but are not limited to, physical, learning, personal injury, or mental illness.

Further information regarding Cooley's Disability Policy is available on Cooley Connect.

Lansing Students:

Ieva Inglis

Associate Director of Enrollment & Student Services

inglisi@cooley.edu

(517) 371-5140 ext. 2282

Tampa Bay Students:

Jacqueline Freeman, M.A., J.D.

Senior Director and Special Advisor to the President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

freemanj@cooley.edu

(517) 371-5140 Ext. 2843

Campuses Addresses:

Lansing

Cooley Law School

300 S. Capitol Ave.

Lansing, MI 48933

(517) 371-5140

Tampa Bay

Cooley Law School

9445 Camden Field Pkwy

Riverview, FL 3357

(813) 419-5100

Canadian federal and private student loans

Federal Services

Canada Student Loans and Grants

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/canada-student-loans-grants>.

Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

[Ministry of Colleges and Universities | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/ministry-of-colleges-and-universities)

Private Loans

Many financial institutions in Canada offer programs to assist in the accessibility of funds, such as student lines of credit for professional programs, U.S. dollar checking accounts and Visas. The following is a list of known programs. The student should contact their financial institution regarding these options. These options require a qualified guarantor as they are out-of-country loans.

TD Canada Trust: tdcanadatrust.com/products-services/banking/index-banking.jsp

Student Line of Credit:

tdcanadatrust.com/products-services/banking/student-life/paying-for-school/graduate.jsp

U.S. Dollar Visa:

tdcanadatrust.com/products-services/banking/credit-cards/more-cards/usd.jsp

U.S. Dollar Account:

tdcanadatrust.com/products-services/banking/accounts/u-s-dollar-accounts/index-usd.jsp

Bank of Montreal: bmo.com/home

U.S. Dollar MasterCard: bmo.com/home/personal/banking/credit-cards/us-dollar-mastercard

U.S. Dollar Account: bmo.com/home/personal/banking/bank-accounts/us-dollar?nav=left

Royal Bank of Canada: rbcroyalbank.com/personal.html

Student Line of Credit: rbcroyalbank.com/personal-loans/student-line-of-credit.html

U.S. Dollar Credit Cards: rbcroyalbank.com/credit-cards/travel-credit-cards/index.html

U.S. Dollar Account: rbcroyalbank.com/products/deposits/us-personal-account.html

CIBC: cibc.com/ca/personal.html

Student Line of Credit: cibc.com/ca/loans/prof-edg-st-pers-ln-credit.html

U.S. Dollar Visa: cibc.com/ca/visa/us-dollar-visa-card.html

U.S. Dollar Account: cibc.com/ca/small-business/fees/us-dollar-acct.html