



# OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING


**HANDBOOK**

**2019-2020**

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# F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) Application Guide



**Everything you need to know to  
prepare your application materials  
for submission to  
United States Citizenship and  
Immigration Services (USCIS)**

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## What is \*OPT? Am I eligible?

- OPT stands for “Optional Practical Training” and is a benefit for F-1 students.
- **Optional Practical Training (OPT)** is a period during which undergraduate and graduate students with F-1 status who have completed or have been pursuing their degrees for more than nine months are permitted by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to work for at most one year on a student visa.
- A period of 12 months, most commonly used after a student’s program is complete, for job training in the United States.
- To be eligible, you must:
  - Have completed course work
  - Have been in valid F-1 status for 1 full academic year (2 semesters)
  - Be physically present in the United States
  - Be otherwise maintaining F-1 status
  - Intend to find training in the major field of study (academic program)
  - You DO NOT need to have a job before applying for OPT
- F-1 students can have 1 period of 12 months of OPT per degree level. You can receive OPT after completing each degree. Certificate programs do not qualify.

### **FAQ- What if I end up failing a course and am not finished with courses as I thought I would be?**

- If this happens, please contact the CIP. A DSO will make a notation on your OPT that you will be doing part time OPT only as you complete your last course. When your course is complete, you can resume full time OPT.

### **FAQ- Can I have OPT if I complete a second BA?**

- No, you can only have 12 months of OPT per degree level, not just degree. One period of OPT for BA/BS, one for MA/MS etc.

\*Reference: 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)

## When can I apply?

- Earliest – 90 days BEFORE your program ends
- Latest – 60 days AFTER your program ends, when your grace period is over.



NOTE: When counting your days, make sure you count the DAYS, not the months. USCIS is very specific in saying that a student may apply 90 days prior to the end date.

### But when does my program end?

- You can find your program end date on your Form I-20.

## How do I chose my start date for OPT?

- YOU are responsible for choosing your own start date.
- The start date must fall between the day after your program ends and the end of your grace period 60 days later.
- Keep in mind that it will take up to 90 days to receive your EAD card and in order to work: You must have your EAD card **AND** your start date has arrived.

### FAQ: But, what date would be best?

- It is really up to you. If you have opportunities to work, you might want to choose a date right away. If you want more time to look or to have a break before working, you might want to choose a later start date. If you are applying close to your Program End Date you should probably choose a later start date to allow for the 90 day processing time of your EAD.

**\*\*YOU CANNOT TRAVEL WHILE OPT IS PENDING\*\***

## Application Process

1. Attend a workshop!
2. Submit the Optional Practical Training Request Form
3. Complete the OPT application packet
  - a. Form I-765
    - i. This form can be found on the USCIS.gov website
    - ii. Use the most current version of this form
    - iii. The CIP does not recommend completing the e-file option of the I-765
  - b. Copies of all previously issued I-20's previously
  - c. Copy of Visa
    - i. Copy must show both the photo and expiration date
  - d. Copy of Passport
    - i. Copy must show both the photo and expiration date
  - e. I-94 Form
  - f. 2 Passport Photos
    - i. Print your name and I-94 number in pencil on the back of each photo
    - ii. The photos must be no more than 30 days old when an application is filed
    - iii. All photos must be of the applicant only and must be identical
  - g. Check or money order in the amount of \$410 made payable to: **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** and print your SEVIS ID number on the memo line. (Fees are subject to change; please visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) to verify filing fee)
  - h. Form G-1145 to confirm receipt and obtain case number in advance of receipt paper notification
4. Drop off your completed packet with your receipt at the CIP.
5. Your packet will be reviewed. Please allow 10 business days before pick up. Make sure your packet is complete. An incomplete packet will cause a delay in the processing of your application.
6. If your packet is complete, a DSO will create a new I-20 for you, recommending OPT (find the notation on page 2 of your I-20).
7. Pick up your packet at the CIP. **MAIL WITHIN 30 DAYS of the new I-20 issue date! If you mail after 30 days, you will be denied OPT.**
8. Copy the complete packet for your files. Always keep detailed records of your immigration paperwork and your employment history on OPT.
9. Mail to USCIS
10. Watch for the receipt in the mail.
11. Use your EAC number to track your application at USCIS.gov.
12. ...wait! It can take up to 90 days before you receive your EAD card in the mail.

**FAQ: I have a job offer but my EAD card has not arrived yet. Can I speed up the process?**

- No. There is no option to expedite the OPT application. You should plan to wait 90 days and plan your application accordingly.

**FAQ: But what if I work for free until it comes and then work for pay? My job wants me to start right away!**

- No. You cannot be training in any way outside your authorized OPT dates.



## What Counts as OPT?

- The “training” of “Optional Practical Training” does not only mean a paid job. You can do many things, as long as you are engaging in training for 20 hours or more per week.
- Volunteer in your field – “volunteering” can mean different things. In order for a volunteer position to count as OPT to avoid unemployment time, it **MUST BE IN YOUR FIELD OF STUDY**.
- Intern – paid or unpaid
- Contract work
- Get a job part time or full time in your field of study

### **FAQ: How do I know if the job is OK for OPT?**

- You must make the call that a job is appropriate or not appropriate. Some things are obvious, working at a fast food restaurant or a grocery store for example wouldn't be appropriate. However, there are some degrees that are ambiguous and have a wide range of jobs that might make use of those skills. You should keep job descriptions of any job you take to prove that your degree was required and that you are using the skills from your major field of study for the job should you be asked by USCIS.

### **FAQ: Who is going to care or know what job I am doing?**

- You must report all of your jobs/training to the CIP for entry into the SEVIS system. Also, if you were to apply for a new visa after OPT, you might be asked to prove what you were doing on OPT and how it was in compliance.

### **FAQ: But maybe I am working at a restaurant as a manager and I was a business major. That counts right?**

- You have to make the call but if it is hard to convince yourself that it meets the minimum requirement of being in your field of study then it probably is not a good idea. A good measurement is that it should require a degree and a job like a restaurant manager, does not.

## Unemployment on OPT

- During the 12 months of OPT, you must not exceed 90 days of unemployment total.
- It is important that you report your training and employment to the CIP to record that you are not unemployed. If you do not report your job and you are actually employed, no one will know that you are not accruing unemployment time.
- If you cannot find a paying job, there are other ways to be considered “employed” and avoid accruing unemployment time. Look into setting up an internship instead.
- If you cannot find anything in your field that would be considered training after 90 days, you can:
  - Begin a new degree program
  - Depart the United States
  - Change to a new visa category if the opportunity is available

**FAQ: What happens if I use my 90 days but don't leave? Maybe I will find a job after 4 months or after 6 months.**

- Staying in the US on your OPT after the 90 days unemployment has passed will cause you to be in violation and out of status. This will put you at risk for being denied a future visa or visa benefit such as H1-B applications. It is important to follow the regulation to protect your future opportunities. If you stay in the US for more than 120 days while out of status, you could be barred from entering the US later on.

## Responsibilities During OPT

- While on OPT, you are still an F-1 student and still under the responsibility of West Chester University of PA. You need to always report the following to the CIP:
- Submit a copy of your EAD card to the CIP.
- Change of address within 10 days of your move.
- A new or change of job or training site within 10 days of the start date. If you are doing two part time jobs or contract work at the same time, report all positions.
- If you decide to leave the U.S. and not complete your OPT, the DSO will complete your SEVIS record so you have a clean end to your status and will not encounter problems the next time you apply for a visa.

### **FAQ- I lost my EAD card/ My EAD card was stolen. What do I do?**

- You will need to replace your card. To replace your card you should contact the CIP. You will be required to complete a new I-765 form and pay the \$410 fee once more. Your application for replacement will include the same materials as your initial OPT application plus any police reports of a theft if applicable. It is important that you report your card lost or stolen and get a replacement so that someone does not use your card fraudulently.

**\*\*Please be advised that any new information regarding immigration regulations that could affect you while on OPT will be sent to your WCU email address. It will be your responsibility to check this email address for these updates.\*\***

## Reporting Requirements

- You must provide a copy of your EAD card to the CIP
- You must report any changes to your employment, address, and/or name within 10 days to the CIP.

### Employment Requirements

- All F-1 students participating on OPT must work a minimum of 20 hours per week in a position related to your field of study.
- You cannot exceed more than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT. Days of unemployment prior to your EAD start date do not count towards the 90 days. It is your responsibility to keep records of your employment and any periods of unemployment

## Travel on OPT

To return to the U.S. while on OPT you must present:

- A valid passport
- A valid F-1 visa stamp
- OPT I-20 with travel signature (valid for 6 months)
- EAD card
- Proof of a job or other training opportunity
- While OPT is pending (you do not yet have your EAD card): Do NOT travel. To return you will need your EAD card. EAD cards will not be mailed outside of the United States. Travel at your own risk!

### **FAQ – I want to travel. I have my EAD card but no job. What do I do?**

- It is recommended that you secure some kind of training before leaving the US for traveling. Keep in mind that you can secure an unpaid internship rather than a paid job and it is just as good. Make sure you get a letter to take with you.

### **FAQ – My visa is expired. What do I do?**

- If you travel while your visa is expired, you will need to reapply for a new visa stamp before returning to the U.S. to do this, you should be in your home country and refer to your local consulate for all the required documents. You will need to show your EAD card and proof of a job/training.

## Travel Documents for Re-entry

Documents	Before Completing Program & Before <u>EAD</u> issuance	After Completing Program & Before EAD issuance	After Completing Program & After EAD issuance
Valid passport	✓	✓	✓
Valid F-1 visa stamp (if applicable)	✓	✓	✓
OPT I-20 with a valid travel endorsement signed by the DSO	✓	✓	✓
Evidence of continued enrollment (e.g. Enrollment Verification)	✓		
Evidence of financial support	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended	Strongly recommended
OPT receipt: I-797 Notice of Action		✓	
Job offer letter from employer		Strongly recommended	✓
EAD (Employment Authorization Document)			✓

**Your admission to the U.S. is always at the discretion of the Customs and Border Protection Agents.  
To avoid problems, you must have the required documents outlined above.**

## 24 month STEM OPT – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

If your major is a STEM qualifying major, you can apply for an extension of your OPT for 24 months, giving you a total of 36 months of OPT.

If you qualify, contact the CIP in your 8<sup>th</sup> month of OPT to complete the STEM application. You will file for a new I-765, pay a new fee and get a new EAD card. Your employer must be an E-Verify employer.

The basic 24-month STEM OPT extension process:

1. A student with a STEM-qualifying bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from an accredited, SEVIS-certified U.S. educational institution, who is in a valid period of standard post-completion OPT, has an offer of paid employment for at least 20 hours per week from an employer enrolled in E-Verify.
2. The student consults his or her DSO on STEM OPT extension eligibility and procedures.
3. The student and the employer complete a Form I-983 Training Plan, and the student submits the completed plan to the DSO.
4. The DSO reviews the Form I-983 submitted by the student, and determines that it is "complete, signed, and addresses all program requirements."
5. The DSO determines that the degree program that will serve as the basis of the STEM OPT extension is on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List.
6. The DSO updates the student's SEVIS record with a recommendation for a 24-month STEM OPT extension, and issues a new Form I-20 that reflects the STEM OPT extension recommendation.
7. Within 60 days of the DSO's recommendation in SEVIS, and before the expiration of the student's post-completion OPT, the student files with USCIS: Form I-765, the Form I-765 filing fee, the STEM OPT Form I-20, and documentation of the STEM degree.
8. The 24-month STEM OPT extension period begins on the day following the expiration of the student's standard post-completion OPT. If the Form I-765 is still pending as of that date, the student is authorized to continue employment for up to 180 days after the expiration of the student's post-completion OPT.
9. USCIS will issue an EAD reflecting the approved STEM OPT extension.
10. Throughout the STEM OPT extension period, the student, employer(s), and school comply with all reporting, training, supervision, evaluation, wage, documentation, and other obligations specified in the regulations and on Form I-983.

A student who has timely filed an application for a 24-month STEM OPT extension with USCIS can continue working while the STEM extension application is pending, for up to 180 days beyond the expiration of his or her prior post-completion OPT EAD. Time spent during the 180-day period while the application is pending counts towards the 24-month extension. If the STEM OPT application is still pending with USCIS beyond the 180 days, the student must stop working until USCIS approves the STEM OPT application.

## What Happens After OPT?

When your OPT is over you can:

- Ask your employer to sponsor an H1-B employment visa
- Begin another degree program as an F-1 Student
- Change to a new visa status if available
- Depart the United States

You have a 60 day grace period after OPT ends to change status, start a new program or to depart the U.S.

**FAQ – My OPT is ending in February and I am going to start a new program in August. Can I stay until my new program?**

- NO! You must begin the new program within 60 days after OPT ends. You will need to depart the U.S. and return for your new program on a new SEVIS record and new F-1 visa within 30 days of the new program beginning.

### H-1 B and the Cap Gap

- H1-B is an employment based visa, applied for by your employer.
- Your employer should apply at the April 1<sup>st</sup> start date of the application. They run out fast!
- If your employer sponsors an H-1B for you, you might run into the Cap-Gap, the time between your OPT end date and the H1-B start date on October 1.
- If this is the case, contact the CIP for a Cap-Gap I-20 so that you can continue to work. You must provide the CIP with a receipt from the application for an H1-B being filed with USCIS.
- Some employers, such as non-profits and institutes of higher education are exempt from the cap and can apply for an H1B at any time of the year.



# APPENDIX

OPT Request FORM

90 Day Employment

Form I-765

Passport Photo Requirements

Required Documents

Form G-1145 (optional)

Mailing Address

EAD card (sample)

OPT Employment Update FORM

STEM Extension Request FORM

STEM EXTENSION CHECKLIST



## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

### REQUEST FORM

- If you are graduating and plan on applying for Optional Practical Training, please complete this form and submit with your OPT application packet
- USCIS must receive your complete OPT application within 30 days of the new OPT I-20 being issued.

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

WCUID: \_\_\_\_\_ SEVIS ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been authorized for OPT in the past? \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have been authorized for OPT in the past, on which degree level was it based?

\_\_\_\_\_ Bachelor's \_\_\_\_\_ Master's \_\_\_\_\_ Ph.D.

When do you expect to graduate?

Fall Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Spring Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ Summer (August) \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested OPT Authorization \*Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Start date must be within 60 days of your program end date*

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**"I understand the responsibilities required for maintaining F-1 status during my period of OPT authorization as stated in the OPT Application Guide"**

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 90 Days of Employment

Immigration regulations for Optional Practical Training (OPT) state that if a student is not employed 90 days after the start date of the EAD card, the student is considered out of status. Unemployment is described as time spent without a qualifying job during OPT and each day that the student is not employed is counted toward the limit on unemployment time. The limit is 90 days for students on post-completion OPT.

If a student is not able to secure a paid job and is coming to the 90 days of unemployment he/she may work as a volunteer or unpaid intern, where this does not violate any labor laws. The work must be at least 20 hours per week for students on post-completion OPT and students must be able to provide evidence from the employer that they worked at least 20 hours per week during the period of unpaid employment.

**If a student exceeds the 90 day period of unemployment then he/she has technically violated his/her status. Therefore the student is required to either:**

- 1. Apply to continue his/her education by a change of level or transfer to another SEVP certified school;**
- 2. Take action to otherwise maintain legal status by applying for another immigration status OR**
- 3. Depart the United States**

Although schools are not required to alert the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) if a student has exceeded the 90 days of unemployment, the student should be aware that he/she may be denied future immigration benefits that rely on valid F-1 status if DHS determines that the student exceeded the limitations on unemployment. Additionally, SEVP may examine SEVIS data for an individual, a selected group, or all students on post-completion OPT and terminate a student's record if it fails to show the student maintained the proper period of employment. In such cases, the student will be given an opportunity to show that he/she complied with all OPT requirements, including maintaining employment

### **Reporting OPT Employment to the CIP**

To report any OPT employer information, changes to employment, or any periods of unemployment, please email [international@wcupa.edu](mailto:international@wcupa.edu) The CIP recommends that any employer updates be made immediately after any changes to employment.

Students are also required to send the CIP a copy of their EAD upon receipt of the card. This is to help ensure that your OPT is valid as the CIP will check on the status of your SEVIS record. Please scan and email a copy of the EAD card to [international@wcupa.edu](mailto:international@wcupa.edu) or mail a copy of the EAD to the address below:

**Center for International Programs  
Mitchell Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
675 S. Church Street  
West Chester University of PA  
West Chester, PA 19383  
Attention: EAD Copy**

# Form I-765

OMB No. 1615-0040; Expires 02/28/2018

Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

## I-765, Application For Employment Authorization

<b>For USCIS Use Only</b>	<b>Fee Stamp</b>	<b>Action Block</b>	<b>Initial Receipt</b>	<b>Resubmitted</b>
			<b>Relocated</b>	
			<b>Received</b>	<b>Sent</b>
			<b>Completed</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid To _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Application Denied - Failed to establish: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c)		<input type="checkbox"/> Economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)
Subject to the following conditions: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant is filing under section 274a.12 _____ <b>Approved</b> <b>Denied</b>		<b>A#</b>

I am applying for: ☐ Permission to accept employment. ☐ Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).  
☐ Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document).

1. **Full Name**  
(Family Name) (First Name) (Middle Name)

2. **Other Names Used** (include Maiden Name)

3. **U.S. Mailing Address**  
(Street Number and Name) (Apt. Number)  
(Town or City) (State) (ZIP Code)

4. **Country of Citizenship or Nationality**

5. **Place of Birth**  
(Town or City) (State/Province) (Country)

6. **Date of Birth** (mm/dd/yyyy)

7. **Gender** ☐ Male ☐ Female

8. **Marital Status**  
☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

9. **Social Security Number** (Include all numbers you have ever used, if any)

10. **Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or Form I-94 Number** (if any)

11. **Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?**

☐ Yes (Complete the following questions.)  
Which USCIS Office? \_\_\_\_\_ Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

☐ No (Proceed to Question 12.)

12. **Date of Last Entry into the U.S., on or about** (mm/dd/yyyy)

13. **Place of Last Entry into the U.S.**

14. **Status at Last Entry** (B-2 Visitor, F-1 Student, No Lawful Status, etc.)

15. **Current Immigration Status** (Visitor, Student, etc.)

16. **Eligibility Category.** Go to the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the Instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.

( ) ( ) ( )

17. **(c)(3)(C) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in Question 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.

Degree

Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify

Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number

18. **(c)(26) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in Question 16 above, please provide the receipt number of your I-1B principal spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-129.

### Certification

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Question 16.

### Applicant's Signature

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

### Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant

I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.

Preparer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Form I-765 12/23/16 N

## Passport Photo Requirements

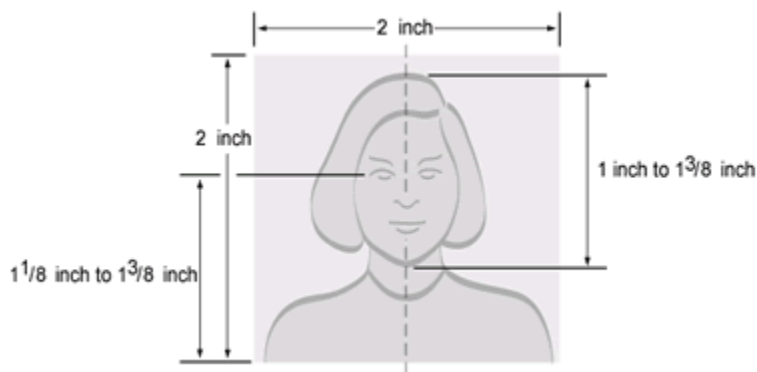
The photos required to use for the OPT application must meet the specifications of U.S. style passport photos. To see a full description of these specifications, go to the [U.S. Department of State](https://www.state.gov/passport-photos/) web site.

- Passport photos must be 2"x2" and taken within the past 30 days.
- Write your name and I-94 number lightly on the back of each photo.

### Professional Photography

USCIS has been examining passport photos more strictly. CIP recommends students have their photos taken professionally. Recently, students have been visiting the following locations to obtain their photos.

- Sykes Students Union
- Walgreens Photo




## Required Documents

- ☐ 2 U.S. Passport Photos
- ☐ Check or Money Order for \$410 made payable to: **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**. (Fees subject to change; please visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) to verify filing fee)
- ☐ Original form I-765. <http://www.uscis.gov>
- ☐ I-20 that was issued by the CIP within the past 30 days. Don't forget to sign it!
- ☐ Photocopy of passport biographical page (photo and expiration date must be included)
- ☐ Form I—94 (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>)
- ☐ Copy of Visa
- ☐ Photocopies of all previously issued I-20's
- ☐ Photocopy of previous EAD card, if applicable
- ☐ Form G-1145 to confirm receipt and obtain case number in advance of paper notification

## Form G-1145

- This is an optional form. Use this form to request text and email notification(s) regarding your application.
- Download the form at: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/g-1145.pdf>
- Attach to the top of the OPT application packet

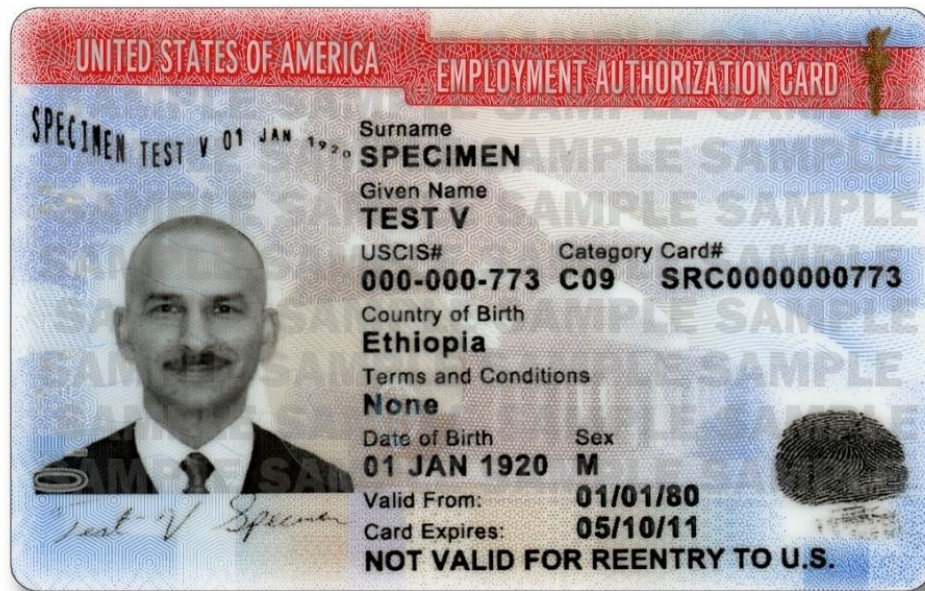
	<b>e-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance</b> Department of Homeland Security U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	<b>USCIS</b> <b>Form G-1145</b> <small>OMB No. 1615-0109 Expires 09/30/2014</small>
<b>What Is the Purpose of This Form?</b>		
Use this form to request an electronic notification (e-Notification) when U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services accepts your immigration application. This service is available for applications filed at a USCIS Lockbox facility.		
<b>General Information</b>		
Complete the information below and clip this form to the first page of your application package. You will receive one e-mail and/or text message for each form you are filing. We will send the e-Notification within 24 hours after we accept your application. Domestic customers will receive an e-mail and/or text message; overseas customers will only receive an e-mail. Undeliverable e-Notifications cannot be resent. The e-mail or text message will display your receipt number and tell you how to get updated case status information. It will not include any personal information. The e-Notification does not grant any type of status or benefit; rather it is provided as a convenience to customers. USCIS will also mail you a receipt notice (I-797C), which you will receive within 10 days after your application has been accepted; use this notice as proof of your pending application or petition.		
<b>USCIS Privacy Act Statement</b>		
<b>AUTHORITIES:</b> The information requested on this form, and the associated evidence, is collected under the Immigration and Nationality Act, section 101, et seq. <b>PURPOSE:</b> The primary purpose for providing the requested information on this form is to determine if you have established eligibility for the immigration benefit for which you are filing. The information you provide will be used to grant or deny the benefit sought. <b>DISCLOSURE:</b> The information you provide is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information, and any requested evidence, may delay a final decision or result in denial of your form. <b>ROUTINE USES:</b> The information you provide on this form may be shared with other Federal, State, local, and foreign government agencies and authorized organizations following approved routine uses described in the associated published system of records notices [DHS-USCIS-007 - Benefits Information System and DHS-USCIS-001 - Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records, which can be found at <a href="http://www.dhs.gov/privacy">www.dhs.gov/privacy</a> ]. The information may also be made available, as appropriate, for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.		
<b>Paperwork Reduction Act</b>		
An agency may not conduct or sponsor an information collection and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 3 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing and submitting the form. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Regulatory Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20529-2140. OMB No. 1615-0109. <b>Do not mail your completed Form G-1145 to this address.</b>		
Complete this form and clip it on top of the first page of your immigration form(s).		
Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full First Name	Applicant/Petitioner Full Middle Name
E-mail Address	Mobile Phone Number (Text Message)	

## Mailing Address

If you live in:	Mail your application to:
Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands.	<p><b>USCIS Phoenix Lockbox</b> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For Express mail and courier deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>
Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, <b>Pennsylvania</b> , Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia	<p><b>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</b> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For Express mail and courier deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>



### EAD card (sample)



F-1 Students who are on Optional Practical Training (OPT) are responsible for reporting their local address, employer's name and address, and any periods of unemployment to the CIP. The CIP is **required** to report this information to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

Family/Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	WCUID
Field of Study	Email Address	Telephone Number	Date of Birth

Local U.S. Address:	
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Reporting Information for: _____ OPT    _____ STEM OPT		Company Name	
Dates of Employment Start: _____ End: _____		Company Address	
Job title	Employer EIN	_____ Full time (more than 20 hours per week) _____ Part time (less than 20 hours per week)	
Name of Supervisor		Supervisor's Email:	Phone:
Explain how employment is related to student's course of study			



West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Center for International Programs

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### Request for STEM OPT Extension I-20

#### **CIP Processing Timeline**

It will take the CIP approximately (5) business days to process your application. Please send all requested items together in ONE package as sending items separately or individually over fax may delay your application.

#### **OPT Extension Period**

The employment authorization period for the extension begins on the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT employment authorization. Mail this form and requested photocopies to:

**Center for International Programs Mailing Address**  
Center for International Programs  
675 S. Church Street, Mitchell Hall  
West Chester University of PA  
West Chester, PA 19383  
ATTN: OPT Extension

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING: To be signed by the STEM degree holder who is currently on a 12-month OPT period and applying for an OPT Extension.**

1. I have not previously received a STEM OPT extension after earning a STEM degree and my degree that is the basis for my current period of OPT is a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in one of the degree programs on the current STEM Designated Degree Program List, published on the SEVP website at [www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm](http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm)
2. My employer is registered in the E-Verify program, as evidenced by either a valid E-Verify company identification number or, if my employer is using a designated agent to perform the E-Verify queries, a valid E-Verify client company identification number. The employer is a participant in good standing in the E-Verify program.
3. My employer agrees to report the termination or departure of my OPT to the DSO at WCU or through any other means or process identified by DHS if the termination or departure is prior to the end of the authorized period of OPT. Such reporting must be made within 48 hours of the event. My employer shall consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows that I have left the employment or if I have not reported for work for a period of 5 consecutive business days without the consent of the employer, whichever occurs earlier.
4. I understand that the *duration of status* while on post-completion OPT is defined as the period beginning when my OPT Extension application was properly filed and pending approval, including the authorized period of post-completion OPT, and ending 60 days after the OPT employment authorization expires (allowing me to prepare for departure, change educational levels at the same school, or transfer to another institution).
5. I understand that during post-completion OPT my F-1 status is dependent upon employment. I may not accrue a total of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization. If I am granted an STEM OPT extension, I may not accrue a total of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total OPT period comprising any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization and the subsequent extension period.

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Student's Signature

Print Name

EAD Card #

Date

## USCIS STEM OPT Extension Application Checklist

*Items to be submitted to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)*

The Center for International Programs has updated your I-20 reflecting our support of your petition to file for STEM OPT Extension. It is your responsibility to complete the required application and submit it in a timely manner to USCIS. Your application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date that appears on item 10 on page 1 of the STEM OPT Extension I-20.

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### USCIS APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Assemble application materials in the order indicated below. Please paperclip check and passport photos on top.

- ☐ **Form G-1145:** Typed, not handwritten
- ☐ **Original, signed Form I-765:** Typed, not handwritten
  - At the top of the form, check the box: *Renewal of my permission to accept employment*
  - Item 11: Have you ever received an EAD card before? If yes, provide info for all previous EAD cards:
    - ◊ Which USCIS Office? California, Texas, Vermont or Nebraska Service Center
    - ◊ Dates: Dates of EAD card validity
    - ◊ Granted
  - Item 16: Eligibility category is (c) (3) (C) (small c, number 3, capital C)
  - Item 17: Degree is listed on page 1 of the I-20
  - Signature: Use black ink to sign between horizontal lines. Signature must not touch either line
- ☐ **Form I-983 – Training Plan for STEM OPT Students**
- ☐ **Photocopy** of STEM OPT Extension I-20 pages 1 and 3, signed at Line 11 with name, signature and date
- ☐ **Printout** of I-94 Arrival/Departure form (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>)
- ☐ **Photocopy** of passport page with photo, passport number and expiration date (must be valid for at least 6 months prior to application date)
- ☐ **Photocopy** of all previously issued EAD cards and OPT I-20's
- ☐ **\$410 check payable to:** U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Fees subject to change; please visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) or call USCIS National Customer Service at 1-800-375-5283 to verify filing fee)
- ☐ **Two (2) U.S. style passport photos:** Write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo
  - Passport photos must be 2" x 2" with proper facial dimensions of U.S. style passport photos taken within 30 days

☐ **Verification of graduation from WCU:** Provide an official or unofficial WCU transcript; or a copy of a WCU diploma showing degree earned and program of study

## West Chester University of Pennsylvania

### Center for International Programs

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## USCIS STEM OPT Extension Application Checklist

*Items to be submitted to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)*

### MAILING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make copies of the entire application for your records and mail by certified U.S. mail. Application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date that appears on page 1 at item 10 (reflected on the signature line of your I-20).
2. Mail application to the USCIS Lockbox for the state you currently live in:

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**If you currently live in:** Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

### Mail your application to:

#### For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS  
PO Box 660867  
Dallas, TX 75266

#### For Express Mail and Courier Deliveries:

USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business  
Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067

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**If you currently live in:** Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

### Mail your application to:

#### For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS  
PO Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036

#### For Express Mail and Courier Deliveries:

USCIS  
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

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### REPORT REQUIREMENTS WHILE ON OPT STEM EXTENSION

All students on OPT are required to report to the CIP within 10 days of any change of:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legal name</li><li>• Residential or mailing address</li><li>• Employer name</li><li>• Employer address</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of employment</li><li>• Any interruption of employment</li><li>• Change in degree level</li><li>• Transfer to another school</li></ul>
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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Students who file the STEM extension application in a timely manner will be able to continue employment until a final decision is made by USCIS or for 180 days, whichever is earlier.
- The CIP advises students not to travel until STEM Extension application is approved and a new EAD card has been received.

# NOTES