Optional Practical Training

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a work authorization granted to F-1 students for employment in their field of study (their major). Students generally use it for post-graduation employment. Processing is estimated at 2 – 4 months, though this depends on USCIS (Immigration).

Apply for OPT

- Attend OPT session
- Complete OPT checklist
- Make OPT appointment
- Mail OPT application

Make Appointment

- Schedule an appointment with Emily Bailey or Zabrina Williams. Appointments take ~30 minutes. Prior to your appointment, upload all checklist items in iStart.
- Appointments are held by phone or zoom.

OPT Checklist

All Applications:

- Submit Reves OPT Application e-form in iStart before your appointment. Upload OPT checklist items for review.
- Application for Employment Authorization (Form I-765), typed. Confirm form edition during your appointment and before mailing; may change due to a court case.
- e-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance (Form G-1145), typed.
- Check or money order for $410, made payable to US Department of Homeland Security, or Authorization for Credit Card Transactions Form (Form G-1450), typed. Confirm amount during your appointment and before mailing; may change due to a court case.
- 2 color passport style photos, sized 2 inches by 2 inches
- Printed I-94 record (“Get Most Recent I-94”). If you last traveled to the US before April 2013 or by land, this card is in your passport, and you should copy front and back, even if blank.
- Photocopy of passport identity page(s) showing your biographical info and expiration, valid 6 months in future

Some Applications:

- Previous EADs (work authorization card), copied front and back
- If you changed Status to F-1 within the US: Copy of the I-797 notice showing your change of status to F-1

STEM Extension Applications:

- Paper copy of your official W&M transcript (or other school’s transcript, if applicable), listing your degree
- Form I-983, completed by you and signed by your employer

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Ways to Pay for your OPT

Check

If you have a US checking account, you can typically request “starter checks” from your bank, if you do not have any. Example:

![Check Example]

Money Order

You can purchase a money order at the US Postal Office (425 N. Boundary St.), a local bank, many grocery stores or other stores such as Walmart. There is usually a small fee to purchase the money order. See instructions on how to fill out a money order.

Credit/Debit Card

If you wish to pay by credit or debit card, download the Authorization for Credit Card Transactions form (Form G-1450) from the USCIS website, and put it as your top form when mailing your packet to Immigration. Type and sign this form. International credit cards have been rejected in the past; we recommend paying with a US credit or debit card.
Photo Recommendations

- Sized 2 inches by 2 inches
- Photo should have **full head** from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1-3/8 inches (25 mm to 35 mm).
- **Head centered** within frame (see example below).
- **Eye height** should be between 1-1/8 inches to 1-3/8 inches (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo.
- Plain white or off-white background.
- No **distracting shadows** on the face or background
- Full face, front view, eyes open.
- **Natural expression, without teeth showing.**

![Photo Composition](image)

More Tips:
- Check photos to make sure they follow the guidelines. Sometimes the background comes out too dark.
- Plain dark clothes usually produce better photos.
- If you are wearing glasses, it is best to take them off for the photos.
- Make sure that your ears are visible.
- Your head must be bare, unless you are wearing religious headwear.
- Some additional tips are available from the [State Department](https://state.gov).

Where can I get photos taken?
- **AAA Williamsburg** - 6517 Richmond Rd., 757-965-2229
  Free for AAA members. Typically produces high quality photos that typically the guidelines.
- **Local pharmacies, such as CVS or Walgreens; Walmart; the Post Office, and other locations.**
Reves Center Recommendations for Form (I-765) for OPT

We recommend that you type your answers on the PDF version of the I-765 form, save a copy, and then print and sign.

**Part 1. Reason for Applying**

1. **I am applying for:** a) For post-graduate OPT application, check “Initial permission to accept employment.” b) For OPT STEM Extension, check “Renewal of my permission to accept employment.”

**Part 2. Information About You**

1. **Your Full Legal Name:** As it appears in your passport.
2. **Other Names Used:** All other current or previous names, including nicknames.
5. **Your U.S. Mailing Address:** Your mailing address. The post office cannot forward immigration mail, so if you use your address and move, you must change addresses on the USCIS website.

You may need to sign for your OPT card (EAD) when it’s delivered. If it’s possible someone else may sign for your EAD (such as a friend, family member, or roommate), you should complete a Standing Delivery Form (Form 3801) and bring it to your local Post Office.

**In Care Of Name:** If you are mailing to a friend, their name.

6. **Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?** If mailing to a friend, say “no” and list your current address for #7.
7. **U.S. Physical Address.** Necessary if you list a mailing address where you do not live.
8. **Alien Registration Number.** If you did OPT previously, this is typically listed on your OPT card as your USCIS #.
13. – 17. **Social Security Number:** Here you must answer questions about your Social Security card, or if you do not have one and would like one, information related to that. SSNs may arrive after your OPT card, and sometimes do not arrive at all. If you would not like one, answer 13-14, and skip 15-17.

21. **I-94 number (if any):** Your I-94 number is the 11 digit number printed on your I-94 card in your passport (if you last entered the US in 2013 or earlier, or if you entered through a land border) or online record (available at “Already Visiting and Need Proof”).

22. **Date of Your Last Arrival:** The date when you last entered the U.S, usually date stamped on your passport, or listed in your I-94 record.

23. **Place of Your Last Arrival:** Airport or land border where you entered the U.S. and the immigration officer stamped your passport.

24. **Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival:** If you entered the U.S. in another status (e.g., F-2), then applied to change your status to F-1, enter the previous status here. Otherwise, enter F-1 student.
25. **Your Current Immigration Status or Category:** F-1 Student

26. **SEVIS Number:** Listed on your I-20, in the upper right corner, beginning with “N”.

27. **Eligibility Category.** For post-graduate OPT, enter \((c)\) \((3)\) \((B)\). For OPT STEM Extension, enter \((c)\) \((3)\) \((C)\).

28. **\((c)\) \((3)\) \((C)\) STEM OPT Eligibility Category:** Complete this only if you are applying for OPT STEM Extension. If you are, enter the “CIP” code (a six digit number) and SEVIS degree name as it appears on your I-20. This information is found under your major listed on the first page of your I-20. (Example: Physics, 40.0801).

   **Employer’s Name as listed in E-Verify & E-Verify Company Number:** Your employer should be able to provide you with this information.

29. - 32. Leave blank. These questions apply to other work authorization types, not OPT.

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**Part 3. Applicant’s Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification, and Signature**

1. Check 1a if appropriate
2. – 4. Your Phone Number(s)
3. Your Email
4. Sign and Date.

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**Part 4. Interpreter’s Contact Information, Certification, and Signature**

Leave blank, unless you used an interpreter.

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**Part 5. Contact Information, Declaration, and Signature of the Person Preparing this Application, If Other Than the Applicant**

Leave blank, unless someone else prepared this form.

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**Part 6. Additional Information**

Enter information about any previous CPT or OPT you have done, or any previous SEVIS records you have had, such as if you attended another university.

- Complete your name (1a -1c)
- For CPT:
  - Suggested format:
    - Items a – c: Page 3, Part 2, Item 27.
    - Item d: CPT Authorizations. (as a title to the section).
    - Employer Name; Part time or Full time; SEVIS ID; Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelors, Masters, or PhD). You can find your CPT details on page 2 of your CPT I-20.
- For OPT:
  - Suggested format:
    - Items a – c: Page 3, Part 2, Item 27.
    - Item d: OPT Authorizations. (as a title to the section).
    - Part time or Full time; SEVIS ID; Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelors, Masters, or PhD)
- Previous SEVIS IDs:
  - Suggested format:
    - Item d: Previous SEVIS IDs (as a title to the section). SEVIS ID: N00...
    - Program start date – end date (from your I-20); Degree level (Bachelors, Masters, PhD).
**All Postal Service deliveries (USPS, Post Office):**

USCIS  
PO Box 805373  
Chicago, IL 60680

**Express mail and courier deliveries (UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc):**

USCIS  
Attn: I-765 C03  
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor  
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

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**Applicant:** ____________________________________________  
Last Name, First Name  
SEVIS ID Number

**Note:** The OPT application must reach USCIS no later than 30 days after the OPT I-20 is printed.

For the I-765 application for Optional Practical Training for the above listed applicant, the following documents have been enclosed:

- Payment (Check or money order in the amount of $410, made payable to Dept. of Homeland Security or Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions Form)
- Two 2”x2” color photos, with a full face, front view
- Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance
- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization
- Copy of the I-20 issued recommending OPT
- Copy of the applicant’s I-94 record
- Copy of the bio page of the applicant’s passport
- If applicable: Copy of any CPT I-20s, or I-20s with previous SEVIS IDs
- If applicable: A copy of any previous EADs
- If applicable: A copy of the change of status to F-1 approval notice
- If applicable: A copy of the transcript for the degree (STEM extensions only)