



Post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) is defined in the F-1 regulations as “temporary employment authorization for practical training directly related to a student’s major field of study.” Standard OPT is available for a cumulative maximum of 12 months of employment authorization per higher degree level completed in the U.S.

- **Pre-Completion OPT:** Off-campus work authorization *during* a student’s degree program. Most CU students participate in [Curricular Practical Training](#) work authorization during their degree program instead of pre-completion OPT.
- **Post-Completion OPT:** Off-campus work authorization *after* completion of all degree requirements or *after* completion of all coursework (excluding thesis or dissertation credits). This packet focuses on post-completion OPT work authorization.

An [extension of OPT](#) is available for students who have earned certain qualifying [STEM degrees](#) and whose employer is enrolled in the USCIS [E-Verify program](#). This packet reviews information related to post-completion OPT and does not address the [STEM Extension](#) of OPT.

Below is information that will guide you through each step of the OPT application and authorization process.

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION TO OPT

This section will review eligibility requirements, the application timeline, and the OPT start date. Students will better understand the general OPT process after reading this section.

How do I know if I am eligible for OPT?

In order to be eligible to apply for OPT, you must:

- Currently be in the U.S. in valid F-1 status;
- Have a valid passport and I-94 record indicating F-1 and D/S (duration of status);
- Have been continuously enrolled full-time for at least one full academic year (fall and spring semester) before your requested OPT start date;
- Be enrolled full-time at CU Boulder (or an authorized equivalent) with an on-campus presence in the semester in which you apply for OPT;
- Have not completed more than 365 days of full-time CPT at the current degree level or a higher degree level;
- Have not previously completed a higher degree level in the U.S.;
- Have not previously been approved for 12 months of OPT at the current degree level or a higher degree level; AND
- Only pursue employment directly related to your major field of study.



Please note: You must be registered for credits that require on-campus presence in your final semester. [Temporarily waived: See ISSS COVID-19 Maintaining Immigration Status.](#)

When can I apply for OPT?

You are eligible to apply for post-completion OPT after you have completed all degree requirements or after completion of all coursework (excluding thesis or dissertation credits). The first day that you can apply for OPT is 90 days before your last day of enrollment in your final semester. The last day you can apply is 60 days after your last day of enrollment. Do not delay and plan ahead! If you want to apply for OPT, we recommend applying early to increase your chances of getting approved for your requested start date.

- For students graduating in the Fall 2020 semester, your last day of enrollment is December 13, 2020. The first day you can apply for OPT is September 14, 2020. The last day that USCIS can receive your materials to apply for OPT is February 11, 2021.
- For students graduating in the Spring 2021 semester, your last day of enrollment is May 5, 2021. The first day you can apply for OPT is February 4, 2021. The last day that USCIS can receive your materials to apply for OPT is July 4, 2021. Since July 4th is a holiday and a weekend, USCIS needs to receive your materials on or before July 2, 2021.
- For students graduating in the Fall 2021 semester, your last day of enrollment is December 15, 2021. The first day you can apply for OPT is September 16, 2021. The last day that USCIS can receive your materials to apply for OPT is February 13, 2022.

Do I need to have a job before I apply for OPT?

No. When you apply for OPT, you are requesting authorization to work in a job directly related to your major field of study during a 12-month period. You will choose your requested start and end dates when you apply for OPT. You are not required to have a job offer before applying for OPT. If USCIS approves your request for OPT authorization, they will tell you exactly what dates your OPT starts and ends. You can accrue 90 days of unemployment while in your authorized period of OPT. This means that you must begin working (and report that work in the SEVP Portal) within 90 days of your approved OPT start date.

How do I choose my requested start date for OPT?

Your OPT requested start date must be within 60 days of your F-1 program end date. Please note that when you apply for OPT, ISSS will shorten your F-1 program end date



to your last date of enrollment (if necessary). For the fall and spring semesters, the last day of enrollment is the last date of exams listed on the CU Boulder [academic calendar](#).

Students graduating in Fall 2020 can choose a start date that is anywhere between: December 14, 2020 and February 11, 2021.

Students graduating in Spring 2021 can choose a start date that is anywhere between: May 6, 2021 and July 4, 2021.

Students graduating in Fall 2021 can choose a start date that is anywhere between: December 16, 2021 and February 13, 2022.



SECTION 2 APPLYING FOR OPT

This section provides a material guide to applying for OPT. Included in this section are detailed instructions, a list of documents and materials that you need to compile, and information about what happens after you fill out the OPT I-20 Request Form. ISSS has a list of OPT resources on the right-hand side of the [OPT website](#). Please check out these resources and allow us to highlight the ISSS OPT Application Presentation as a valuable resource.

How do I apply for OPT?

Complete the [OPT I-20 Request Form](#) and upload all of the required documentation for the request. We will review that documentation below.

- You will have to enter your academic advisor's name and email address on the DocuSign form. Once you complete your section of the form, it will *automatically* be emailed to your advisor based on the information you have provided.
- After your academic advisor completes their section of the form, it will automatically be emailed to ISSS for processing. You will receive a copy of the request when ISSS is reviewing it. After ISSS receives your request form, please allow 2-5 business days for processing.

What happens while ISSS is reviewing my OPT I-20 Request Form and attached materials?

- ISSS will review your application materials and email you if any questions arise.
- ISSS will shorten your I-20 program end date based on your last date of enrollment (if necessary). Sometimes, a student's I-20 program end date already matches the last date of enrollment.
- ISSS will issue you an I-20, sign it, and email it to you. You must sign this I-20 by hand and include a copy of it in your application that you mail to USCIS.
- Please note that ISSS only *REQUESTS* that your OPT application be approved; the final decision is made by USCIS.

What materials do I need to provide with my OPT application materials?

Submit the following documents to ISSS via the [OPT I-20 Request Form](#). *Color copies* are recommended:



- **Form I-765:** Type information into the form, print, and sign in *black* ink. Please review the I-765 instructions in section 3 of this packet.
- **Current I-94 Record**
- **Electronic I-94:** Download a copy from the [Customs and Border Protection I-94 website](#).
- **Paper I-94 Card:** Include photocopies of the front and back of your I-94 card
- Clear (color) copy of your valid passport ID page(s) and any renewal, extension, amendment, or correction pages
- Clear (color) copy of most recent U.S. entry visa or change of status I-797 approval notice. Exception: Canadians

Required for the Application to USCIS but optional to upload in the OPT I-20 Request that ISSS reviews:

- Application Fee (Pay by Check, Money Order, or Credit Card): \$410 filing fee
 - **If you choose to pay with a Credit Card:** Submit the [Form G-1450](#) to authorize a credit card payment. USCIS accepts: Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover.
 - **If you choose to pay with a Personal Check/Money Order Payment:** Make payable to “*U.S. Department of Homeland Security*”
 - Do NOT abbreviate name to DHS or USDHS; Sign and date the check (month/day/year) on the front of the check (do not sign the back of the check); On the memo line, indicate—OPT and your I-94 number
- [Form G-1145](#) (optional, but recommended): Place this form on the top of your application if you would like to receive an email/text message when USCIS accepts your application at the Lockbox
- Clear copies of the front and back of any Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) issued previously by USCIS. You would only have this if you had a previous work authorization adjudicated by USCIS (OPT, STEM OPT, Severe Economic Hardship).
- Photocopies of the I-20 ISSS issues with the OPT recommendation and any previous I-20s from a different SEVIS ID than you have now (if applicable).
- Two identical color U.S.-style passport photographs taken within the last 30 days
 - 2” x 2” on plain white or off-white background in accordance with [Department of State photo requirements](#). You cannot be wearing glasses, hats, or head coverings unless a personal or doctor’s statement is submitted.
 - Do not cut, trim, or otherwise alter the photos.
 - Do not reuse old photos or photos used in passport/visa applications.
 - If USCIS requests new photos, it will delay OPT application processing.
 - Gently write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo in case they are separated from the application.



SECTION 3

I-765 INSTRUCTIONS & SAMPLE

This section contains an in-depth guide to the Form I-765. It is your responsibility as the F-1 applicant to ensure that you have filled out your I-765 correctly. ISSS will review your I-765 for completeness, not accuracy. Included in this section is also an example of a completed I-765.

What resources should I reference while filling out my I-765?

- Please review the I-765 instructions on the [USCIS website](#) and prepare a complete OPT application.
- Below are I-765 instructions written by ISSS.
- Below is a sample I-765. Please note that this is one example. Student circumstances may differ and require different answers. Please be sure to review the USCIS I-765 instructions, read the I-765 carefully, and reach out to ISSS if you are still unsure.

ISSS I-765 INSTRUCTIONS

Do not leave any questions blank unless the form specifically says you do not need to answer the question. Otherwise if a question does not apply to you, write "N/A" or "NONE"

- Mark "Initial permission to accept employment" as the reason for completing the form
- Item 1: Enter your full legal name in the applicable boxes. See Part 6 if you require more space to enter your name.
- Item 5: Utilize an address you will continue to receive mail at for at least 120-150 days
 - Do not use the ISSS office address
 - If you move, update your address with [USCIS Online Change of Address System](#)
 - 5.a.: If your name is not on the lease or you do not live at the mailing address you are providing, enter the name of the official person living at this address
- Items 7.a.-7.d.: If you selected "Yes" to Item 6, you can leave this section blank. If you selected "No" to Item 6, complete all of Item 7 with your current physical address
- Items 8-9: Write "NONE"
- Item 13.a: Enter "Yes" if you have been issued a SSN and include it in 13.b.
Enter "No" if you need to apply for a SSN and complete 14-17.b.
- Item 21.a: Enter your complete I-94 number



- Electronic I-94—Enter the Admission (I-94) Record Number from your [electronic I-94](#)
- Paper I-94—Enter the complete number found on the upper left corner of your paper I-94 card
- Item 21.c: If you entered your passport number in 21.b, leave 21.c blank.
- Item 22: Enter the date of your last entry to the U.S. This will most likely be the date indicated on your I-94 unless you traveled to Canada, Mexico, or an adjacent island for less than 30 days and did not obtain a new I-94.
- Item 23: Enter the city where you last passed through U.S. Customs.
 - Unless you utilized the automatic visa revalidation program or completed preclearance outside the U.S., it should be the port of entry indicated in your [electronic I-94 travel history](#).
- Item 26: Enter your SEVIS number that is located on your Form I-20 (starts with N00...)
- Item 27: Enter the appropriate eligibility category based on the information below:
 - (c) (3) (A)– Pre-completion OPT: Requested employment start day is prior to degree completion
 - (c) (3) (B)– Post-Completion OPT: Requested employment start date is after degree completion or after all course requirements with thesis/dissertation remaining
- Items 28-31.b.: You can leave all of these fields blank as they do not apply to pre and post-completion OPT applications.
- Part 3, 7.a: Sign (original black ink signature—try to stay within the box) and date.
- Part 4: Write N/A in all blanks unless you used an interpreter to complete the I-765
- Part 5: Write N/A in all blanks unless someone else prepared your I-765 (e.g. immigration attorney).
- Part 6, Items 1.a.-1.c.: Fill out your name
- Part 6, Item 2: Write “NONE”
- Part 6, Items 3.a. onward: *complete this section IF:*
 - You have been approved for CPT in the past
 - You have been approved for OPT in the past
 - You have used a different SEVIS ID in F-1 status in the U.S.



- Your SEVIS ID can be found in the top right corner of your I-20. It starts with N00...
 - Example: You attended school in the U.S., left the U.S. to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20. Your SEVIS ID from your initial attendance is different than your current SEVIS ID.
- You need extra space to provide any other additional information that would not fit on the previous pages of the I-765
- For each of the items listed above, complete one box in Part 6.
- It is recommended that you use Page 3, Part 2, Item 27 for each box that refers to previous CPT, OPT, or a different SEVIS number, as this information is required specific to Category (c)(3)(B) per the [I-765 instructions](#), page 4.
 - CPT: Please list your CPT approvals. We suggest this format: CPT Authorizations (as a title to the section). Part-time / Full-time; start date-end date; degree level (bachelor's, master's, or PhD); major including CIP code; employer name. You can find your CPT details on the I-20 that was approved for each period of CPT. Please also include a copy of each CPT approval I-20 with your application.
 - OPT: Please list your past OPT approvals. We suggest this format. OPT Authorizations (as a title to the section). Type of OPT (pre-completion, post-completion, or STEM extension); start date-end date; degree level (bachelor's, master's, or PhD); major including CIP code. Please also include a copy of each OPT approval I-20 with your application.
 - Previous SEVIS ID's: Please list the other SEVIS ID's you have used in the past. We suggest this format: Previous SEVIS ID's (as a title to the section). SEVIS ID: N00...; program start date-program end date; degree level (bachelor's, master's, or PhD). Please also include a copy of a previous I-20 for each different SEVIS number you have had.



Application For Employment Authorization

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

USCIS
Form I-765
OMB No. 1615-0040
Expires 07/31/2022

For USCIS Use Only	<input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From	Fee Stamp	Action Block
	<input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid Through		
	Alien Registration Number A-		
	Remarks		

To be completed by an attorney or Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)-accredited representative (if any).	<input type="checkbox"/> Select this box if Form G-28 is attached.	Attorney or Accredited Representative USCIS Online Account Number (if any) <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
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▶ **START HERE - Type or print in black ink.** Answer all questions fully and accurately. If a question does not apply to you (for example, if you have never been married and the question asks, "Provide the name of your current spouse"), type or print "N/A" unless otherwise directed. If your answer to a question which requires a numeric response is zero or none (for example, "How many children do you have" or "How many times have you departed the United States"), type or print "None" unless otherwise directed.

Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select **only one** box):

- 1.a. Initial permission to accept employment.
- 1.b. Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of my employment authorization document **NOT DUE** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) error.
- NOTE:** Replacement (correction) of an employment authorization document due to USCIS error does not require a new Form I-765 and filing fee. Refer to **Replacement for Card Error** in the **What is the Filing Fee** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for further details.
- 1.c. Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

Part 2. Information About You

Your Full Legal Name

- 1.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 1.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 1.c. Middle Name

Other Names Used

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in **Part 6**.

Additional Information.

- 2.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 2.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 2.c. Middle Name
-
- 3.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 3.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 3.c. Middle Name
-
- 4.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 4.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 4.c. Middle Name



Part 2. Information About You (continued)**Your U.S. Mailing Address** ([USPS ZIP Code Lookup](#))

- 5.a. In Care Of Name (if any)
- 5.b. Street Number and Name
- 5.c. Apt. Ste. Flr.
- 5.d. City or Town
- 5.e. State 5.f. ZIP Code
6. Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 6.**, provide your physical address below.

U.S. Physical Address

- 7.a. Street Number and Name
- 7.b. Apt. Ste. Flr.
- 7.c. City or Town
- 7.d. State 7.e. ZIP Code

Other Information

8. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)
▶ A-
9. USCIS Online Account Number (if any)
▶
10. Gender Male Female
11. Marital Status
 Single Married Divorced Widowed
12. Have you previously filed Form I-765?
 Yes No
- 13.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 13.a.**, skip to **Item Number 14.** If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 13.a.**, provide the information requested in **Item Number 13.b.**

- 13.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known).
▶

14. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**, **Consent for Disclosure**, to receive a card.)
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to **Item Number 14.**, skip to **Part 2., Item Number 18.a.** If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 14.**, you must also answer "Yes" to **Item Number 15.**

15. **Consent for Disclosure:** I authorize disclosure of information from this application to the SSA as required for the purpose of assigning me an SSN and issuing me a Social Security card.
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Numbers 14. - 15.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 16.a. - 17.b.**

Father's Name

Provide your father's birth name.

- 16.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 16.b. Given Name (First Name)

Mother's Name

Provide your mother's birth name.

- 17.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 17.b. Given Name (First Name)

Your Country or Countries of Citizenship or Nationality

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national. If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information.**

- 18.a. Country
- 18.b. Country



Part 2. Information About You (continued)**Place of Birth**

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.

19.a. City/Town/Village of Birth

Budapest

19.b. State/Province of Birth

Pest

19.c. Country of Birth

Hungary

20. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

02/14/1990

Information About Your Last Arrival in the United States

21.a. Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)

▶ 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 9

21.b. Passport Number of Your Most Recently Issued Passport

1A2B3456

21.c. Travel Document Number (if any)

N/A

21.d. Country That Issued Your Passport or Travel Document

Hungary

21.e. Expiration Date for Passport or Travel Document (mm/dd/yyyy)

12/06/2026

22. Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)

08/10/2020

23. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States

Chicago (ORD)

24. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)

F-1 Student

25. Your Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, parolee, deferred action, or no status or category)

F-1 Student

26. Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)

▶ N- 0001234456

Information About Your Eligibility Category

27. **Eligibility Category.** Refer to the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions to determine the appropriate eligibility category for this application. Enter the appropriate letter and number for your eligibility category below (for example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii)).

(C) (3) (B)

28. **(c)(3)(C) STEM OPT Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 28.a. - 28.c.**

28.a. Degree

28.b. Employer's Name as Listed in E-Verify

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

29. **(c)(26) Eligibility Category.** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the receipt number of your H-1B spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice for Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker.

30. **(c)(8) Eligibility Category** If you entered the eligibility category (c)(8) in **Item Number 27.**, provide the information requested in **Item Numbers 30.a. - 30.g.**

30.a. Have you **EVER** been arrested for, and/or charged with, and/or convicted of any crime in any country?

Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 30.a.**, refer to **Special Filing Instructions for Those With Pending Asylum Applications (c)(8)** of the Form I-765 Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

30.b. Did you enter the United States lawfully through a U.S. port of entry and were you inspected and admitted or paroled after inspection by an immigration officer? (If you answer "Yes," you **MUST** provide evidence of your lawful entry.)

Yes No

30.c. If you answered "No" to **Item Number 30.b.**, did you present yourself to the Secretary of Homeland Security or his or her delegate (DHS) within 48 hours of entry or attempted entry **AND** express an intention to seek asylum within the United States or express a fear of persecution or torture in your home country?

Yes No



Part 2. Information About You (continued)

If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 30.c.**, provide the following information:

30.d. Date you presented yourself to DHS

30.e. Location where you presented yourself to DHS

30.f. Country of claimed persecution

30.g. Provide an explanation for why you did not enter the United States lawfully through a U.S. port of entry. If you need extra space to complete this item, use the space provided in **Part 6. Additional Information.**

NOTE: Refer to the **Special Filing Instructions for Those With Pending Asylum Applications** (c)(8) section of the Form I-765 Instructions for more information.

31.a. (c)(35) and (c)(36) Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(35) in **Item Number 27.**, please provide the receipt number of your Form I-797 Notice for Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(36) in **Item Number 27.**, please provide the receipt number of your spouse's or parent's Form I-797 Notice for Form I-140.

▶

31.b. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(35) or (c)(36) in **Item Number 27.**, have you **EVER** been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime? Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to **Item Number 31.b.**, refer to **Employment-Based Nonimmigrant Categories, Items 8. - 9.**, in the **Who May File Form I-765** section of the Form I-765 Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

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

NOTE: Read the **Penalties** section of the Form I-765 Instructions before completing this section. You must file Form I-765 while in the United States.

Applicant's Statement

NOTE: Select the box for either **Item Number 1.a.** or **1.b.** If applicable, select the box for **Item Number 2.**

- 1.a.** I can read and understand English, and I have read and understand every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question.
- 1.b.** The interpreter named in **Part 4.** read to me every question and instruction on this application and my answer to every question in , a language in which I am fluent, and I understood everything.
- 2.** At my request, the preparer named in **Part 5.**, , prepared this application for me based only upon information I provided or authorized.

Applicant's Contact Information

- 3.** Applicant's Daytime Telephone Number
- 4.** Applicant's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)
- 5.** Applicant's Email Address (if any)
- 6.** Select this box if you are a Salvadoran or Guatemalan national eligible for benefits under the ABC settlement agreement.

Applicant's Declaration and Certification

Copies of any documents I have submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered, original documents, and I understand that USCIS may require that I submit original documents to USCIS at a later date. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information from any and all of my records that USCIS may need to determine my eligibility for the immigration benefit that I seek.

I furthermore authorize release of information contained in this application, in supporting documents, and in my USCIS records, to other entities and persons where necessary for the administration and enforcement of U.S. immigration law.



Part 3. Applicant's Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification, and Signature (continued)

I understand that USCIS may require me to appear for an appointment to take my biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) and, at that time, if I am required to provide biometrics, I will be required to sign an oath reaffirming that:

- 1) I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application; and
- 2) All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in my application and any document submitted with it were provided or authorized by me, that I reviewed and understand all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct.

Applicant's Signature

7.a. Applicant's Signature

➔

7.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

NOTE TO ALL APPLICANTS: If you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents listed in the Instructions, USCIS may deny your application.

Part 4. Interpreter's Contact Information, Certification, and Signature

Provide the following information about the interpreter.

Interpreter's Full Name

1.a. Interpreter's Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Interpreter's Given Name (First Name)

2. Interpreter's Business or Organization Name (if any)

Part 4. Interpreter's Contact Information, Certification, and Signature

Interpreter's Mailing Address

3.a. Street Number and Name

3.b. Apt. Ste. Flr.

3.c. City or Town

3.d. State 3.e. ZIP Code

3.f. Province

3.g. Postal Code

3.h. Country

Interpreter's Contact Information

4. Interpreter's Daytime Telephone Number

5. Interpreter's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)

6. Interpreter's Email Address (if any)

Interpreter's Certification

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that:

I am fluent in English and , which is the same language specified in **Part 3., Item Number 1.b.**, and I have read to this applicant in the identified language every question and instruction on this application and his or her answer to every question. The applicant informed me that he or she understands every instruction, question, and answer on the application, including the **Applicant's Declaration and Certification**, and has verified the accuracy of every answer.

Interpreter's Signature

7.a. Interpreter's Signature

7.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)



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

Provide the following information about the preparer.

Preparer's Full Name

1.a. Preparer's Family Name (Last Name)

N/A

1.b. Preparer's Given Name (First Name)

N/A

2. Preparer's Business or Organization Name (if any)

N/A

Preparer's Mailing Address

3.a. Street Number and Name

N/A

3.b. Apt. Ste. Flr.

N/A

3.c. City or Town

N/A

3.d. State



3.e. ZIP Code

N/A

3.f. Province

N/A

3.g. Postal Code

N/A

3.h. Country

N/A

Preparer's Contact Information

4. Preparer's Daytime Telephone Number

N/A

5. Preparer's Mobile Telephone Number (if any)

N/A

6. Preparer's Email Address (if any)

N/A

Preparer's Statement

- 7.a. I am not an attorney or accredited representative but have prepared this application on behalf of the applicant and with the applicant's consent.
- 7.b. I am an attorney or accredited representative and my representation of the applicant in this case extends does not extend beyond the preparation of this application.

NOTE: If you are an attorney or accredited representative, you need to submit a completed Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, with this application.

Preparer's Certification

By my signature, I certify, under penalty of perjury, that I prepared this application at the request of the applicant. The applicant then reviewed this completed application and informed me that he or she understands all of the information contained in, and submitted with, his or her application, including the **Applicant's Declaration and Certification**, and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct. I completed this application based only on information that the applicant provided to me or authorized me to obtain or use.

Preparer's Signature

8.a. Preparer's Signature

8.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)



Part 6. Additional Information

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)
1.b. Given Name (First Name)
1.c. Middle Name
2. A-Number (if any) ▶ A-

3.a. Page Number 3.b. Part Number 3.c. Item Number

3.d. OPT
Post-Completion OPT:
06/06/2015-06/05/2016, Master's level, 11.0701 - Computer Science
STEM Extension OPT:
06/06/2016-06/05/2018, Master's level, 11.0701 - Computer Science

4.a. Page Number 4.b. Part Number 4.c. Item Number

4.d. CPT
Part-time CPT: 01/15/2019-05/05/2019, PhD level, 11.0701 - Computer Science
Full-time CPT: 06/01/2019-08/10/2019, PhD level, 11.0701 - Computer Science

5.a. Page Number 5.b. Part Number 5.c. Item Number

5.d. Previous SEVIS Number
SEVIS Number: N0027586901
Program Dates: 08/16/2008-05/05/2012
Degree Level: Bachelor's

6.a. Page Number 6.b. Part Number 6.c. Item Number

6.d.

7.a. Page Number 7.b. Part Number 7.c. Item Number

7.d.





SECTION 4

MAILING YOUR OPT APPLICATION

This section provides instructions for mailing your complete OPT application materials to USCIS.

ISSS has issued me an I-20 recommending OPT. Now what do I do?

- Make any edits that ISSS has recommended to your OPT application materials and review all your materials completely.
- Compile all the USCIS application materials that were listed in section 3 of this packet. Ensure they are complete, accurate, and all forms signed by hand with black ink.
- Mail your complete application to USCIS (see below for instructions)

Is there anything I should be aware of while I work on mailing my materials to USCIS?

- You **MUST** submit your application to USCIS while you are still in the United States. You are not eligible to apply for OPT if you have already graduated and have left the United States.
- USCIS must *receive* your complete OPT application within 30 days of the date ISSS enters the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record. This means that you should not delay mailing your complete application to USCIS once you receive the I-20 recommending OPT.
- You must have your EAD in your possession before beginning work.

• When can I start working?

- Take note of your new OPT request I-20 program end date (see “Program of Study” section on p. 1 of your I-20). It reflects the semester you complete all academic program requirements.
- You are **NOT** eligible to work on-campus (e.g., assistantship, hourly job) or off-campus (e.g., CPT, economic hardship) after the I-20 program end date on your OPT request I-20 unless you meet **ALL** of the following criteria:
 - You have received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD/OPT card)—*it is in your hands*;
 - It is within the OPT employment authorization period noted on the EAD card; and
 - You are working in a job *directly* related to your major field of study as noted on your OPT request I-20.
 - You have successfully completed all coursework for your degree.

Please note: If you do not complete your degree coursework by your I-20 end date as expected, please contact ISSS immediately to discuss your options.



Where do I mail my complete application?

It is your responsibility to mail all of the required OPT application materials to the USCIS Lockbox or Service Center that processes applications for your eligibility category and place of residence.

- The address depends on the mailing service you choose to use to mail the application
- ISSS recommends that you use a mailing service that provides detailed tracking information (FedEx, UPS, or DHL). You can also use the U.S. Postal Service.
- I-765 filing addresses are available the [USCIS website](#).
- Remember that USCIS must receive your OPT application within 30 days of the date ISSS enters the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record, and no later than 60 days after the program end date indicated in the "Program of Study" section of p. 1 on the I-20 with your OPT request (*whichever occurs first*).

How long will it take USCIS to process my OPT application?

You can check USCIS's OPT processing time by going to their [processing times website](#) selecting "I-765 Application for Employment Authorization" under "Form" and "Potomac Service Center" under "Field Office or Service Center". There you will be able to see their estimated time range for processing OPT applications. Generally speaking, it takes 2 – 5 months for OPT applications to be adjudicated by USCIS.



SECTION 5

WHILE YOUR OPT APPLICATION IS PENDING

This section provides an overview of what to expect while your OPT application is pending. Included is a checklist of what to be watching for, reminders, and travel information.

I mailed my OPT application materials to USCIS. What should I do while I wait?

- Pay attention to receipt notices, mail, and notifications from USCIS
- ISSS shortened your I-20 program end date based on your assertion that you will complete your coursework by this date. If you do not complete your degree coursework or your plans otherwise change, please let ISSS know immediately.
- Contact ISSS if your OPT application is rejected, denied, or if you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE).
- If you move from the U.S. address you entered in item 3 of the I-765 or are no longer receiving mail there and have not yet received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card), you must update your address information in the [USCIS Online Change of Address System](#).
- If you have questions about your case or status of your application, please use the [USCIS online tools](#) or call the National Customer Service Number (800-375-5283). To check your case status online, [click here](#). On that webpage, you can create a free account which will allow you to view your case status, history, and easily save your receipt numbers. You will also receive electronic case updates.
- Wait for your EAD card to arrive by mail. You must have your EAD card in hand to begin working.

Can I leave the United States while my OPT application is pending?

You can depart the U.S. with a pending OPT application. Be sure you have your OPT I-20 with a valid travel signature, active visa and your Receipt Notice from USCIS that shows you have applied for OPT.

There are a few things to be aware of if traveling with a pending OPT application:

- If your OPT application is denied while you are outside of the U.S., you cannot re-enter the US in F-1 status to re-apply for OPT. It may be possible to re-enter the US in another visa category (for example, ESTA or tourist visa), but you would no longer be eligible for OPT.
- If additional information is needed for your OPT application, USCIS would mail you a request for evidence (RFE). If you receive an RFE you would need to respond in a certain amount of time and you may have difficulty responding to any request(s)



for evidence from USCIS while you are outside of the U.S. which could result in an OPT denial.

- Future travel restrictions could impede your ability to return to the U.S.; travel restrictions may change at a moment's notice. You will need to carefully consult both the airline and the travel restrictions for the country to which you will be returning to the U.S. from.

If your OPT is approved while you're abroad, you should have your EAD card with you on your return. Please review the [International Student Travel FAQ for students on OPT.](#)



SECTION 6

OPT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This section reviews your reporting requirements while on an approved period of OPT. Also included in this section is information about the SEVP Portal, information about unemployment, travel, extension options, and more.

What is the SEVP Portal?

The SEVP Portal allows F-1 students to monitor their employment authorization and update their address, telephone, and employer information in order to meet regulatory reporting requirements.

An F-1 student who has been approved for OPT and is in the employment authorization period will receive an email from do-not-reply.SEVP@ice.dhs.gov with information about creating a [SEVP Portal account](#). Please add do-not-reply.SEVP@ice.dhs.gov to your trusted sender list. Monitor all your active email accounts including your junk/spam folder for the SEVP email. The SEVP email will most likely be sent to your colorado.edu email account but may be sent to an alternate account if you provided the email address to ISSS as your primary email account. If you do not receive the SEVP email and are in an approved period of OPT, please contact [ISSS](#). Please review the [SEVP Help Hub](#) for additional resources (e.g., user guide, instructional videos).

What am I required to report while I'm on an authorized period of OPT?

While authorized for OPT, you are still in F-1 status. Immigration regulations require you to report certain changes including changes in employment status, employer, address, name, citizenship, contact information, within 10 days of the change.

- When you start your first job on OPT, you need to enter that employment into the [SEVP Portal](#) to stop your unemployment days from accruing.
- You also need to complete the [OPT Employment Relevance Statement Form](#) that will be reviewed by ISSS. You should indicate on this form that you would like a re-print of your I-20.
- During your OPT authorization period, you should report changes of address, employment, and telephone information in the [SEVP Portal](#). For alumni purposes, you can update your address in [Buff Portal](#) and with [Alumni Association](#). If you change employers while on OPT, do not delete the previous employers you listed unless a duplicate was entered in error.
- If your employer changes while on OPT, you must complete the [OPT Employment Relevance Statement](#) for the new employer.
- If your name or citizenship changes: Submit the [OPT Information Update Form](#)
- If your Email Address changes: Please email [ISSS](#)



What information will I have to enter in the SEVP Portal when I add a new employer?

The following employment information must be reported for each job you have while authorized for OPT:

- Explanation of how employment is directly related to your major field of study (OPT Employment Relevancy Form)
- Whether employment is self-employment
- Employer/Company Name
- Employer Identification Number (EIN)—highly recommended
- Job Title
- Employment Start Date
- Whether employment is full-time or part-time (full-time employment is defined as 20 hours or more per week)
- The employer's address and, if applicable, any alternative work addresses
- Your supervisor's name, telephone, and email address
- Previous employment end date (if applicable)

How many unemployment days can I use?

8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(E) states—"During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment. Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization." This limit also applies to students with an automatic extension of an OPT authorization due to the cap-gap provisions.

In other words, you can accrue no more than 90 days of unemployment. The unemployment days start on your OPT authorization start date (the start date listed in SEVIS and on your EAD card). To stop the unemployment days from accruing, you need to enter your employment information into the SEVP Portal.

What documentation should I keep for my records while on OPT?

The list below is a suggestion of records you may be asked to present to prove OPT employment (during or after your OPT authorization); it is not exhaustive. Be sure to maintain documentation that the work/internship is in your major field of study.

- Copies of offer letters and agreements/contracts with all OPT employers including: start/ end dates, pay rate, and number of weekly work hours
- Copies of job descriptions including job title, duties, location, and supervisor's contact information
- If you worked for an agency or consultancy, keep evidence of the projects you worked on
- Keep copies of your pay vouchers/pay stubs for all periods of employment, copies of your bank statements that show direct or corresponding deposits from your employer(s), and associated W-2 tax forms



If you engage in employment that is not paid while on OPT, it is recommended that you keep the following:

- Copies of employment agreement or contracts with the employer including: start/end dates, trainings (on location, online, etc.), responsibilities and training objectives, location of the internship/unpaid training, and supervisor's contact information
- Copies of all diplomas, completion certificates and/or certifications that you received related to the training program;
- If you worked/trained as an unpaid employee for a third party, keep evidence of the projects you worked on
- Copies of company time and attendance records that document your daily tasks in detail for all employers during the unpaid internship or training.

What types of employment are allowed while on an approved period of OPT?

- Regular paid employment in a position directly related to the student's major program of study.
- For post-completion OPT, the work must be for at least 20 hours per week. However, for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, SEVP considers students participating in OPT activities less than 20 hours per week as maintaining status.
- Students may work for multiple employers, as long as the employment is directly related to the student's major field of study
- Payment by multiple short-term employers. SEVP guidance states "Students, such as musicians and other performing artists, may work for multiple short-term employers (gigs). The student should maintain a list of all gigs, the dates and duration."
- Work for hire. SEVP explains, "This is also commonly referred to as 1099 employment where an individual performs a service based on a contractual relationship rather than an employment individual relationship. If requested by DHS, students should be prepared to provide evidence showing the duration of the contract periods and the name and address of the contracting company."
- Self-employed business owner. SEVP indicates, "Students on OPT may start a business and be self-employed. The student should be able to prove that he or she has the proper business licenses and is actively engaged in a business related to his or her degree program."
- Employment through an agency. SEVP guidance states, "Students on post-completion OPT must be able to provide evidence showing they worked an average of at least 20 hours per week while employed by the agency."
- Please note, for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, SEVP considers students participating in OPT activities less than 20 hours per week as maintaining status.
- Volunteers or unpaid interns: Standard OPT. SEVP OPT Policy Guidance states that, "Students may work as volunteers or unpaid interns, where this practice does not violate any labor laws. The work should be at least 20 hours per week**"



for students on post-completion OPT. A student should be able to provide evidence, acquired from the student's employer, to verify that he or she worked at least 20 hours per week during the period of employment."

- Please note, for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, SEVP considers students participating in OPT activities less than 20 hours per week as maintaining status.
- Students should exercise caution when undertaking volunteer activity as a form of OPT employment. Should this volunteer activity be seen as a violation of U.S. labor law, then the activity will not stop the accrual of days of unemployment and the activity could result in loss of status.

I work for a third-party agency, what should I do?

For Students Working for a Third-Party Agency

For future visas to the U.S. as well as for USCIS petitions/applications you may be asked to present proof of employment for *all* positions you have had while on OPT. If you have been employed by a recruiting agency and have worked at a client's site, ISSS recommends you document proof of employment from both your employer and site location entity.



SECTION 7 TRAVEL, EXTENSION, & CHANGES WHILE ON OPT

Are there any options to extend my OPT employment period?

Yes, there are two ways to extend (if you are eligible).

24-Month Extension of OPT

(with Qualifying STEM Degree and E-Verify Employer)

F-1 students in a current period of OPT [with qualifying STEM degrees](#) (previous U.S. degree or current U.S. degree) and an employment offer with an E-Verify employer in the STEM field may be eligible to apply for a [STEM extension of OPT](#). Students must meet all of the eligibility requirements including submitting the [OPT STEM Extension I-20 Request Form](#) with a complete [I-983 Training Plan to ISSS](#).

Cap-Gap Extension

An F-1 student is eligible for a cap-gap extension of OPT if they:

- are the beneficiary of a H-1B petition
- have requested a change of status
- have an employment start date of October 1 of the current year

If eligible, your duration of status (D/S) and any post-completion OPT work authorization is extended to September 30 or until the H-1B petition is withdrawn or denied. An automatic cap-gap extension of an F-1 student's record also applies to the duration of status of any dependents in F-2 status. To request an I-20 with a comment indicating the H-1B is pending or has been approved, complete the [Cap-Gap I-20 Request](#).

Do I get a grace period when I finish OPT?

There is a 60-day grace period following the completion of your post-completion OPT (starting from the EAD end date) for students who maintained status and did not accrue more than 90 days of unemployment. You are not eligible for employment or to re-enter the U.S. in F-1 status during the 60-day grace period. F-1 students in the 60-day grace period can request that their SEVIS record be transferred to another institution if they have been admitted and will begin the program within 5 months. F-1 students can also apply for a change of status during the grace period.

What happens if I begin a new degree level or need a SEVIS transfer while I am on OPT?

During post-completion OPT, employment in your major field of study is the basis for maintenance of F-1 status. Enrollment is not required and if you choose to enroll while participating in OPT, it may impact your OPT work authorization. Consult ISSS if you are considering beginning a new course of study or will seek to [transfer your SEVIS record](#) to another institution. OPT work authorization is



terminated when your SEVIS record is transferred to a new school and/or you begin a program at a new degree level.

Can I travel while I am on an authorized period of OPT?

If you depart the U.S. while authorized for OPT for a temporary absence, you must have proof of employment or a job offer in your major field of study in order to re-enter the U.S. Please review your employment authorization in the [SEVP Portal](#) prior to traveling and update it if necessary.

During post-completion OPT, employment in your major field of study is the basis for maintaining F-1 status. If you do not have a job, travel outside of the U.S. is not recommended. If you exceed the 90-day limit on unemployment while outside the United States, you will not be eligible to re-enter the United States in F-1 status.

If you seek re-entry to the U.S. in F-1 status while authorized for OPT, carry the following documents:

- I-20 ISSS issued with OPT employment information on page 2 and travel signature dated less than six months from your date of re-entry to the U.S.
- Valid Passport (validity should extend at least 6 months beyond your date of re-entry to the U.S.)
- *Valid F-1 visa (exception- Canadians; *[automatic visa revalidation](#))
- Unexpired Employment Authorization Document (EAD/OPT card)
- Evidence that you have a job or a job offer in your major field of study in the United States and have not exceeded 90 days of unemployment since the EAD card start date
- I-901 SEVIS fee receipt - a copy can be printed from [online](#).

If you are using automatic visa revalidation to re-enter the U.S., have your printed I-94.

Things to keep in mind if you choose to travel while authorized for OPT:

- **A temporary absence from the U.S. should be less than 5 months.** Even with a job offer and valid EAD, an absence greater than 5 months may not be considered temporary and you may be denied re-entry.
- **Do NOT leave the U.S. if you have a pending change of status application as it will likely be considered abandoned.** Please consult an immigration attorney if you have questions about this.
- **Do NOT re-enter the U.S. in another status (e.g., B) if you intend to work on OPT.** You must be present in the U.S. in F-1 status to work on OPT.

Additional Travel Resources:

- [ICE Travel FAQ](#)
- [ISSS OPT Travel FAQ](#)
- [Visa Renewal](#)
- [Printing a Copy of Your I-94](#)



I-94 Arrival Record

Review your [I-94 arrival record](#) every time you re-enter the U.S. to ensure that your entry was recorded properly. Check your biographical information as well as your Class of Admission (F-1) and Admit until Date (D/S).

Travel to Third-Country Destinations

Depending on the country you are traveling to and/or through, you may require a transit visa (to travel through an intermediary country on your way to your final destination) or a tourist visa to enter your final destination. Please consult the appropriate embassy or foreign consular office to determine if an additional visa is necessary. ISSS cannot give advice on visa procedures or application requirements for other countries.