



University of
New Haven

OPT HANDBOOK

UNIVERSITY IMMIGRATION SERVICES



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Overview : Optional Practical Training and the STEM Extension on the F-1 Visa

Overview

Post-completion Optional Practical training (OPT) is a 12-month employment authorization available to F-1 students who have been lawfully enrolled full-time for at least one academic year and are completing the required coursework to earn an academic degree at the Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral level.

F-1 students are permitted one period of OPT after each degree level, and they must engage only in employment directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Post-completion OPT begins after the I-20 program end date, and must conclude no later than 14 months after the program end date.

Although it is possible to use some or all of the allotted 12 months during semester breaks prior to the I-20 program end date (called Pre-completion OPT), this is mostly impractical because it requires the same application process and cost as post-completion OPT and reduces the allotment of months for post-completion OPT. UIS does not endorse pre-completion OPT because internships are possible for most University academic programs, thus Curricular Practical Training (CPT) can fulfill the same experiential purpose.

Students who complete degrees in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics may be eligible for a two-year STEM extension of their post-completion OPT, depending on the support and eligibility of their employers.

Eligibility

To be eligible for post-completion OPT, the student must have been in valid visa status and lawfully enrolled for at least one full academic year immediately preceding their I-20 program end date. UIS recommends that students confirm with their academic advisor that they are on track to complete their coursework as planned, prior to starting the OPT application process. Students may apply up to 90 days prior to their program end date and up to 60 days past their program end date. Due to UIS processing times, it is highly recommended that students apply early. UIS will provide virtual information sessions in March for students graduating in May or August, and in October for students graduating in December.

To be eligible for the STEM extension, a student must have completed a qualifying degree, as listed on the [DHS STEM designated program list](#), from an accredited and SEVP-certified school; be employed full-time (20+ hours per week) in a qualifying job that is related to their field of study; AND work for a qualifying employer that is E-Verified and able to fill out an I-983.

OPT/STEM Timeline

- 1) 90 Days prior to the completion of Coursework (I-20 Program End Date) – post-completion OPT application begins. Deadline to apply is 60 days after the I-20 program end date.
- 2) Student completes the Canvas course. UIS issues the OPT Request I-20 to the student.
- 3) Within 30 days of the I-20 issuance, student submits I-765 application to USCIS, which issues an I-797 Receipt Notice with the student's case number.
- 4) USCIS adjudicates the OPT application, usually in about 3 months. USCIS send the student an OPT approval notice.
- 5) The EAD card is manufactured and shipped separately to the student.
- 6) If the student has also applied for the SSN on the same I-765, a different federal agency, the Social Security Administration, will process the application and upon approval, will ship the SSN card to the student.
- 7) When the student acquires an employment, they notify the UIS and submit the Update OPT/STEM Information Form with the employment information.
- 8) UIS updates the SEVIS record and reprints an I-20, which includes the employer information, which goes to the student.
- 9) The student continues to report to the UIS any changes in employment or personal contact information using the Update OPT/STEM Information Form.
- 10) If eligible, the student begins the STEM Extension application 90 days prior to the EAD expiration date. Deadline to apply is the EAD expiration date.
- 11) Student submits the STEM Request Form to the UIS along with the I-983 and other requested evidence. UIS issues the STEM Request I-20 to the student.
- 12) Within 60 days of I-20 issuance, student submits the I-765 application to USCIS, which sends the student an I-797 Receipt Notice with the case number.
- 13) USCIS adjudicates the STEM Extension application, usually in about 3 months. The student may continue working for up to 180 days while the application is pending.
- 14) USCIS sends the student an approval notice, and the new EAD card is manufactured and shipped separately to the student. The STEM start date will be one day after the post-completion EAD expiration date.
- 15) The student continues to report to the UIS any changes in employment or personal contact information using the Update OPT/STEM Information Form. Any changes to the employer/employment requires a new I-983.
- 16) 6 months after the STEM start date, the student reports in to the UIS using the Update OPT/STEM Information Form to confirm their OPT participation with the current employer as reported to the UIS.
- 17) 12 months after the STEM start date, the student reports in to the UIS to confirm their OPT participation with the current employer as reported to the UIS, and submits the 12-month evaluation section on the I-983.
- 18) 18 months after the STEM start date, the student reports in to the UIS to confirm their OPT participation with the current employer as reported to the UIS.
- 19) 24 months after the STEM start date, the student reports in to the UIS to confirm their OPT participation with the current employer as reported to the UIS, and submits the final 24-month evaluation section on the I-983.
- 20) At any time during OPT/STEM, the student may change status from F-1 to another visa status (often the H1-B professional workers visa) if their employer chooses to sponsor them. If approved, the student transitions to the new visa status and is no longer under the visa jurisdiction of the University.
- 21) When the STEM Extension ends, the student may start a new academic program at the same school or transfer to another school. If not, the student has 60 days to depart the U.S.

Post-Completion OPT: Application Process

Step 1: Complete the OPT Online Preparation Course

Students graduating in the current term will be enrolled in the Canvas course, titled "OPT Online Preparation Course," which gives detailed instructions on applying for OPT, completing required forms, and maintaining F-1 status while on OPT. *All students that apply for OPT are **required** to complete the online course prior to submitting a Post-Completion OPT I-20 Request Form or meeting with the UIS staff.*

A student who is graduating but doesn't find the OPT course card in Canvas when they log on, may contact the UIS to be added to the course roster.

Step 2: Collect the required documentation.

Students applying for OPT must collect all of the documents listed on the *OPT Application Checklist* on [page 7](#) of this handbook. Detailed instructions on completing forms can be found on the "OPT Online Preparation" course on Canvas and in the appendix of this handbook. Please find all forms, instructions, filing fees, filing addresses, etc. on the [USCIS website](#) to ensure you are following current guidance.

- Form G-1145
- Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization - If filing the paper packet, use the fillable/downloadable form. Type in your answers then print the form to sign it and add it to your application packet. If filing online, do not pay and submit the final application until all required evidence has been uploaded, including the OPT Request I-20 in Step 3.
- Copies of Page 1 and travel signature pages of ALL previous I-20s that have been issued to you from the University of New Haven, and from previous institutions if available.
- Printed electronic I-94 Record
- Color copy of your most recent U.S. F-1 visa
- Color copy of passport biographical page
- 2 standard (2» x 2») passport-sized, recent, color photos. Write your full name and I-94 number in pencil on the back.
- Check or money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The current fee is posted on the USCIS website. If filing online, payment can be made only by ACH withdrawal from an American bank account or by credit card.

Step 3: Submit the Post-Completion OPT Request Form to the UIS.

Students must submit the [Post-Completion OPT Request Form](#). The form can be found on myCharger. Upon submission of this e-form, the UIS will issue the required OPT Request I-20 with DSO recommendation. Students must be prepared to submit their complete OPT application to USCIS promptly after receiving the OPT Request I-20. USCIS must receive the request within 30 days of the I-20 issuance date.

NOTE: The online I-765 requires the student upload a scan of the OPT Request I-20 hand-signed by both the DSO and the student. USCIS does not accept digital signatures.

Step 4: *OPTIONAL*: Attend a virtual OPT Q & A session to ask questions about your OPT application packet. Or make an appointment with the UIS to have a DSO review your paper packet.

The UIS has no authority over the I-765 application process because the application is adjudicated by the USCIS, which is an agency of the federal government. After the student mails the paper packet, or submits the online application, the UIS can't edit the I-20, change the requested OPT start date in SEVIS, or in any way influence USCIS' decision.

Step 5: Mail the OPT application packet to USCIS

Once students have received the OPT Request I-20, they must either finalize the online filing by paying the fee and submitting, or mail the paper packet to USCIS. Please note that USCIS must receive the OPT application within 30 days of the issue date on the OPT Request I-20. Find the current USCIS filing address for paper packets on the USCIS website.

If the student realizes that 30 days have passed and they still haven't submitted the final application, UIS can cancel the OPT request in SEVIS and issue a new OPT Request I-20.

Step 6: Share your USCIS case number with the UIS, and keep the UIS informed of I-797 Receipt notices, Requests for Evidence (RFEs), Approval Notices.

Students who file online will receive the case number immediately following successful submission. Students who file paper packets will receive an email, text message, and/or an I-797 receipt notice in the mail. Remember that employment may not begin until you have received the EAD card, and the employment authorization has a specific start date listed on the card.

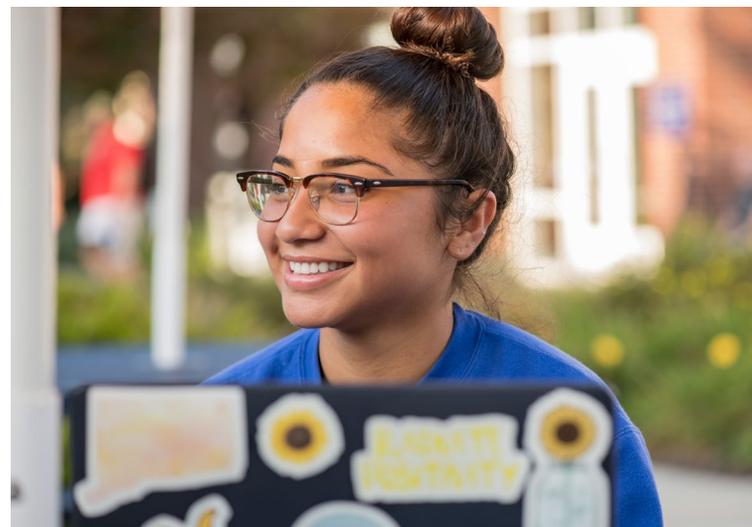
Students are advised not to travel while their OPT application is in process because USCIS may consider departure from the U.S. as abandonment of the application. Travel before receiving your EAD card could thus result in denial of your application.

DISCLAIMER: The UIS is able to provide you with general guidance; however, any advice the Office of University Immigration Services (UIS) provides does not constitute legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, the USCIS may change its interpretation of immigration policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time. The UIS will do its best to provide current guidance, but the student is responsible to read the official instructions on the USCIS website. Please be mindful that each case is fact-specific and the student should contact an experienced immigration attorney if they have questions regarding their situation.

Post-Completion OPT: Application Checklist

Please find all forms, instructions, filing fees, filing addresses, etc. on the [USCIS website](#) to ensure you are following current guidance. If using fillable/downloadable forms in a paper application packet, print them out. For the online application, upload hard copies. USCIS does not accept digital signatures.

- Form G-1145 (not required for the online application)
- Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization. (Please get the most recent version from the USCIS website and pay attention to notices about which versions are currently being accepted. Also follow current instructions on the USCIS website.)
- OPT Request I-20 issued within 30 days. This one must be hand-signed by the DSO and the student. USCIS does not accept digital signatures.
- Copies of Page 1 and travel signature pages of all previous I-20s that have been issued to you (Including the University of New Haven and other institutions, if applicable.) Put in order of most recent to oldest I-20s. The online application is particularly interested in CPT and OPT authorizations on previous I-20s.
- Printed electronic I-94 (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>)
- Color copy of your most recent U.S. F-1 visa
- Color copy of passport biographical pages
- Previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (EAD cards) if you used OPT before.
- Two standard (2" x 2") passport-sized, color photos.
- Two recent photographs on thin, glossy paper per [passport photo instructions](#). Write your full legal name as it appears on your passport, SEVIS number, and I-94 number in pencil on the back of the photos. Do not cut to size or staple yourself; have it cut professionally.
- Photographs submitted for use on an EAD card must not have been taken more than 30 days prior to the submission of the I-765 application and not have been previously used.
- Check or money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Check the USCIS website for the correct fee information. The online application only accepts payment via credit card or ACH withdrawals from an American bank account.



Post-Completion OPT: Reporting Employment

During a student's OPT authorization period, they must report to the UIS any time they accept employment or change employment by submitting the [Update OPT/STEM Employment Information Form](#), which requires the following documentation:

1. Offer letter (must be on company letterhead, state the date the student began employment, and whether the student is a full or part-time employee)
2. Address of employer and contact information of supervisor
3. Copy of EAD (front and back)
4. A brief statement of why this employment is related to their field of study

Students are permitted to change jobs during the Post-Completion OPT period; however all jobs must be related to the field of study and all employment must be reported to the UIS accompanied by an offer letter within 10 days of the change.

Any change of the student's U.S. address, phone number, or email must be sent to the UIS within 10 days of the change via the [Personal Information Update Form](#).

The SEVIS system counts days of unemployment based on the information reported in the student's SEVIS Record by the UIS when they send updates or enter data into their SEVP Portal. It is important that any data entry to the Portal match the same evidence submitted to the UIS on the e-forms.

Failure to properly report in a timely manner can result in termination of employment authorization, loss of legal F-1 status, and/or ineligibility for future work authorization applications.



Post-Completion OPT: Unemployment and Activities that Constitute Employment

The visa regulations state that during post-completion OPT, an F-1 visa-holder is permitted no more than 90 days of unemployment. That is an aggregate total during the entire 12-month period, and the student's SEVIS record has an unemployment counter based on the information entered into the employer information fields. SEVIS performs automatic terminations of SEVIS records connected to timed fields such as this one. Student must report employment to UIS on the [Update OPT/STEM Employment Information Form](#), and in their SEVP portal when possible. In addition to maintaining up-to-date employment information in SEVIS, students should keep evidence of employment in case they need it for future USCIS adjudications.

To avoid counting days of unemployment, students may want to consider all the activities that constitute employment on post-completion OPT. However, whatever the activity, it must be related to the student's field of study and the total combined hours from all jobs must be full-time (more than 20 hours per week). The following constitute employment on post-completion OPT:

- **Regular paid employment** – evidence of employment might include a contract or offer letter, paystubs, w-2 tax forms, et al.
- **Payment by multiple short-term employers** – For example, musicians and performing artists may have “gigs”. The student should maintain a list of all gigs, the dates and durations, and keep record of payments.
- **Work for hire** – These are services of a contractual nature, commonly referred to as 1099 employment because the payment is tracked by the Form 1099 for tax purposes. Examples are things like graphic design projects, household repairs, etc.
- **Self-employed business owner** – Students may start a business and be self-employed. Evidence includes business licenses, incorporation paperwork, etc.
- **Employment through an agency** – Student must be able to provide evidence they worked at least 20 hours per week while employed by the agency. Evidence might include contracts, evidence of payment for services, etc.
- **Volunteers or unpaid interns** – where the practice does not violate labor laws. Students must be able to provide evidence they worked at least 20 hours per week. Evidence might include an offer letter, or other documentation from the employer.

The STEM Extension of OPT: Overview and Eligibility

Students with degrees in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) may be eligible for a 24-month extension of work authorization immediately following the first 12 months of post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT). To be eligible for the STEM extension, a student must:

- Have completed a qualifying degree, as listed on the [DHS STEM designated program list](#), from an accredited and SEVP-certified school;
- Be employed full-time (20+ hours per week) in a qualifying job that is related to your field of study; AND
- Work for a qualifying employer that is E-Verified and able to fill out an I-983.

A qualifying degree is determined by the numeric CIPP code as assigned by the associated government offices based on the curriculum submitted by the University for accreditation/certification purposes. The UIS must make the numeric code on the I-20 match the state-approved CIPP code. The University of New Haven is an accredited institution. Information about the University's accreditation can be found on the website at [University Accreditation - University of New Haven](#)

A qualifying job is related to the student's field of study, and must be a paid job for at least 20 hours per week at each STEM employer.

A qualifying employer is enrolled in E-Verify and has an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN). The student must not be self-employed.

The student and employer must complete a Form I-983 Training Plan, and the I-983 must be submitted to the UIS prior to issuance of the STEM Request I-20 required in the application process.

The STEM Extension request application must be stamped received by USCIS before the expiration date on the post-completion OPT EAD card and within 60 days of the date the STEM Request I-20 was issued in SEVIS. The earliest a student may apply for a STEM Extension is 90 days before the expiration of post-completion OPT. Students who filed a timely application are permitted to continue employment while the extension application is pending for 180 days beyond the EAD expiration or until a final decision is made, whichever comes first.

Students interested in applying for the STEM Extension please read thoroughly and carefully the information provided before contacting University Immigration Services.

The STEM Extension application can be filed online at the USCIS website or by the traditional paper packet. UIS urges students to have all documentation ready for upload when filing online, and to not pay and finalize the application until they have completed all fields and uploaded all required documents. After the payment is made online, the student will not be able to return to the application, and USCIS may deny an incomplete application.



The STEM Extension of OPT: Application Process

STEP ONE: Students must submit the following documents to the Office of University Immigration Services (UIS) to request an I-20 with the DSO endorsement for the STEM Extension:

1. [STEM OPT Request Form](#)
2. Copy of completed Form I-983—Instructions for filling out a Form I-983 can be found [here](#). (Do not fill out the self-evaluation section on page 5.)
3. Copy of completed Form I-765—If filing the paper packet, use the fillable/downloadable form. Type in your answers then print the form to sign it and add it to your application packet. If filing online, print a draft copy for the UIS. Do not pay and submit the final application until all fields are complete and all required evidence has been uploaded, including the STEM Request I-20.)
4. Copy of current EAD card (front and back)
5. Copy of Employment Offer Letter (dated within the last 4 months)

STEP TWO: Complete your paper application packet. Or compile all evidence prior to completing the online application.

For the paper packet, place the items in the following order (from top to bottom). You will need to collect and arrange the following documentation.

- A check or money order made payable to the "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" (Find the current fee posted on the USCIS website). If filing online, payment must be via credit card or ACH withdrawal from an American bank.
- Two (2) recent Passport size photographs with your name and I-94 number printed on the back
- Completed G-1145 (This is not required when filing online)
- Completed I-765
- Copy of your STEM Request I-20 with your DSO endorsement on page 2, hand-signed and dated.
(Do not send the original!)
- Copies of all previous I-20's. USCIS is particularly interested in I-20s that have a CPT authorization or OPT information on page two.
- Copy of your post-completion OPT EAD card (front and back)
- Copy of your employer's offer letter (dated within the last 4 months)
- Copy of passport
- Copy of your visa
- I-94 number
- Sealed, official transcripts from the University of New Haven
- Copy of diploma

The online application on the USCIS website requires fewer documents than the paper packet. Investigate the requirements on the USCIS website.

Mail your paper packet to the address listed on the USCIS website. If filing online, make sure you have all your evidence ready to upload and don't pay and submit until the application is complete. The online I-765 requires the student upload a scan of the STEM Request I-20 hand-signed by both the DSO and the student. USCIS does not accept digital signatures.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Do not send your Form I-983 to USCIS with the rest of your documents. You will submit your Form I-983 to the UIS and a DSO will upload the information to your SEVIS record.

The UIS has no authority over the I-765 application process because the application is adjudicated by the USCIS, which is an agency of the federal government. After the student mails the paper packet, or submits the online application, the UIS can't in any way influence USCIS' decision.

You will be able to update some but not all information on your SEVP Portal. Always send the same information to UIS. UIS needs the information too and will make sure your SEVIS record is updated with the information you share using the Update STEM OPT Employment Form.

DISCLAIMER: The UIS is able to provide you with general guidance; however, any advice the Office of University Immigration Services (UIS) provides does not constitute legal advice. Additionally, due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, the USCIS may change its interpretation of immigration policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time. The UIS will do its best to provide current guidance, but the student is responsible to read the official instructions on the USCIS website. Please be mindful that each case is fact-specific and the student should contact an experienced immigration attorney if they have questions regarding their situation.

The STEM Extension of OPT: Reporting on STEM and the I-983

Students on STEM OPT are required to report every six months. The SEVP Portal will remind you when to report, but it is ultimately your responsibility to report on time. The UIS can report your STEM participation in SEVIS, but the functionality to do so only exists for a short window of time. Failure to report these changes in a timely manner could result in the termination of your work authorization period and/or in the ineligibility for further work authorization applications.

6-Month Report: Submit the [Update STEM OPT Employment Form](#), with an upload of your STEM EAD card and your offer letter. You must submit the form even if there are no changes.

12-Month Report/Annual Self-Evaluation: Fill out the first part ("Evaluation of Student Progress") on page 5 of the [Form I-983](#) and have your supervisor sign it. Upload this to the [Update STEM OPT Employment Form](#).

18-Month Report: Submit the [Update STEM OPT Employment Form](#), with an upload of your STEM EAD card and your offer letter. You must submit the form even if there are no changes.

24-Month Report/Annual Self-Evaluation: Fill out the second part ("Final Evaluation On Student Progress") on page 5 of the [Form I-983](#) and have your supervisor sign it. Upload this to the [Update STEM OPT Employment Form](#).

Students must also report on any changes to employment or to the employer's information by submitting a new I-983. It is possible to change jobs on STEM or to hold multiple jobs on STEM. However, for each and every job, the student submits an I-983. Each employer must qualify and each employment must qualify (see [page 10](#) of this handbook).



Changing Jobs on STEM

While your STEM OPT application is processing, if possible, don't change jobs until you receive your new STEM EAD card because the STEM application is based on the employer information submitted on the I-983. If however, you don't have a choice because of circumstances outside your control, contact the UIS.

If a student wishes to change employers once they have been authorized for STEM OPT and received their EAD card, they must complete the following:

- Submit the [Update STEM OPT Employment Form](#)
- Upload the new offer letter
- Upload the EAD card

Additionally, students on STEM OPT who are changing jobs must upload the following two documents on the same UPDATE STEM OPT Employment Information Form as above:

- New [Form I-983](#) completed with the new employer
- Copy of "Final Evaluation On Student Progress" found on pg. 5 of the [Form I-983](#) completed by the previous employer.

Always keep the UIS updated on the following via their e-forms. **The SEVIS system runs automatic terminations of SEVIS records and may terminate your work authorization if you do not report in a timely fashion.**

1. Change of Address and Contact Information
2. Change of Employer
3. Six-month and 18-month Reporting
4. Self-evaluation Forms (12-month and 24-month)
5. Change of Status (H-1B, F-2, etc.)

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is the umbrella agency for SEVP. They maintain substantial information on their official website at [STEM OPT Hub | Study in the States \(dhs.gov\)](#)

Travel During OPT/STEM

The UIS does not advise traveling when an OPT or STEM application is pending. First, USCIS generally considers that departing the U.S. equals abandonment of the application and thus may deny the application. Second, adjudication of the application may take longer than expected, and without the approved OPT documents, it will not be possible to re-enter the U.S. Additionally, to re-enter the U.S. requires evidence of employment, which a student may not yet have while the post-completion OPT application is still processing.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED WHEN TRAVELING IN F-1 STATUS:

An F-1 or J-1 student planning to travel outside of the country must carry the following documentation in order to depart and re-enter the U.S.:

- Current I-20/DS-2019 with a recent DSO/ARO's signature in the travel signature section
- The travel signature must be issued within 1 year from the travel re-entry date. The signature must be within 6 months if student is on OPT/STEM. Students requiring a signature should contact the UIS two weeks prior to traveling.
- Unexpired passport (The passport must be valid for at least six months into the future.)
- Unexpired visa
- In order to re-enter the U.S., the F-1/J-1 visa must be valid. If it is expired, the student must renew their visa prior to reentry.
- I-901 Receipt of SEVIS fee payment (The receipt can be obtained at <https://www.fmjfee.com/>)

While on OPT or STEM OPT, a student must also carry this additional evidence:

- Valid EAD card and
- Evidence of employment (eg. job offer letter or employer letter)

Some exceptions exist for travel to Canada, Mexico, and islands adjacent to the U.S.

An F-1 or J-1 student planning travel within the U.S. are recommended to carry their I-20/DS-2019, unexpired passport and F-1/J-1 visa. If traveling within the U.S., the F-1/J-1 visa may be expired as long as the I-20/DS-2019 are valid.



The Cap-gap Extension and the H1-B Visa

When an F-1 student on OPT or STEM OPT applies for a change of visa status to H1-B in a timely fashion, they are eligible for a cap-gap extension of their employment authorization. The cap-gap extension should automatically appear in SEVIS when the H1-B application is selected in the lottery. A reprint of the I-20 with the cap-gap listed will serve as the student's employment authorization even though the EAD end date has passed.

A cap-gap extension of the OPT/STEM authorization starts on the day after the current EAD expiration and extends the employment authorization until September 30 or until the H1-B application is denied, whichever comes first. The H1-B visa status takes effect on October 1. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions.

1. Can you tell me the status of my H1-B application?

No. We don't receive information from USCIS about your H1-B application. Neither your case status nor case number appears in SEVIS. What you see in your SEVIS portal is what is in SEVIS. The H1-B application is between you and your employer. The UIS is not involved. When you transition from the F-1 visa to the H1-B, your employer becomes your sponsor and the University will no longer have jurisdiction over your visa status. Please ask your employer or your immigration attorney any questions about your H1-B application. If you did not personally receive the I-797C receipt notice with your assigned case number, then the attorney who filed the H1-B petition should have your case number. You can track your case status online at www.uscis.gov.

2. Can you check the status of my SEVIS Record?

Are you asking whether a cap-gap extension appears in your SEVIS record? This is the only thing we can check for you. If you would like us to reprint your I-20 with the cap-gap extension, please submit the e-form [Update OPT/STEM Employment Information Form \(newhaven.edu\)](#) or the [I-20 Reprint Request Form](#).

If you need to reset your portal access, email the UIS with the email address where you wish SEVIS to send the reset link.

3. I filed for the H1-B, but the cap-gap extension doesn't appear on my SEVIS record.

The cap-gap extension should automatically appear in your SEVIS record if you have a timely-filed H1-B petition. Your employer should have filed this on April 1. If your employer waited too long, it will not be timely-filed and you will not be eligible for the cap-gap extension. If the cap-gap extension does not show in SEVIS, we can request a data fix based on evidence to have it appear in SEVIS. To request a data fix, you must submit a copy of the I-797 receipt notice proving you filed the H1-B petition in a timely manner and the application was accepted in the lottery. Email a scan of the I-797 receipt notice to the UIS, and we will submit the request to SEVP. SEVP will review the evidence and make a judgment on your request. If approved, SEVP will add the cap-gap extension to your SEVIS record, and then we can print out an I-20 with the cap-gap extension on it.

4. What if I get a Request for Evidence (RFE) when USCIS is adjudicating my H1-B petition?

The H1-B application is between you and your employer. Contact the immigration attorney that is helping you file the application for assistance in responding to the RFE. Unfortunately, the UIS can not assist you with the H1-B application. It is the students' responsibility to maintain copies of all their documents (including all your I-20s and I-983s) and to supply any evidence requested by USCIS. The only documentation the UIS can provide would be a print-out of your SEVIS record Event History which indicates if/when you reported within the required timeframe, and copies of any reports you sent to us via our Update OPT/STEM form. Contact the Registrar for transcripts. Download from the University website information about your academic program or the University's accreditation.

5. What happens to my cap-gap extension if my H1-B petition is denied?

If your H1-B is not accepted in the lottery and/or your petition is denied, the cap-gap extension will auto-terminate. In this case, your OPT/STEM authorization will end either on its original end date (if it has not yet passed) or upon denial of your petition (if the original end date has passed). There is no grace period following the termination of a cap-gap extension.

The UIS encourages students to have alternate plans because there is a strict limit as to how many H1-B petitions are accepted. An H1-B petition, even if selected in the lottery, must be adjudicated by USCIS, so there is no guarantee the petition will be approved.

6. What happens if after September 30 I find out the pending H1-B petition is denied?

Per new USCIS guidance, any student who has a pending H1-B receipt past September 30th, upon denial, will have their record automatically completed and backdated to September 30th. The student will not be awarded a 60-day grace period. If you have a pending H1B receipt but would still like the option of transferring your record to a new University, you must submit transfer paperwork prior to September 30th in case the H1B is denied.



Appendix

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Appendix: Applying for OPT Presentation



Optional Practical Training

An information session for F-1 students
Presented by the Office of University Immigration Services (UIS)

What is OPT?

- Allows an F-1 student to engage in temporary employment to gain practical experience in his or her field of study.
- You **DO NOT** have to have a job to apply for OPT.

Are you eligible for OPT?

- You have attended at least 2 semesters at University of New Haven
- You are finishing your degree requirements in the current semester
- You have maintained full-time enrollment (or if applicable you were authorized for a reduced courseload your last semester)

Application Dates

- The earliest an OPT I-20 can be generated is 90 days before your program end date.
- The latest date you can apply is 60 days past your program end date. Note: **It can take MORE THAN 3 months** to receive your EAD card so it is always best to apply early.

Application Guidelines

- OPT information can be found in MyCharger and an OPT Handbook is linked to the UIS webpages.
- Complete the required Canvas course. It is recommended you attend an information session, but it is not required.
- Prepare all your documents on the **OPT Application Checklist** filled out and ready to go.
- Submit your **OPT Request e-Form** to the UIS. Upload scans of our passport, visa, I-94, and I-765 application pages

The OPT Application Checklist

PREPARE THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:

- [Form I-765](#) (for the paper application: typed, printed one-sided, and signed in blue ink. If filing the I-765 online, print out a draft copy for the UIS. DO NOT submit the online application until you have all the evidence including the OPT Request I-20)
- [Form G-1145](#) (for the paper application: typed and printed. If filing online, this form is not required.)
- Copies of all previous I-20's issued to you from the University of New Haven and any previous institutions. (USCIS is particularly interested in any I-20s with CPT or OPT authorizations on them.)
- Color copy of your passport
- Color copy of your visa
- Copy of your [I-94 record](#)

OPT Application Checklist

SUBMIT TO UIS :

- Post-completion Optional Practical Training Request E-Form along with the requested scans [OPT - Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Request Form \(newhaven.edu\)](#)

ALSO REQUIRED IN THE OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS:

- Two standard (2" x 2") color passport photos with last name, first name and I-94 written on back
- Check or Money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security, as currently posted at www.uscis.gov/i-765. *(If filing online payment must be by credit card or ACH withdrawal from an American bank.)*

Choosing a Start and End Date

- Please choose a start date:
 - Must be within 60 days of your program end date
 - Or, the UIS will choose one for you
 - You cannot change this date after submitting the e-form to the UIS.
- **YOU DO NOT** need a job to apply for OPT.

Appendix: Guide to Completing the Form I-765 for the OPT Application

Starting in April 2021, USCIS opened an online filing option for the I-765 in the F-1 categories of Pre- and Post-completion OPT and the STEM Extension. There may be a few glitches at first, but the online filing option promises to expedite the process and improve student access to USCIS with regards to tracking their applications.

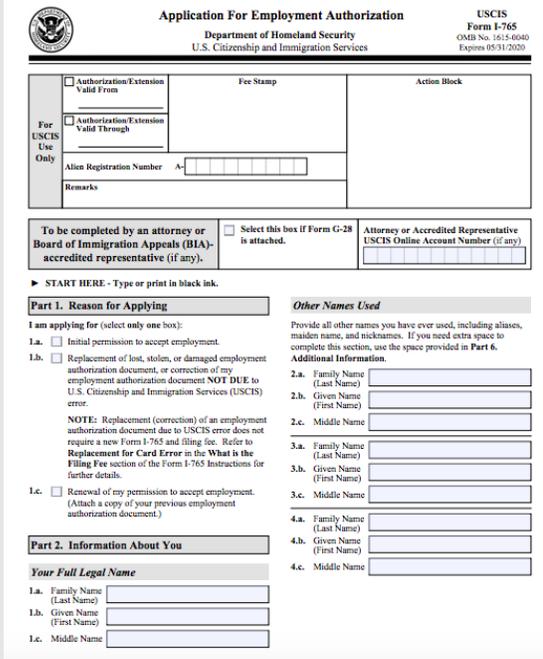
The following guide is based on the paper packet application, which is still an option for those who wish to use it or for those who are unable to pay online. Nonetheless, most of the same fields are required in the online version, so this guide can help explain how to answer particular items.

Most of the same evidence as the paper packet application is still required, so prepare all the same documents and be prepared to upload them online. DO NOT pay and submit the final application online until you have uploaded all the required evidence including the OPT Request I-20. You will no longer have access to your application after you submit the payment, so you want to be sure it is 100 % complete.

USCIS is prone to changing the paper form versions and denying the application if an old version is used. If using the fillable/downloadable version, be sure to get it directly from www.uscis.gov/i-765.

Form I-765

- Application for Employment Authorization
- <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Download the form
- Recommended to type the form then print
- Read the official USCIS I-765 instructions. What follows is a help, but should not be substituted for the official instructions.



The image shows the front page of the USCIS Form I-765, 'Application For Employment Authorization'. The form is titled 'Application For Employment Authorization' and is issued by the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It includes the USCIS logo and the form number 'Form I-765 OMB No. 1615-0040 Expires 05/31/2020'. The form is divided into several sections: 'For USCIS Use Only' (with fields for 'Authorization/Extension Valid From', 'Authorization/Extension Valid Through', 'Fee Stamp', and 'Action Block'), 'Remarks', and a section for 'To be completed by an attorney or Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)-accredited representative (if any)'. Below this is a 'START HERE' section with instructions to type or print in black ink. The form is divided into 'Part 1. Reason for Applying' and 'Part 2. Information About You'. 'Part 1' includes options for 'Initial permission to accept employment', 'Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document', and 'Renewal of my permission to accept employment'. 'Part 2' includes 'Your Full Legal Name' and 'Other Names Used' sections, both with fields for family, given, and middle names.

Page 1

- Leave the top section of Page 1 blank
- Begin the form where it says "Start Here"
- **PART 1: REASON FOR APPLYING**
When applying for OPT or STEM OPT work authorization,
 - Check the box "1.a. Initial Permission to accept employment"

► **START HERE - Type or print in black ink.**

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.)

Page 1

- **PART 2: INFORMATION ABOUT YOU**
- For **Question 1:** Write your full legal name as it appears on your passport
- If you have had other legal names, you must complete the section on the right
- If your given name is too long to fit in the field, you may divide it into the first and middle name fields.

► **START HERE - Type or print in black ink.**

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

Page 2

- **PART 2: INFORMATION ABOUT YOU (continued)**
- **Question 5:** Enter your U.S. Mailing Address for the application and EAD card
- You should plan to live there 3-5 months into the future
- If you prefer to use a friend's address, write their name in question 5.a.
- **Questions 6:** Answer if the mailing address is the same as your personal address
- **Questions 7:** Answer where you actually live if it is different than the answer in #5

Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Your U.S. Mailing Address

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 [\(USPS ZIP Code Lookup\)](#)

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

Page 2

- **Question 8:** Only for green card holders or previous USCIS applicants
- **Question 9:** Only if you have applied to USCIS previously
- **Questions 10-12:** Answer these personal questions regarding gender, marital status and if you have previously filed an I-765 application
- If you answer yes on Question 12, you will explain on page 7.
- **Question 13:** Answer yes or no if have a Social Security Number (SSN)

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.

Page 2

- **Question 13.b.:** Enter your Social Security Number if you already have one
- If you do not have an SSN, select "Yes" on **Question 14** to apply for one in this process
- Answer **Questions 15, 16, and 17** if you intend to apply for an SSN. If you already have an SSN, skip to **Question 18**
- **Question 18:** Enter the countries where you are a citizen or national

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

Page 3

- **Question 19:** Information about your place of birth
- **Question 20:** Enter your date of birth in Month/Date/Year format

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

19.b. State/Province of Birth

19.c. Country of Birth

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

Page 3

- **Question 21-26:** Information about your last arrival in the U.S.
- Copy the information from your most recent I-94 and your current I-20.

Information About Your Last Arrival in the United States

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

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

21.c. Travel Document Number (if any)

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

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

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

23. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States

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

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

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

Page 3

- ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY:
- **For Question 27:**
For Post-Completion OPT after graduation:
Enter code (c) (3) (B)
For Pre-Completion OPT during program (this is rarely used):
Enter code (c) (3) (A)
- If you are applying for Post-Completion OPT, you can leave questions 28-31 on Page 3 blank.

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)).

28. (c)(17) STEM OPT Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(17) 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 I-118 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, have you EVER been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime?
 Yes No

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

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.

Page 4

- PART 3: APPLICANT'S STATEMENT
- **Question 1:** If you have prepared and completed the application by yourself, select 1.a.
- **Question 3-5:** Enter your phone numbers and personal email address
- **Question 7:** Enter the date you completed the form I-765
Print the form and sign it in blue ink

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.

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

Pages 4-6

- PARTS 4 and 5: INTERPRETER AND PREPARER STATEMENT
- If you did not use the services of an interpreter or a preparer, you may leave all of the questions in Parts 4 and 5 blank.
- Print these pages of the I-765 even if they are blank.

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) _____
- 1.b. Preparer's Given Name (First Name) _____
2. Preparer's Business or Organization Name (if any) _____

Preparer'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 _____

Preparer's Contact Information

4. Preparer's Daytime Telephone Number _____
5. Preparer's Mobile Telephone Number (if any) _____
6. Preparer's Email Address (if any) _____

Appendix: Mailing your OPT Application and Beyond Presentation

Optional Practical Training: Mailing Application and Beyond

An information session for F-1 students
Office of University Immigration Services



Mailing your OPT application to USCIS

- Once you have submitted the Post-completion OPT request e-form and received your OPT Request I-20, you must mail your application to USCIS.
- Consult the USCIS page: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> for instructions on where to file. USCIS will specify the mailing lockbox based on application type and/or geographic location, and may change these addresses occasionally
- **The application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the issue date of your OPT I-20.**
- If it is received after 30 days, your application will be denied.

Reminders before You Mail to USCIS

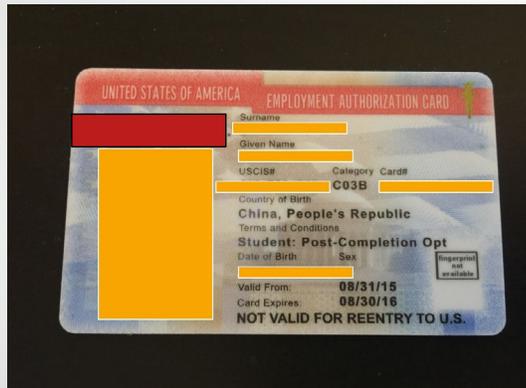
- Review your application packet again. Be careful not to make any mistakes or forget anything.
- Scan a copy of your complete packet for your own records prior to mailing the packet.
- Make sure you have a shipment tracking number to be sure the packet arrives to the lockbox. You may need to be able to prove which day it arrived.
- If filing online, make sure you have answered all required fields and have uploaded all required evidence including the OPT Request I-20. USCIS does not accept digital signatures, so the OPT Request I-20 must be hard-signed by you and the DSO before you scan it to upload. When you submit payment, the application will be finalized and you will not be able to return to edit it.

After Mailing your Application to USCIS

- Within 7-10 business days of USCIS receiving your application:
 - USCIS will contact you by e-mail and text message.
 - The message will include your case number (EAC..../YSC....)
 - You can use this number to track the status of your application on the USCIS website.
 - If filing online, you should get confirmation of your case number when submission is complete. You will also get a “case card” so that USCIS will communicate to you via your USCIS online account. Check your account for messages.

- **I-797 Receipt notice** in the mail (within 4 weeks)
 - Make sure your name and birthdate are correct on the I-797.
- **I-797 Approval notice** in the mail (typically 90-120 days)
- **Employment Authorization Document/ EAD card** in the mail separately (typically 1 week after I-797 Approval Notice)
- **Social Security Number** (if included in the I-765 application) will be assigned by the Social Security Administration, which is a separate federal agency. Thus the SSN will arrive in a separate mailing.
- Please note that USCIS and SSA will mail your documents to the address you submitted on your I-765.

Your EAD card will look like this...



- Make sure all information on the EAD card is correct as soon as you receive the card.
- If there are any errors, you must have them corrected by USCIS as soon as possible. The mailer with the EAD card will contain instructions.

You may not begin work until...

- You have your physical EAD card in your hands.

AND

- The start date listed on your OPT card is reached (eg. If you receive your card on June 1 and your EAD start date is July 1, you must wait until July 1 to begin work.)

Travel

- **DO NOT TRAVEL** outside of the U.S. while your application is processing
 - If you leave while your application is processing it can be considered “abandoning” your application.
- Once you have received your EAD card, you can travel with these documents:
 - Your EAD card
 - Your I-20 **signed within the last 6 months**
 - A valid passport and Visa
 - Evidence of employment, like a job offer letter

Maintaining your F-1 Status

- When you receive your first job, update it on the SEVP Portal.
- AND submit the Update OPT/STEM Employment Information e-form to the UIS along with and copy of your EAD card and the job offer letter which states
 - Whether you are a full or part time employee
 - Your start date
 - The company address
- Also provide a brief, 3-4 sentence, explanation of how your job relates to your degree of study.
- If you change jobs, you are responsible for providing the UIS with this information for your new employer, as well as the final date at your previous employer.

Maintaining your F-1 Status

- You must work at least **20 hours per week** on OPT.
 - You can work multiple jobs to reach this total. If you work more than one job, you must provide a job offer letter and a brief description of how the job relates to your degree of study for each job.
- Your work may be volunteer, internship, paid, unpaid, research with a professor, etc.
- The job you take must be related to your degree that you earn from the University of New Haven.
 - If you have a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Washington State University, but your UNH Master's degree is Business, you cannot have an Engineering job on OPT.
 - Additionally, if you took one Computer Science course while at UNH but did not major in Computer Science you cannot work for a Computer Science company.

Finding a Job

- You are allowed 90 days of unemployment. This is the aggregate total out of your 1 year of post-completion OPT.
 - The 90 days starts from the start date on your EAD card.
 - You must keep track of start and end dates for each employer.
 - SEVIS may auto-terminate your OPT authorization if you exceed the 90 day limit.
- If you are approaching the 90 day limit, you can...
 - Volunteer for a position in your field of study
 - Do research with a professor in your field of study
 - Take an unpaid internship in your field of study

The Career Development Center at the University of New Haven can assist with many aspects of job searching from preparing your resume to the successful interview.

The UIS encourages you to reach out to the Employer Relations Manager, International at careerdevelopmentcenter@newhaven.edu

While on OPT...

- **Submit your inquiries to the general UIS inbox or via the e-forms.** Individual staff will forward emails to the general inbox. One queue assures we answer inquiries in the order they are received.
- 3-5 Business days means 3-5 **weekdays**.
- Tell the UIS within 10 days of changing a job, address or contact info. This is federal regulation.
- It is illegal to work before your OPT is approved or before your EAD start date.
- Do not travel while your OPT or STEM OPT is processing. You may be denied reentry.
- Seek advice from the UIS when making F-1 immigration decisions.
- The UIS cannot negotiate with federal agencies. We can't intervene or overrule in the adjudication process. You are fully responsible for your application.

Maintaining your F-1 Status

- Please update the UIS if you...
 - change your address, phone number, email
 - change jobs
 - change marital status
 - change immigration status

The UIS needs this same information even if you upload it to your portal.

