Carnegie Mellon University

OPT Work Permission for F-1 Students

www.cmu.edu/oie
Optional Practical Training

READ THE OPT HANDOUT!

The Handout and the PowerPoint Will:

- Outline OPT Basics
- Review Application Process & Timing
- Questions?
Types of OPT

OPT = Temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student's major area of study.

- Types of OPT:
  - Pre-completion
    - Part-time (less than 20 hours per week) during academic year
    - Full-time during official breaks and vacations
  - Post-completion
    - Full-Time
  - STEM extension
    - Full-Time
Practical Considerations

During OPT period:

- You remain in F-1 status
- OPT is not a status, it is a benefit
- CMU holds your SEVIS record
- OIE still your advisors/visa sponsor!
Optional Practical Training Usage

• 12 months per advanced degree level
• Can be used before or after program completion
  – Full time when school is not in session
  – Part time when school is in session (no more than 20 hours per week)
Optional Practical Training Usage

• You choose start and end dates for all periods of OPT

• Once USCIS grants the work permission the time is “used” and cannot be restored
OPT Usage

- 12 months per **advanced** degree level
  - Can’t have another 12 months of OPT after 2\textsuperscript{nd} Master’s
- Once OPT has been granted, you have used the benefit
OPT Usage

• Full-time pre-completion OPT deducted from the 12 months at 100%
  ▪ (can only be used in the summer/official school breaks!!)

• Part-time pre-completion OPT deducted from the 12 months at $\frac{1}{2}$ rate
OPT Usage

• Post-completion OPT application may need to be filed while waiting for Pre-completion to be approved.

• **2 SEPARATE APPLICATIONS** must be filed:
  – 1 for pre-completion OPT
  – 1 for post-completion OPT
  – Same time frame for approval
  – 2 fees!
What work can you do during Pre-completion OPT?

- **Any/all** – As long as it:
  - Is related to **YOUR** field and level of study
  - Paid, unpaid, volunteer, contract
  - Job title **doesn’t** matter…
  - **BUT** the nature of the work **does**

You can only legally work in the U.S. when:

• Have received the EAD Card
• Within valid dates on EAD
The Application Process has IMPORTANT Timelines!!

No more than 90 days BEFORE requested start date

OPT I-20 no more than 30 days old
OPT I-20: The 30 Day Rule!!

- OPT application **must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date your OPT I-20 is issued.**
- Be ready to file when you turn in your request!
- I-20 more than 30 days past issuance date = **OPT DENIED!**
## Employment Authorizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>FULL/PART-TIME</th>
<th>STATUS REQUESTED</th>
<th>START DATE</th>
<th>END DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Completion OPT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21 May 2018</td>
<td>10 Aug 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Change of Status/CAP-GAP Extension


## Authorized Reduced Course Load


## Travel Endorsement

This page when properly endorsed may be used for reentry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each certification signature is valid for one year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>SIGNATURE</th>
<th>DATE ISSUED</th>
<th>PLACE ISSUED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7-2-2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signature: [Signature]

Date Issued: 7-2-2015

Place Issued: [Place Issued]
OPT Denial

• OPT application **must be received** by USCIS within **30 days of the date your OPT I-20 is issued**.

• Be ready to file when you turn in your request!

• I-20 more than 30 days past issuance date?

• **OPT DENIED!**
The Application is a Three Part Process

1. **Step 1. Recommendation**
   - Signed by your advisor & submitted to OIE

2. **Step 2. New I-20**
   - Goal: new I-20 with OPT recommendation
   - I-20 TIME: 5 business days at OIE

3. **Step 3. Application**
   - Mail to USCIS
   - Goal: EAD card
   - APPROVAL TIME: Up to 90 days
The Application Process:

Pre-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) Recommendation Form

To: Student OPT Applicant
Complete the following information. The OIE advisor will use the information you provide to recommend your OPT.

Name: ___________________________ Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy): ___________________________
(Family) (First)

Andrew ID: ___________________________ Non-Andrew e-mail: ___________________________

Address*: ___________________________ (State & Zip Code)
(Street) (City)

*Address must also be updated in SIO!

☐ Check here if you have a secondary MAJOR or are in a dual degree program.

OPT Start Date: ___________________________ OPT End Date: ___________________________

Full-time or Part-time: ___________________________ Passport Expiration (mm/dd/yyyy): ___________________________

Check one: ☐ The work ☐ WILL ☐ WILL NOT directly relate to my field of study/degree program.

Have you applied for OPT before?: ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, Educational Level (circle) Bachelor’s Master’s PhD

☐ I understand that all periods of pre-completion OPT are deducted from the available period of post-completion OPT.
The Application Process: Advisor’s Form

THIS INFORMATION MUST BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED BY THE ACADEMIC ADVISOR OR DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR, NOT BY THE STUDENT.

This is to certify that __________________________ is expected to complete all requirements for the degree on

(Student’s name)

and will receive the degree of __________________________, in the field or major of __________________________.

(Date: mm/dd/yyyy) *actual completion-not end of month (Level) (Field of Study)

(Name of Academic Advisor or Authorized Department Personnel—Please Print) (Signature of Academic Advisor or Authorized Department Personnel)

(Telephone Number and/or email address) (Date) 7

Updated 9/2013

Your academic advisor completes this section.
Choosing Your OPT Start Date

• **Start date:** Start date of employment

• **End date:** End date of employment (can’t go past program completion date)

• Summer: OPT can start after classes/finals end and must end before start of fall term.

• Remember, it will take up to 90 days for approval!

• **CAREFUL – CAN’T CHANGE DATES** once sent to USCIS

• **NO WORK** without EAD!
The Application Process: OPT Dates

• Completed Form…
  • Submit at OIE front desk/email to oie@andrew.cmu.edu
  • Pre-completion I-20 ready for pick up from OIE front desk in 5 business days

• NO email reminders
The Application Process

• Be aware of processing times:
  
  • Up to 90 days to be approved…
    
    ..or longer if application is returned, something is missing, etc.
  
  • Cannot expedite OPT requests with USCIS (can slow processing!)

No work until card received and you are within start and end dates on card!
What do I include with my application?

Include *ALL* Materials on PAGE 1 in Pre-Completion OPT Handout.
What Do I Include?

✓ G-1145 form
✓ Check for $410
  (payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security)
✓ Two U.S. passport-sized photos (No Glasses)
✓ Completed, signed I-765 form
✓ Copies of all I-20s issued to you
✓ Copy of passport
✓ Copy of F-1 visa stamp
✓ Copy of I-94 record (www.cbp.gov/i94)
✓ Copy of previous EAD (if you’ve applied for OPT before)

Items are listed on page 1 of the OPT handout!!
G-1145 Form

Complete this form and clip it on top of the first page of your immigration form(s).

Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name
Your LAST NAME

Applicant/Petitioner Full First Name
Your First Name

Applicant/Petitioner Full Middle Name
Your Middle Name

E-mail Address
xxxxxx@gmail.com

Mobile Phone Number (Text Message)
412-123-4567

• G-1145 - first page of application
• Free to file
• More like 1-2 weeks…
• Disregard form expiration date – be sure to download from uscis.gov

When Will I Be Notified?
USCIS will notify you within 24 hours of accepting your immigration form(s).

Form G-1145
OMB No. 1615-0109
Expires 09/30/2014
Preparing Your Check

Pre-OPT Application

Sign Your Name Here

US Department of Homeland Security

$410.00

Four Hundred and Ten

Date mm/dd/yyyy

YOUR NAME
123 YOUR STREET
YOUR CITY STATE ZIP
(123)456-7890

YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
ANYTOWN, USA

Carnegie Mellon University
Preparing Your Check

Leave the back **BLANK**
Preparing Your Application: Photos

OIE Cannot Check Photos!

• **Write your name AND I-94 # on back!**
  – Write lightly – don’t damage the photo

• Make sure they are the correct size!

• **DO NOT Wear Glasses!**

• **DO NOT USE OLD PHOTO’S!!!**

![Photo Dimensions Diagram]
Preparing Your Application: Tips

• You can include your check & photos in marked white envelope:

• Attach to application – don’t staple photos!
Form I-765

https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

• Complete Online – form fillable pdf
• USCIS uses machine readable scanner
Form I-765

START HERE - Type or print in black ink.

I am applying for:

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

Check the box:

“Permission to accept employment…”
#1: Last name, First name, Middle Name
(If No Middle Name – Leave Blank)

• #3: **Be careful of address**!
  • This must be a U.S. address!
  • Where will you be in 90+ days?
  • Do NOT use a P.O. Box address.
  • Governmental Mail **NOT** forward by USPS!
  • Keep name on mailbox

**Remember:**
• This address determines the USCIS location to which you send your OPT application.
• This address is the location to which USCIS will mail your receipt notice and EAD card.

## U.S. Mailing Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Number and Name</th>
<th>Apt. Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C/O Jane Doe 300 Grand Ave.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town or City</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Bay</td>
<td>FL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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If you believe you will change addresses within the next three months, you are advised to list the address of a trusted friend or family member.

If you choose to enter your friend or family member’s address, you must also include a “care of” name. This is indicated by writing “C/O” and then the name of your friend or family member before the street address.
Form I-765

#9A: Do you have a Social Security Number?

#9B: Enter SSN Number

#10: ONLY if you answered NO for #9A, and would like an SSN Number – and will be at address used on I-765 – Complete questions 10, 11, 12, and 13.
Form I-765

#14: Write in I-94 Number
https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home

#15: Check “Yes” ONLY if you have had OPT before.

List the appropriate USCIS Service Center, Refer to EAD… code could be:
EAC = Vermont
SRC = Texas
WAC = California
LIN = Nebraska
YSC = Potomac
List OPT start date.
#16 and #17: Refer to your latest port of entry stamp in your passport.

Please Note: **ANY** U.S. Point of Entry outside the U.S. – Where you enter through immigration.

#18: “F-1 Student”

#19: “Student”

#20: Post Completion OPT code: (c)(3)(A)
Form I-765

Certification
I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the Who May File Form I-765 section of the Instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Item Number 20.

Applicant’s Signature

Don’t forget to sign!

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

Telephone Number

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant
I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.

Preparer’s Signature

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

Printed Name

Address

Sign within lines in dark blue ink
Required **Photocopies of Documents**

- I-94 printout ([www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94))
  OR White I-94 card (front & back)

- Photo page of passport

- Most recent F-1 visa stamp

- **ALL I-20s ever issued** (including Pre-OPT)
  • Be sure all I-20s have been signed by you!
Optional Cover Letter

• Cover letter **not required**, unless something is missing or further explanation is required:
  • Missing I-20
    -(check your records then contact your school)
  • Missing EAD
    -No template: Just “To whom it may concern: I am missing ‘X’”
Dependents in F-2 Status

• F-2 dependents will receive a new I-20

F-2 documents NOT submitted in OPT application

• F-2(s) Must ALWAYS Travel with:
  • New F-2 I-20
  • Copies of F-1’s Documents (OPT I-20, EAD card(s), Job Offer Letter)
Make A Copy of **ENTIRE** Application!!

You will need this information in the future!
Scan, copy, etc…
But make sure it is a copy of the *entire application*
Mailing your Application: FedEx/UPS

On I-765 (#3), if you use an address in:
Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, DC, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067
Mailing your Application: FedEx/UPS

On I-765 (#3), if you use an address in:


USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034
Mailing your Application

If you mail your application with **ANY SERVICE** other than FedEx or UPS…

Please find that specific lockbox [here](#)

**DO NOT MAIL** Regular Mail!
If You Make a Mistake on Your Application…

DON’T PANIC!

Contact OIE!
And
NEVER Send in Duplicate Applications!
The Waiting Game: Next Steps

You should receive from USCIS:
1. Text message or email with case number
   • (within 2 to 3 weeks)
2. Paper Receipt Notice
   • (within 4 weeks)
3. Approval Notice
   • (up to 90 days)
4. EAD card
   • (up to 90 days)

Remember To Be Patient
On November 3, 2014, we received your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, Receipt Number EAC: and sent you the receipt notice that describes how we will process your case. Please follow the instructions in the notice. If you do not receive your receipt notice by December 3, 2014, please call Customer Service at 1-800-375-5283. If you move, go to www.uscis.gov/addresschange to give us your new mailing address.
Keeping Records & Maintaining Status

Job *must* be related to level & field of study at CMU

Keep documentation of employment for *your* records:

- Employer/company
- Employer address
- # hours per week
- Job description
- Supervisor contact info
Keeping Records

- **Paid work:** Offer letter, Paystubs, W-2 forms, etc.
- **Unpaid work:** Employer letters
  
  **NOTE:** Employer **MAY NOT** be able to write letter for unpaid work – **check before starting job**!

- F-1 students on OPT **MUST** keep local & permanent addresses current
- Must notify OIE within 10 days of a move
- How?
  - Update SIO: [https://s3.as.cmu.edu/sio/index.html](https://s3.as.cmu.edu/sio/index.html)
Unemployment Days

• Unemployment days *do not “count”* on pre-completion OPT

• For students on post-completion OPT (after you graduate), you may not be unemployed for more than 90 days.
Social Security Number (SSN)

- Use Pre-completion OPT I-20 and EAD to apply for an SSN
- Instructions on [OIE Website](#)! 
- Apply in person at SSN office
- Card mailed in 7-10 days – keep in safe place!
SSN Tips

- Do not apply more than 30 days before the EAD start date.
- Apply **anywhere in the US**!
- SSN is not work authorization – you can start work without it **as long as you have your EAD**.
Adding to your I-20 “collection”

- Pre-Completion I-20 is your new I-20
- Valid even after Pre-Completion OPT period is over
- KEEP all I-20s! Needed for Post-Completion OPT
OIE Web Resources
Contact OIE at: oie@andrew.cmu.edu
Warner Hall, 3rd Floor
Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00
412-268-5231
www.cmu.edu/oie
oie@andrew.cmu.edu