Carnegie Mellon University

SIGN-IN REQUIRED!

Did you Swipe your Student ID Card?
Carnegie Mellon University

OPT Work Permission for F-1 Students

2019 EDITION
Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OIE IS LAUNCHING E-FORMS!

READ THE OPT HANDOUT!

Today we will:

• Outline OPT Basics
• Review Application Process & Timing
• Discuss work options in US after OPT (H-1B, etc.)
• Questions?
Optional Practical Training

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

• Types of OPT:
  • Pre-completion
  • Post-completion
  • STEM extension

• Part-time or Full-time
  - Always full-time after completion of requirements for degree
Practical Considerations

During OPT period:

• You remain in F-1 status
• OPT is not a status, it is a benefit
• CMU/OIE still maintains your SEVIS record
  • So you still have reporting requirements to OIE!!
Employment

What work can you do during Post Completion OPT?

• **Any** – 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*

No job offer is needed for you to apply for OPT!
Employment

Types of employment that are acceptable while in the initial period of Post-Completion OPT:

- Multiple employers.
- Short-term multiple employers (performing artists).
- Work for hire.
- Self-employed business owner.
- Employment through an agency or consulting firm.
- Paid employment.
- Unpaid employment.*

*A student may work as a volunteer or unpaid intern, where this practice does not violate any labor laws. The work must be at least 20 hours per week for a student on post-completion OPT. A student must be able to provide evidence acquired from the student’s employer to verify that the student worked at least 20 hours per week during the period of employment.
OPT Usage

- 12 months per advanced degree level
- Can’t have another 12 months of OPT after 2\textsuperscript{nd} Master’s
- \textbf{Once USCIS grants OPT, you have used the benefit!!}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzcd}
\text{Bachelor’s Degree} & \\
\text{Master’s Degree} \\
\text{Doctoral Degree}
\end{tikzcd}
\end{center}
The Application is a Three Step Process

1. Step 1. Recommendation
   - Signed by your advisor & submitted to OIE through the MyOIE Portal

2. Step 2. New I-20
   - Goal: new I-20 with OPT recommendation
   - I-20 TIME: 5 to 10 business days at OIE

3. Step 3. Application
   - Mail to USCIS
   - Goal: EAD card
   - APPROVAL TIME: 3 to 5 months!!
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!!**

Not yet eligible to apply for Post-OPT

USCIS Accepts Post-Completion

OPT Applications

Requestable

OPT Start Date

60 Days

90 Days

No longer eligible to apply for Post-OPT

If OPT is denied **before** end of 60 day grace period, it **MAY** be possible to apply again.

If OPT is denied **after** 60 day grace period, the benefit is **forfeited**.
The Application Process has **IMPORTANT Timelines!!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If You Are Graduating In:</th>
<th>Then Your Program Ends On:</th>
<th>The EARLIEST You Can Mail Your Application To USCIS Is:</th>
<th>The LATEST Your Application MUST Reach USCIS Is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>May 16, 2019</td>
<td>February 15, 2019</td>
<td>July 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2019</td>
<td>August 13, 2019</td>
<td>May 15, 2019</td>
<td>October 12, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>December 18, 2019</td>
<td>September, 19, 2019</td>
<td>February, 16, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PhD Students: Potential End Dates

- Date of defense
- Date corrections will be completed
- Date you turn in dissertation and committee signs off
- OR Employment start date (if you have completed all your requirements – EXCEPT thesis/dissertation)

PhD students need to apply for Post-OPT no earlier than 90 days before one of the above examples of end dates, and no later than 60 days after that date.
Program End Date Listed On Your OPT I-20 Is The Last Day You Can Work at CMU!
ARE YOU WORKING ON-CAMPUS!?!?

Then, if your Program End Date has changed, you **MUST** give a copy of your New OPT I-20 to CMUWorks and your CMU Department Payroll Administrator!!

**(ONLY if your Program End Date has changed!!)**
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!**
1. Login to your MyOIE Portal Account
2. Check and make sure all biographical data is correct and up-to-date

3. Next click on: “F-1 Practical Training”

4. Then click on: “Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Request Form”
Next complete the Post-OPT e-form as required:

- **REMEMBER – YOU MUST ATTEND AN OPT INFORMATION SESSION BEFORE YOU SUBMIT THIS E-FORM!**

- Is the above information correct?
Next complete the Post-OPT e-form as required:

- **CURRENT RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**
  - Do you live at the current address listed below?
  - If NO... **STOP**
Next complete the Post-OPT e-form as required:

- PLEASE CONFIRM
  - Personal Email
  - Requested OPT Start Date
  - Requested OPT End Date
  - Department
  - Passport Expiration
  - Are you graduating with multiple majors/degrees at this time?
  - Have you applied for OPT before?
  - How would you like to receive your new I-20?
**MyOIE Portal**

隗 REMEMBER!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If You Are Graduating In:</th>
<th>Then Your Program Ends On:</th>
<th>Select Any OPT Start Date Between The Following Dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>May 16, 2019</td>
<td>May 17, 2019 – July 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2019</td>
<td>August 13, 2019</td>
<td>August 14, 2019 – October 12, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>December 18, 2019</td>
<td>December 19, 2019 - February, 16, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MyOIE Portal
Upload A Copy Of Your I-94 Record

- Electronic arrival record (called I-94) **MOST** important immigration document you have
- Make sure all information is correct
- Proof of your F-1 status and D/S (Duration of Status)

Obtain I-94 record: [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)
Contact oie@andrew.cmu.edu if there are any mistakes!
MyOIE Portal
Upload A Copy Of
Academic Advisor’s Form

This is to certify that __________________________ will receive the degree of __________________________ in __________________________
(Student’s Full Name) (Degree Level)

the field/major of __________________________ and is expected to complete all requirements for the
(Field of Study/Major)

degree at the end of __________________________ Term Or (PhD’s ONLY) on this specific date: __________________________.
(Fall/Spring/Summer) (mm/dd/yyyy *actual completion)

(Name of Academic Advisor/Authorized Department Personnel - Print) (Telephone Number and/or email address)

(Signature of Academic Advisor/Authorized Department Personnel) (Date)

Your academic advisor completes this section. OPT CANNOT begin before this date.

Bachelors and Masters Students
– Term You Will Graduate

PhD Students
– Exact Date You Will Complete Requirements
MyOIE Portal – FINAL STEP

- **STUDENT CERTIFICATION:**
  - **ONLY CERTIFY AND SUBMIT THIS E-FORM IF EVERYTHING IS CORRECT**
  - If needed, you can save this e-form as a **DRAFT**
The Application Process: OPT Dates

- Choose dates CAREFULLY!

*CAN’T CHANGE OPT DATES AFTER APPLICATION IS MAILED TO USCIS!

- OPT Pending?

*Fine to stay in the U.S. But NO WORK without EAD Card!
Choosing Your OPT Start Date

• **Early Start:**
  • Work permission right after completion
  • On-campus work continues

• **Late Start:**
  • Good if no job offer
  • Consider travel plans
  • Won’t cut into days of unemployment (90 days)
If there is a **GAP** between your Program END DATE and your EAD CARD START DATE... *(example)*

- **Program Completion Date**
  - May 16, 2019

- **GAP BEFORE EAD CARD START DATE**
  - **NO WORK!**
  - *NOTE: YOU are still in a Valid STATUS inside the U.S. While OPT Application is PENDING.*

- **EAD CARD HAS ARRIVED!**
  - **WORK OK!**
  - *As long as you are within the dates listed on the EAD Card!*

- **HAVE NOT GRADUATED**
OPT Duration

ONLY Eligible for 365 days of Post-OPT per degree level!

If you applied for a period of Pre-Completion OPT, you must deduct that time from your 12-months of Post-OPT.

- Part-time pre-OPT deducted at ½ rate.
- Full-time pre-OPT deducted at full rate.

• NOTE: If you choose less than 12 months, only way to “redeem” remainder of 12 months is to go back to school, complete another program (at same level) and reapply for OPT.
When Can I Pick-Up My New OPT I-20?

- You will receive an email once your OPT I-20 is ready for pick-up at OIE.
- However, your OPT I-20 will **NEVER** be ready prior to the dates listed below.

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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!**
OPT Dates

Travel Signature should be updated every 6 months during OPT

OPT Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>FULL/PART-TIME</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>START DATE</th>
<th>END DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POST-COMPLETION OPT</td>
<td>FULL TIME</td>
<td>REQUESTED</td>
<td>17 May 2019</td>
<td>16 May 2020</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.

Title: FOREIGN STUDENT/SCHOLAR ADVISOR

Signature: 

Date Issued: 7-2-2015

Place Issued: Pittsburgh, PA
EAD’s Issued After Start Date Requested

• You requested OPT dates of 5/17/2019 to 5/16/2020

**But**

• *IF* USCIS does not process your application until 7/29/19
  Then your EAD card will have new dates 7/29/19 to 7/14/20

*Your Post-Completion OPT EAD card end date will NEVER go beyond 14 months from your program completion end date!*
Timing of Your Application

Be aware of processing times:

• Up to 3 to 5 months to be approved...
  ..or longer if application is returned, something is missing, etc...

• Cannot Expedite OPT!!

NOTE: Always check [https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/](https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/) for most up-to-date processing times. Select “I-765...” & “Potomac Service Center” from the drop-down menus.
What do I include with my application?

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

- **G-1145** form
- Check for $410 (payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security) **OR**
  - **Form G-1450** – to pay by Credit Card
- **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](http://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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant/Petitioner Full Last Name</th>
<th>Applicant/Petitioner Full First Name</th>
<th>Applicant/Petitioner Full Middle Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your LAST NAME</td>
<td>Your First Name</td>
<td>Your Middle Name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-mail Address</th>
<th>Mobile Phone Number (Text Message)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:xxxxxxxx@gmail.com">xxxxxxxx@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>412-123-4567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- G-1145 - first page of application
- Free to file
- More like 2-4 weeks...
- Disregard form expiration date – be sure to download from uscis.gov

When Will I Be Notified?
We will send the e-Notification within 24 hours after we accept your application.

USCIS Form G-1145
Expires 9/26/14
Preparing Your Check

Your Name
123 Street Name
City, State, Zip Code
(123) 456-7890

DATE mm/dd/yyyy

PAY TO THE ORDER OF U.S. Department of Homeland Security $410.00
four hundred and ten dollars only DOLLARS

Sign Your Name Here

Carnegie Mellon University
Preparing Your Check

Leave the back **BLANK**
If you wish to pay by credit card – please fill-out at attached the **G-1450 Form** to your application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant's/Petitioner's/Requester's Information (Full Legal Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Card Billing Information (Credit Card Holder's Name as it Appears on the Card)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given Name (First Name)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Card Holder's Billing Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Number and Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City or Town</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Card Holder's Signature and Contact Information:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card Holder's Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card Holder's Daytime Telephone Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Card Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorized Payment Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card Expiration Date (mm/yyyy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**“Petitioner is person applying for the OPT**

**Card Holders Information** Can be your information or a friend -> enter that information here.

**Make sure “Card Holder” SIGNS the form!**

Type or Print in Black Ink
Preparing Your Application: Photos

OIE Cannot Check Photos!

• Write your name AND I-94 # on the back of the photos!
  – Write lightly – don’t damage the photo!!
• Make sure they are the correct size!
• Photos taken within past 30 days!!
• NO glasses!
• White or off-white background with no shadows!

Well Composed Photo Composition Examples
Preparing Your Application: Tips

• You can include your check & photos in a white envelope, marked with your name and I-94 number:

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

**DO NOT** use an old I-765 from a previous OPT application!

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

- Complete:
  - Form fillable pdf
  - Handwrite in black ink
Form I-765

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.)

Check the box: “Permission to accept employment...”
Form I-765

1.a: Last name
1.b: First name
1.c: Middle Name
(If No Middle Name – Leave Blank)

Only complete this section if your name has legally changed.
i.e. You updated your passport with a new name, etc...
Follow the below instructions **ONLY** if you will use a friend or family member's address on the I-765.

- 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** fill in 5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 5.d, 5.e with this person's U.S. address.
- You would then check box “NO”
- You will now enter **YOUR** current U.S. address to where you are living at the time you submit your application to USCIS.

**Please Note:** You cannot use OIE's address!
If you know that you **WILL BE** at your current address for 3 to 5 months after submitting your OPT application to USCIS – then follow the directions below.

- Enter a US address (where you will be located in the next 3 to 5 months)
- You would check box “YES” – if this is the same as your current physical address.
- You would check “NO” if this mailing address is not the same as you listed for questions 5.a to 5.
- Leave Blank – ONLY is address is the same as listed above!
8. Leave Blank
9. Leave Blank
10. Check Gender Listed On Your Passport
11. Check Marital Status
12. Have You Filed an I-765 Before? Check Appropriate Answer
13.a: Do you have a Social Security Number? Check Appropriate Answer

13.b: Enter SSN Number

**ONLY** if you answered **NO** for 13.a, and **and** would like an SSN Number **and** will be at address used on I-765 -> Then complete questions **14, 15, 16.a to 17.b**
Form I-765

18.a: Enter Country of Passport

18.b: Leave Blank – *Unless* – You Hold Two Passports

19.a: to 19.c: Enter Needed Information

20: Enter Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
### Form I-765

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.a</td>
<td>Write in I-94 Number <a href="https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home">https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.b</td>
<td>Passport Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.c</td>
<td>Leave Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.d</td>
<td>Enter Country on Passport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.e</td>
<td>Passport Expiration Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Your Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, parolee, deferred action, or no status or category)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please Note:**

**ANY** U.S. **Point of Entry** outside the U.S. - Where you enter through immigration

24: “F-1 Student”

25: “F-1 Student”

26: SEVIS Number
Form I-765

27: Write Post Completion OPT code: (c)(3)(B)

SKIP Questions 28 through 31.b

*Check Options 1.a to 2 As They Apply To You

3: Current US Phone Number
4: Current US Mobile Number
5: Current “Personal” Email Address – NOT Your Andrew Email
Form I-765

Please Note: You should **ONLY** complete pages 5, 6 and 7 **IF** they apply to you (See next slide!).

If they DO NOT apply, then Leave Blank.

However, **INCLUDE ALL 7** PAGES OF THE I-765 IN YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS.

Sign within lines in **dark blue** ink

---

**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.
Form I-765

If you have had ANY of the following in the past:
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- AND/OR
- Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- AND/OR (if applicable)
- A Previous SEVIS ID Number

Then complete 1.a, 1.b, and 1.c -> Leave #2 Blank and then follow the example picture with YOUR information

> 3.a. and 4.a write:
*Page Number – 3
*Part Number – 2
*Item Number – 27

>(if applies to you) 5.a write:
*Page Number – 3
*Part Number – 2
*Item Number – 26

If none of the above applies to you, leave page 7 black, but INCLUDE ALL 7 PAGES OF THE I-765 IN YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS.
Required **Photocopies** of Documents

- I-94 printout
  - [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home)
  - **OR** White I-94 card (front & back)

- Photo page of passport

- Most recent F-1 visa stamp

- **ALL I-20s ever issued (including OPT)**
  - Sign all I-20s before copying
Optional Cover Letter

Sample OPT Cover Letter

[DATE OF REQUEST]

[STUDENT NAME]:
[SEVIS ID NUMBER]:
[OPT REQUESTED: PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM]
[OPT DATES REQUESTED]:

Dear USCIS Officer:
Please accept this cover letter for my F-1 [PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM] Practical Training request. I am writing this letter because [REASON FOR LETTER].

Enclosed, please find my [PRE or POST-COMPLETION or STEM] application materials

Please contact me if you require additional information or documentation to process this request.

Sincerely,

[signature of student]
[NAME OF STUDENT]

• Cover letter *not required*, unless something is missing or further explanation is required:
  • Missing I-20
  • Missing EAD
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 (Part 2 - #5.e), 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: NFB AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121
Business, Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067
Mailing your Application: FedEx/UPS

On I-765 (Part 2 - #5.e), if you use an address in:


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

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

Please find that specific lockbox here

**DO NOT MAIL** Regular Mail!
What Happens After You Send In Your Application to USCIS?

You should receive from USCIS:
- Text message or email with case number
  - (within 2 to 4 weeks)
- Paper Receipt Notice
  - (within 4 weeks)
- Approval Notice
  - (3-5 months)
- EAD card
  - (3-5 months)

Remain Patient!!
If You Make a Mistake on Your Application…

DON’T PANIC!

Contact OIE!
And NEVER Send in Duplicate Applications!
Case Status Online: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

**Case Was Received**

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](http://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

- Paid work: 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!**
Yes
Is your Post-OPT Approved?

Yes
Do you have your Post-EAD Card?

Yes
Have you registered with immigration using the SEVP Portal?

Then you can update any of the below using the SEVP Portal.

- Add and Edit Employer Information
  - NOTE: you should only delete an employer if you have NEVER worked for them.
- Residential Address
- Personal Contact Information

You MUST report ANY changes in employer, address, etc...

within 10 days of ANY Change:

Be specific—this information is reported DIRECTLY to immigration (SEVIS)
Keeping Records & Maintaining Status
I Reported To Immigration...
Do I Need A New I-20?

- No new I-20 is needed for an updated residential address.
- No new I-20 is needed for an updated personal contact information.

At this time, if you update your information through the SEVP Portal and would like an updated I-20, **you must also complete the required sections of the OIE OPT Reporting Form**.

Have questions about reporting? Read the SEVP Portal Guide.
90 Day Unemployment Rule

You may not accrue more than 90 days of unemployment during the Post-Completion OPT...if more than 90 days...

Your SEVIS record will be terminated

OPT and F-1 status ends!

The start date listed on your EAD is when either:

• Employment starts
• Unemployment clock starts

*Employment (Full-Time) from an Immigration Stand-Point =

• MUST work 20 hours a week or MORE for a job to count as employment on OPT.
Travel

“I’m traveling before...”

- If you have applied for OPT and travel outside the U.S. before your program end-date:
  - You will travel with the usual:
    - ✔ Passport
    - ✔ I-20 (New OPT I-20)
    - ✔ Unexpired Visa
    - ✔ Enrollment Verification Letter from The HUB (Optional)

“But when I travel after I have applied for OPT – my I-94 record will change...”

- This is expected – And does not affect your OPT Application
Travel While on OPT/Pending OPT

*After Program End Date Listed on OPT I-20

You will always need the following documents in order to travel and re-enter the US while on any period of OPT:

- Valid passport (valid for 6 months into the future)
- Valid F-1 visa (not expired)
- I-20 (most recently issued)
  - Employer information Report to Immigration and listed on page 2 of your I-20 if your EAD Card has been approved
  - Signed for travel within the past 6 months
- EAD Card (or if EAD Card is pending – your USCIS OPT Receipt Notice)
- Job offer letter or proof of a future job interview, etc...
  - Check I.C.E’s website for updated guidance on travel.
Travel

- H-1B application pending?
  - **CONSULT** your H employer!

- Travel questions (need a new visa, etc.)?
  - Consult the [OIE Website](#)
Travel

EAD says not valid for re-entry!
• Don’t worry!
• This means not Valid for re-entry alone!

Canada and Mexico + adjacent islands?
• 30-day exception for expired US visa
  – *unless you apply for and are denied a US visa*
• Called Automatic Visa Revalidation

➢ DO NOT ENTER THE US AS A TOURIST!
➢ This will END your F-1 Status and OPT!
My Post-Completion OPT Plan Guide

OPT Application Period

- OIE Preferred Submission Date of OPT e-form 100 days before program completion date
- Apply to USCIS up to 90 days before program completion date
- OPT Start Date can be any day during 60 day grace period
- OPT Application MUST be received by USCIS before the end of the 60 day Grace Period

OPT Authorization Period

- YOU'RE ON OPT!! (BUT REMAIN IN F-1 STATUS)

OPT Grace Period

- After Post-OPT has ended you can transfer, change status, or leave U.S.
- YOU'RE ON OPT!! (BUT REMAIN IN F-1 STATUS)
- NO WORK unless authorized for STEM extension or change of status (Cap-Gap)

100 Days 90 Days 60 Days 12 Months 60 Days
Options After Your Initial Post-OPT Expires

- H-1B Temporary Work Visa
- 24-Month STEM Extension
H-1B Temporary Work Visa

Private Sector:
- H-1B effective start date is Oct 1\textsuperscript{st}
- The H-1B “CAP” or quota
  - 65,000 annually available to employers April 1\textsuperscript{st} (6 months in advance)
  - 20,000 additional H-1B spaces set aside for advanced degree holders

Universities and Non-Profits:
- Not subject to Cap
- University/Non-Profits employers can apply at any time for any start date
Cap-Gap Extension

• If H-1B is *timely* filed:
  • Between April 1 and before the end of your OPT
  • Then your OPT is **AUTOMATICALLY** extended from the end of your OPT to September 30 of the year filed

• Does your employer want a new I-20?
  • Directions of how to request a “Cap-Gap I-20” is on our [website](#)
H-1B/OPT Timeline (example)

**H-1B Filing Year Opens on April 1**

If H-1B (change of status -ONLY) Petition is accepted in the lottery, then you are eligible for a

**On OPT/STEM**

EAD CARD END DATE May 16, 2020

**CAP-GAP I-20**

NOTE: You remain in F-1 status until October 1, when your H-1B starts

**H-1B Start Date October 1**

**H-1B ACTIVE**

IF YOU RECEIVE H-1B APPROVAL – YOU MUST EMAIL A COPY OF THAT TO OIE, AS SOON AS IT IS APPROVED!
H-1B vs. OPT

OPT is *based on your major field of study*

- If you don’t like your job, you can start working somewhere else using your OPT.

H-1B is *directly linked to your employer*

- If you don’t like your job and decide to quit, you will have no status.
- Once H is approved, OPT is ended and F-1 is complete.
24-Month STEM Extension

Am I eligible?

To be eligible you MUST:

1. Have your most recent degree in a STEM designated field
   • CHECK the Major Code(s)/(cip code) on your I-20 NOW!
2. Be in the initial Post-Completion OPT period
3. Have a job or job offer with a qualified e-verify employer, that is paid employment

*NOTE: CMU is not a qualified e-verified employer for the purpose of STEM OPT!
24-Month STEM Extension

How do you apply?
Submit a 24-month STEM I-20 request to OIE
Can be done remotely!
-Directions on our website

Mail STEM application to USCIS

*Must* reach USCIS:
• Within 90 days of EAD Card end date
• *Before* end of Post-OPT period
Quiz Time

☐ TRUE
☐ FALSE
1. “I cannot travel outside the U.S while my OPT is pending....?”

FALSE!
Travel While on OPT/Pending OPT

*After Program End Date Listed on OPT I-20

You will always need the following documents in order to travel and re-enter the US while on any period of OPT:

- Valid passport (valid for 6 months into the future)
- Valid F-1 visa (not expired)
- I-20 (most recently issued)
  - Employer information Report to Immigration and listed on page 2 of your I-20 if your EAD Card has been approved
  - Signed for travel within the past 6 months
- EAD Card (or if EAD Card is pending – your USCIS OPT Receipt Notice)
- Job offer letter or proof of a future job interview, etc...
- Check I.C.E’s website for updated guidance on travel.
2. “I need a Job Offer to apply for Post-Completion OPT?”
3. “My Job can be unpaid during Post-Completion OPT?”

TRUE!
4. “I can still work at CMU and also get paid by CMU AFTER the Program End Date listed on my I-20?”

FALSE!
5. “I can begin working before the start-date listed on my EAD Card? It’s volunteering – That’s OK?!”

FALSE!
6. “I do not need to report any employment to immigration, if it is unpaid...”
7. “On the Form I-765, if certain characters do not fit – I can fill in the form in Black Ink?”

TRUE!
8. “I should get my I-20 signed for travel on my way to the airport...?”

FALSE
9. “If I get a new or replacement I-20, I should throw my old I-20 in the trash..?”

FALSE!
10. “My OPT I-20 was issued 2 months ago – and I was too busy to mail my OPT application – It’s OK to mail it now, right?”

FALSE!
**“The best source of information on immigration regulations at CMU is...???”**

The Office of International Education!!

FREE ADVICE At OIE!!
Office of International Education
Posner Hall, 1st Floor
412-268-5231
www.cmu.edu/oie
Carnegie Mellon University

QUESTIONS HERE
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

• “How long does it take to get authorization for Post-Completion OPT and when should I apply?”
  • It takes OIE 5 to 10 business days to process, your new Post-Completion OPT I-20. After you mail your Post-Completion OPT application to USCIS, it takes USCIS approximately 3 to 5 months to approve your Post-Completion OPT. Therefore, it is important that you apply for the authorization well in advance of the date you wish to start working. You may apply up to 90 days before your program end date and NO LATER THAN 60 days after your end date. **NOTE: The Post-Completion OPT I-20 cannot be more than 30 days old when it arrives at USCIS or OPT will be denied!**

• Does the job I have while on Post-Completion OPT have to be paid employment, or can it be unpaid?
  • For the 12 month period of Post-Completion OPT, the employment does NOT have to be paid employment. Therefore, a student who is self-employed (including performance majors with regular “gigs”), interning or volunteering in a position directly related to the academic field would be considered “employed” for the purposes of OPT employment. Employer may not be able to write letter for unpaid work - check before starting job. Unpaid work is acceptable by USCIS, but unless it’s truly “volunteer” work, there could be problems with U.S. Department of Labor laws. For the 24-month STEM extension, employment MUST be paid and full-time.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

• “What is considered full-time employment on the Post-OPT?”
  • Students must work at least 20 hours per week in a position directly related to their level and field of study.

• “Can I begin working before I receive the Employment Authorization Document?”
  • NO. You may NOT begin employment before you receive your EAD card from USCIS; working before practical training has been authorized by the USCIS, and you have physically received the EAD card, constitutes illegal employment that will jeopardize your legal status in the U.S. – Also, Students MAY NOT continue on-campus employment after the end date on the I-20 until they have an approved EAD card from USCIS.

• “I have my EAD Card – Now what?”
  • Immigration regulations REQUIRE that while you are on OPT, you MUST report address, name changes, employer and any interruption in employment, within 10 days to immigration. Submit reports to https://www.sevp.ice.gov/opt. If you do not receive an email from SEVP – you can find instructions on next steps here: https://www.cmu.edu/oie/opt-reporting/index.html

• How many days of unemployment am I allowed while on Post-OPT?
  • F-1 regulations require that you have employment in your field of study during Post-Completion OPT period. You are only allowed to have a total of 90 days of unemployment in your 12 month period of Post-Completion OPT.
**My Post-Completion OPT Plan Guide**

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- **100 Days**
- **90 Days**
- **60 Days**
- **12 Months**
- **60 Days**