STEM OPT Work Permission For F-1 Students

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
2020-2021 Edition
Agenda

Topics That Will Be Discussed:
1. Outline STEM OPT Basics
2. Review Application Process & Timing
3. Discuss work authorization options in US after STEM OPT (H-1B, etc.)
4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*READ THE OIE OPT HANDOUT!*
Types of Allowable Employment

- Must be a “bona fide employee” of the employer completing the Form I-983.
- The employer signing Form I-983 must be the same entity to employ you and provide the practical training experience required by Form I-983.
- Multiple employer arrangements, sole proprietorships, employment through “temp” agencies, employment through consulting firm arrangements that provide labor for hire, and other relationships that do not constitute a bona fide employer/employee relationship are generally not supported.

Volunteer, unpaid positions and self employment are NOT allowed during the 24-Month OPT STEM Extension.
Eligibility for the 24-Month Extension

- Be a recipient of a U.S. Bachelor’s, Master’s or Doctoral degree in a STEM-designated degree program (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math).
- Be authorized for a period of Post-Completion OPT and have not exceeded 90 days of unemployment.
- Be employed or have a job offer (directly related to your field of study) from an employer who is registered in the USCIS E-Verify Program.
- Employer completes and signs Form I-983 (employer must participate in E-Verify employer and have a valid EIN number).
- File within the required timeline.

Note: Up to two 24-month STEM OPT Extensions may be granted per lifetime based on completion of an advanced degree level and approved post-OPT.
Login to MyOIE's “Limited Access Client Services” Portal:
• To process a request for a STEM OPT I-20, you must follow the below instructions below.

Complete the MyOIE STEM I-20 e-Form Request
• You will find the “STEM I-20 Request” e-Form under the F-1 Practical Training tab.
• You can only submit the STEM I-20 e-Form (at the earliest) 100 Days before your current EAD Card expires.

A new I-20 will be created, and you will gather all the needed documents and mail your application to USCIS
• The new I-20 will have your STEM OPT listed on page 2 (Check your new STEM I-20 for ACCURACY!)
• Remember, new immigration documents take 5 to 10 business days for OIE to process.
• After you have mailed your STEM OPT application to USCIS, your STEM OPT application CANNOT be updated!
• Processing Times for STEM OPT applications – 3 to 5 months
STEM I-20 e-Form – Documents To Upload

1. Copy of previously issued EAD Card(s)
2. Copy of a completed **AND** signed I-983 Form (pages 1-4) Make sure the employer is **E-Verified**
3. Copy of your most recent I-94 Record
   - *(NOT Travel History)*
   - Confirm information on your I-94 Record is correct! Contact **OIE** if there are any mistakes!
STEM OPT Employer Responsibilities

- Be enrolled in E-Verify and remain in good standing.
- E-Verify is a government program that verifies employee’s work eligibility. Ask your Human Resource Department if your employer participates in E-Verify

*NOTE: CMU is **NOT** an E-Verify Employer for the purpose of STEM OPT Extension*

- Report material changes to the STEM OPT student’s employment to the DSO within 10 business days.
- Implement a formal training program to augment the student’s academic learning through practical experience.
- Provide an OPT opportunity that is commensurate with those of similarly situated U.S. workers in duties, hours, and compensation.
- Complete the Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students. In this form, the employer must attest that:
  - They have enough resources and trained personnel available to appropriately train the student;
  - The student will not replace a full- or part-time, temporary or permanent U.S. worker; and
  - Working for the employer will help the student attain his or her training objectives.
24-Month STEM OPT Extension – IMPORTANT Timelines!

USCIS must receive a complete request:
- **No more** than 90 days before current Post-Completion OPT EAD Card expires
- **No later** than 60 days from the date that the STEM Extension I-20 is issued by OIE
- Before the end date on your EAD Card!

*Submission after EAD Card end date = DENIAL!*
IMPORTANT! The 60-Day STEM OPT I-20 Rule!

- Your OPT application MUST be received by USCIS **within 60 days** of the date your OPT I-20 is issued.
- If I-20 is received by USCIS more than 60 days after its issuance date, your OPT application will be **DENIED**.
- You must be ready to file OPT application when you turn in your MyOIE e-Form Request!
While the STEM OPT Application is Pending...

THE GOAL?
• A New Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card)
• You may continue to work for up to **180 Days** while waiting on your new STEM EAD Card to be approved
  • This is unique to the **24-Month STEM OPT**
What Do I Include With My Application?
“What Do I Include With My Application?”

What To Include:
✓ **G-1145 Form**
✓ **Check** (payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security) **OR**
✓ **Form G-1450** – to pay by Credit Card. The fee amount is found on the [USCIS website](https://www.uscis.gov/). Click the ‘Filing Fee’ tab.
✓ Completed, signed **I-765 Form**
✓ Two U.S. passport-sized photos (No Glasses)
✓ Copies of all I-20s issued to you from your current degree level, including new STEM I-20
✓ Copy of most recent **I-94 Record** *(NOT Travel History Page)*
✓ Copy of **VALID** passport
✓ Copy of F-1 visa sticker (even if expired)
✓ Copy of previous EAD (if you’ve applied for OPT before)
✓ Proof of Degree Completion: Official transcripts confirming your degree and/or a copy of your diploma.

Include **ALL** the materials listed on OIE’s [STEM OPT Extension Instructions](https://www.STEMopt.org)
G-1145 Form

- G-1145 Form:
  - Should be the 1st page of your OPT application
  - Free to file
  - More like 2-4 weeks...
  - Disregard the forms expiration date but be sure to download from uscis.gov website.

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 Y
A Personal Check
Prepare Your Check Following the Format of the Image Below

• NOTE: There are different options for paying the I-765 Fee. You can find additional information about this on the USCIS website.
• Checks must be issued by a U.S. bank.
• Confirm the fee amount on the USCIS website. Click ‘Filing Fee’
A Personal Check
Prepare Your Check Like The Image Below

Leave the back of the check **BLANK**
G-1450 Form

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

US Banks ONLY!
Type or Print in Black Ink

“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!
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!
- You can include your check & photos in a white envelope, marked with your name and I-94 number.
- Attach envelope to application
- Do not staple photos!
Form I-765

Complete This Form By:

• Form fillable pdf
  OR
• Combination of form fillable and Handwritten in black ink

*Then Print and Sign in BLUE ink*

*NOTE: Use the most recent/updated I-765 Form ONLY. If you use an old I-765 Form, your OPT Application will be denied.*

Download the new form on the uscis.gov website

https://www.uscis.gov/i-765
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, “Initial permission to accept employment”
Form I-765

Provide other names you have used in an official capacity. Example: A preferred name in your Carnegie Mellon SIO record.
Form I-765

Follow the below instructions **ONLY** if you will use a friend or family member’s address on the I-765.

- If you will change addresses within the next 3 to 5 months, you are advised to list the address of a trusted friend or family member.
- **NOTE: YOU CANNOT USE OIE’S ADDRESS!**
- 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. name and address.
- **You would then check box “NO”**

- You will enter **YOUR** current U.S. address to where you are living at the time you submit your application to USCIS.

### Part 2. Information About You (continued)

#### Your U.S. Mailing Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.a</td>
<td>In Care Of Name (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.b</td>
<td>Street Number and Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.d</td>
<td>City or Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.e</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### U.S. Physical Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.a</td>
<td>Street Number and Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.c</td>
<td>City or Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.d</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

• Leave Blank – **ONLY if address is the same as listed above!**
8. If you have an A-Number, enter that information here. If not, or if you lost this information, then you can leave this blank.

9. Leave Blank

10. Check Gender Listed On Your Passport

11. Check Marital Status

12. Have You Filed an I-765 Before?
   • Check The Appropriate Answer

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.
Form I-765

13.a: Do you have a Social Security Number?  
*Check Appropriate Answer*

- If you check **YES** → then go to 13.b: Enter SSN Number.

- **ONLY** if you check **NO** for 13.a, and would like an SSN Number/Card → Then complete questions 14, 15, 16.a to 17.b

  - **NOTE:** The SSN Number/Card will be mailed to the address input on “Part 2, questions 5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 5.d, 5.e” after your EAD Card has been approved.
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

21.a: Write in I-94 Number
https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home
21.b: Passport Number
21.c: Leave Blank
21.d: Enter Country on Passport
21.e: Passport Expiration Date \textit{(Passport MUST BE VALID)}
22 and 23: *Refer to your latest POE stamp in your passport

NOTE: U.S. Point of Entry \textit{(POE)} outside U.S. is allowed! This is where you \textit{entered} through immigration.
*Can be the full city name or the abbreviation!*

24: **“F-1 Student”** *(This could be different if you changed your status inside the US. Contact OIE with questions.)*
25: “F-1 Student”
26: SEVIS Number
Form I-765

27: Write STEM OPT code: (c)(3)(C)

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

28.a. Degree

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

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

28.a Degree: Enter degree stated on your diploma and/or I-20

28.b: Employer’s Name as Listed in E-Verify (Ask your employer this question!)

28.c: Employer’s E-Verify Number (Ask your employer this question!)
Form I-765

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 an Andrew Email Address)*
Form I-765

Sign within lines in dark blue ink after printing the completed form.

NOTE: You will sign your I-765 Form in Part 3 (Page 5), but you should ONLY complete Part 4, Part 5 and Part 6 IF they apply to you! If they DO NOT apply, then leave Part 4, Part 5 and Part 6 BLANK.

For Part 6 -> See next slide for an example.

NOTE: You MUST INCLUDE all 7 pages of the I-765 Form in your OPT application to USCIS.
Form I-765
Part 6 - Page 7

If you have ever had **ANY** of the following:
- Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
- Optional Practical Training (OPT)
- 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.

(if applies to you) 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, then leave pg 7 blank and draw a diagonal line across pg 7.

**REMEMBER, YOU MUST INCLUDE ALL 7 PAGES OF THE I-765 FORM IN YOUR OPT APPLICATION TO USCIS!**
Additional Required Documents – Photocopies

- I-94 Record Printout, OR
- A photocopy of White I-94 Card (front & back)

- Photocopy of your VALID passport photo page AND a photocopy of your most recent F-1 Visa Sticker
- Photocopy of your current Post-Completion OPT EAD Card.

- **ALL** I-20s from your current degree level, including your new STEM OPT I-20. Remember to Sign all I-20s before photocopy them!
- Proof of Degree Completion: To obtain transcripts and/or a diploma, you will need to contact The HUB.
  - You will need to provide official transcripts confirming your degree completion and/or a copy of your diploma.
  - OIE recommends that you provide both (transcripts and a copy of your diploma).
Optional Cover Letter

Cover letter **NOT** required, unless something is missing, or further explanation is required:
- Missing I-20
- Missing EAD

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]
Dependents In F-2 Status

- F-2 dependents will receive a new I-20 as well
- F-2 documents **DO NOT** need to be submitted in your OPT application

**F-2 dependent(s) Must ALWAYS Travel with:**
- Their F-2 OPT I-20, and copies of the F-1’s immigration documents:
  - OPT I-20
  - EAD card(s)
  - Job Offer Letter
Double Check Your STEM Application!

AND

Make a copy of your ENTIRE OPT Application! (Including Your Payment!)

You may need this information in the future! Scan, copy, etc.
B E F O R E  Y o u  M a i l  Y o u r  A p p l i c a t i o n ...

**DOUBLE CHECK EVERYTHING!**

- Did you check that you are using the most recent/updated I-765 Form?
- Did you check the box at the top of the I-765 Form (page 1) indicating what you are applying for?
- Did you sign and date your I-765 Form on page 5?
- Did you include all 7 pages of the I-765 Form?
- Did you check the USCIS website to make sure that your application fee is correct?
- Did you check the F-1 I-765 mailing instructions on the USCIS website?
Mailing OPT Application – FedEx/UPS

NOTE: OPT Applications **MUST** be mailed from within the United States!

- Make sure that you checked the F-1 (I-765) mailing instructions on the USCIS [website](#)?
  - Click on “Foreign Students” and see the row with
  - ‘F-1 Optional Practical Training’ for the most up to date mailing address.
  - Note the distinct mailing address for FedEx, UPS deliveries.

- OIE recommends using Express Mail (FedEx or UPS).
  - That you mail your application packet with *Tracking*.
  - That you save a copy of the Express Mail receipt that you receive from FedEx and UPS.
  - This can help you prove that your application arrived at USCIS.
What Happens After You Mail In Your OPT Application to USCIS?
What Happens After...

You should receive from USCIS:
- Text message or email with your receipt number
  - (within 2 to 4 weeks)
- Paper Receipt Notice
  - (within 4 weeks)
- Paper Approval Notice
  - (within 3-5 months)
- EAD Card
  - (within 3-5 months)
What Happens After...

“I made a mistake on my STEM OPT Application... Now what!?”

Contact OIE!

And NEVER Mail In Duplicate Applications!
What Happens After…

• Once you receive your Receipt Number from USCIS, you can check your STEM OPT case status on the USCIS website.
• **NOTE: This website is not 100% accurate**
• Case status will stay/remain in “received status” until your STEM OPT has been approved.
Maintaining Your F-1 Status During STEM OPT

1. **You MUST maintain a valid passport**
   - If you need to renew your passport, this can be done from inside the US. You will need to contact your Embassy/Consulate for additional information.

2. **Follow ALL the STEM OPT rules and regulations**
   - The type of ‘qualifying employment’ you can participate in on STEM OPT is specific.
   - Employment during STEM OPT requires that your work be 20 hours a week or more, directly related to your degree/major field of study, that your employer is e-verified, and that you are paid.

3. **You must submit a STEM Validation Reports and Evaluations to OIE**
   - Instructions on how to submit your STEM OPT Validation Reports can be found on the OIE website. You can also review your STEM Planning Tool for specific dates and information.
   - You must also submit a 12-Month STEM Report and Mid-Point Evaluation, and a 124-Month STEM Report Final Evaluation. You can find those evaluations located on page 5 of the I-983 Form.
Maintaining Your F-1 Status During STEM OPT

STEM OPT Validation Reports Timeline

- 4 STEM Validation Reports (every 6 Months)
- The I-983 (pg. 5) Evaluations (2 total)

*(Six STEM OPT Validation Reports in Total!)*
Maintaining Your F-1 Status During STEM OPT

4

Updated your SEVP Portal account
• You MUST report ANY updates through your SEVP Portal, and this must always be done within 10 days of ANY CHANGE.
• NOTE: During STEM OPT you can ONLY update the below in your SEVP Portal account:
  • Add and Edit employer address and supervisor (ONLY!)
  • Residential Address
  • Personal Contact Information

5

Remember, you CANNOT exceed 150 days of unemployment time during your 12-month OPT and 24-month STEM OPT periods combined
• Unemployment time is defined as each calendar day that the student is not employed in qualifying employment.
• If more than 150 days, OPT and F status ends.
• REMINDER: Unpaid Work is not allowed during 24-Month STEM OPT Extension period.

6

“My STEM employer information changed. Do I need a new I-20?”
• What is considered an important STEM OPT employer “change/update” is determined by immigration.
  • You can find out whether or not your recent STEM employer change/update falls under immigrations definition of an “Important Material Change” on the SEVP website.
  • If the change/update is an “Important Material Change”, you will need to submit a new Form I-983 to OIE.
Maintaining Your F-1 Status During STEM OPT

- You **MUST** update OIE once you have an approved Change of Status (COS).
- It could be for an H-1B, O-1, etc., but OIE will need a copy of the COS I-797 Paper Approval Notice from your employer/USCIS **within** 10 days after your new status starts!

You will email **OIE** copies of:
1. Approval Notice (I-797)
2. Current EAD Card
3. Completed Final Evaluation (page 5) of the **I-983 Form**

Have additional questions about reporting requirements?
- Visit the OIE [website](#)
Travel During OPT/STEM OPT Period

If traveling outside the US, you need the below documents to re-enter the US:

- Valid passport (valid for 6 months into the future)
- Valid F-1 visa sticker (not expired)
- STEM OPT I-20 (most recently issued)
  - I-20 Signed for travel within the past 6 months
- EAD Card(s) (or if STEM EAD Card is pending, then your Paper STEM OPT Receipt Notice from USCIS, plus Post-OPT EAD Card).
- Proof of employment

You can check I.C.E's website for updated guidance on travel.
Travel (cont.)

If you travel outside the US, but have an H-1B Application pending with USCIS, you must:

• REFER TO your H employer and their attorneys with all travel questions.
  • Once you have a pending/approved H-1B, you must discuss ALL international travel with your H employer and their attorneys. OIE is not able to advise regarding travel for students in these circumstances.

If you travel outside the US and will remain in F-1 Status on STEM OPT, then you can:

• REFER TO slide 45
  • Refer to the OIE website for additional information

*NOTE: All EAD Cards state “not valid for re-entry” – This is OK. It only means that your EAD Card is not valid for re-entry alone. You will need all the materials listed on slide 60 to re-enter the US.
Travel (cont.)

Automatic Visa Revalidation (AVR)
- AVR may allow students to be admitted into the US, if they meet certain requirements. See OIE website for more information.

Requirements For AVR:
Students on OPT/STEM, who depart the US, for brief travel of 30 days or less to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands, may be admitted back into the U.S. if they have an expired F-1 visa and all other required travel documents. You can find additional information on the DoS website.

NOTE: Citizens of some countries are excluded; some adjacent islands are excluded (Cuba).

AVR does not apply if you:
- Applied for a new visa sticker
- Have been outside of the U.S. for more than 30 days
- Have traveled to a country other than Canada, Mexico, or an adjacent island
STEM OPT vs. H-1B

**OPT/STEM OPT**
- You can change jobs/employers while on your STEM OPT (as long as job/employer meet all STEM OPT requirements). SEVIS must be updated!
- You have 90 days of unemployment time while on 12-month OPT and an additional 60 days on STEM OPT (150 days total).

**H-1B Temporary Work Visa**
- H-1B is directly linked to your employer/job.
- Not as easy to change jobs/employers, since US immigration status is based on the job.
- Once H-1B is approved, your F-1 Status and your STEM OPT benefits end.
H-1B Temporary Work Visa

- **New Process!** Online Registration for H-1Bs now takes place between March 1st to March 20th. Find Information On The USCIS website.
- Private Sector: H-1B effective start date is Oct 1st. The H-1B “CAP” or quota is 65,000 annually, available to employers April 1st, plus 20,000 additional H-1B spaces for advanced degree holders.
- Universities and Non-Profits: Not subject to Cap and can apply at any time for any start date.

Cap-Gap Extension

- Cap-Gap Extension extends an eligible F-1 student's status to bridge the gap between the end of their F-1 status and the start of H-1B status, allowing the student to remain in the U.S. during the "gap" and continue working (if on active OPT/STEM OPT). The cap-gap extension is available to students who were either on approved OPT/STEM OPT or in their F-1 60-day grace period when their H-1B was filed and have a pending or approved Change-of-Status H-1B Petition with USCIS.

To be apply for a **Cap-Gap Extension I-20, you MUST:**
- Submit a Cap-Gap Extension e-Form Request to OIE. Directions on our website.
- You can also review the OIE Cap-Gap FAQ handout for additional information.
1. **What is considered full-time employment on the 24-month OPT STEM Extension?**
   • Students must work at least 20 hours per week for an E-Verify employer in a position directly related to the STEM degree, following the goals and objectives stated in the I-983 training plan.

2. **I have two part-time jobs. One of the employers is enrolled in E-Verify but the other is not. Is this allowed?**
   • No, all employment during the 24-month STEM must be full-time (over 20 hours a week) with an E-Verify employer as outlined on the I-983.

3. **How many days of unemployment am I allowed while on the 24-month STEM Extension?**
   • Students who receive a 24-month OPT STEM extension are given an additional 60 days of unemployment for a total of 150 days over their entire post-completion OPT period.
4. **What counts as unemployment?**
   - Each calendar day during the period when OPT authorization begins and ends that the student does not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment.

5. **Can I continue to work while my 24-month STEM Extension OPT is pending?**
   - If a student’s EAD expires while the STEM Extension application is pending, the student is authorized to work until USCIS makes a decision about the application, but not more than 180 days from the date the student's initial OPT EAD expires.

6. **How do I report any changes during my STEM Extension?**
   - If you have a residential address change, personal contact information change, supervisor contact information change, and/or an employer address change, you can report to immigration using the SEVP Portal.
   - Change of employer must be submitted to OIE via MyOIE Portal STEM OPT I-20 e-form. To submit your STEM Reports – email oie@andrew.cmu.edu.

7. **What documents should I present to my employer once my Post-Completion OPT expires and my OPT STEM is pending?**
   - The student should present the employer with the expired EAD card, the form I-20 recommending the student for STEM Extension, and proof of the timely filing with USCIS (Receipt Notice from USCIS).
8. **Can I switch employers while my OPT STEM application is pending?**

- Yes, but this is **NOT** recommended.
- You will need to upload the below documentation through your MyOIE Portal account *(Remember to login with “Limited Access Client Services”)*:
  - Copy of your **I-983 Form** Final Evaluation (page 5) signed by “Company A” (if your STEM OPT has already started)
  - Copy of your new **I-983 Form** signed by “Company B”
  - Copy of your EAD Card(s)
  - Copy of your most recent **I-94 Record**

OIE will update your information in SEVIS and with USCIS. You will receive a new I-20. Nothing additional would need to be mailed by the student to USCIS.
Additional Questions?

Visit:
- **STEM OPT HUB** on the Study in the States website
- **OIE Web Resources**

Office of International Education
Cyert Hall, 1st Floor (Atrium Level)
oie@andrew.cmu.edu
www.cmu.edu/oie