OPT Final Instructions

Application Checklist:

When you receive your I-20 with OPT recommendation, sign it and make a copy: you will use the copy for your application and keep the original. You will also receive a printout from your SEVIS record regarding whether or not you have had CPT: include this in your application as instructed below.

Assemble your application documents in the following order. Staple or paperclip the entire packet together.

- Completed Form G-1145 (Optional, but recommended. Only when sending with USPS to Phoenix.)
- 2 U.S. passport-sized photos (taken within 30 days and never used for any other purpose) in a small plastic bag. Write your name, birthdate, and I-94 number in ballpoint pen on the back of each photo.
- Check or money order current date (not a future date) made payable to: "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" (Do not sign the back of the check!) Check https://www.uscis.gov/forms/our-fees for the current fee for the I-765.
- Completed original Form I-765. Make sure to sign the I-765 form.
- Photocopy of I-20 with OPT recommendation, with signatures from you and ISS on the front page. Do NOT send the original I-20. Keep the original.
- Photocopy of valid, unexpired passport biographical page
- Photocopy of most recent F-1 visa (all students except Canadian citizens)
- Photocopy of front and back of I-94 OR printout of most recent electronic I-94
- Printout of CPT Employment page from your SEVIS record (provided by ISS)
- Photocopy of any I-20s showing Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization. If you have not had CPT, you do not need to include I-20 photocopies (not even of your current I-20).
- Photocopy of any previous EAD cards (if you were previously authorized for OPT or economic hardship)
- Photocopy of job offer letter, if you have one
- Any other documents personally recommended for you by ISS (optional)

Make a photocopy of your entire application packet for your records before sending to USCIS.

Mailing Instructions:

Make sure all the information in your packet is correct and complete. You are responsible for mailing your OPT application to the appropriate USCIS address in a timely manner. USCIS must receive your application:

- No earlier than 90 days before your program end date
  - Do not send your application packet any earlier than 91 days before your program end date, as sometimes even 2-day mail can arrive in 1 day. Your application will be automatically denied if it arrives too early. Check your program end date on the front page of your I-20.
- No later than the last working day on or before your 60-day grace period
  - Your grace period begins on the day after your program end date, found on the front page of your I-20.
- Within 30 days of the OPT recommendation date
  - You can find this date next to the ISS staff signature on the first page. This is the date the I-20 was created and OPT recommended.
ISS recommends you send your application packet via USPS and use tracking to monitor when your packet is received by USCIS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the address on your I-765 Form is in:</th>
<th>Mail your application to:</th>
<th>For Express mail and courier deliveries:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado,</td>
<td>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries: USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</td>
<td>USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa,</td>
<td><em><strong>only use G-1145 if sending to this location</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri,</td>
<td>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries: USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah,</td>
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<td>Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam,</td>
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<tr>
<td>or the Northern Mariana Islands.</td>
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<td>Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida,</td>
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<td>Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi,</td>
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<td>New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico,</td>
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<td>New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia</td>
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If you need to update the EAD card mailing address, contact ISS directly for advice. To avoid unnecessary complications and problems, ISS recommends you file your OPT application with a requested EAD card mailing address that will remain valid for at least four months.

What Happens After You Apply for OPT:

1. Check your I-20 program end date (on first page in “Program of Study” section): **this is the LAST DAY you may be employed as a student.** You may not work in any capacity until you receive your EAD and your authorized OPT start date arrives.
2. If you are a bachelor’s or master’s non-thesis student and do not graduate as expected, contact ISS immediately. Do not let your I-20 expire.
3. You’ll receive electronic notice when USCIS receives your application, if you submitted Form G-1145.
4. Within approximately three weeks, you will receive a hard copy receipt notice. Please check this notice for accuracy and inform your Immigration Counselor if anything is incorrect. This will have your official receipt date and case number, which you can use to track the status of your application on the USCIS website: [https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus](https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus)
5. If you receive a Request For Evidence, contact ISS immediately.
6. You may check the USCIS Processing Time Information website to get an estimation of how long each USCIS office is taking to process I-765s: [https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/processTimesDisplayInit.do](https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/processTimesDisplayInit.do)
7. If approved, an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) will be sent to the address used on the I-765 Form. Check the EAD for accuracy and inform ISS if anything is incorrect. Make two copies of the card: one for yourself and send one to ISS.
8. If you applied for a Social Security Number by using the I-765, your Social Security card will be sent to the address used on the I-765. Do not use the ISS address on the I-765 if applying for a Social Security Number. You should receive the Social Security card approximately two weeks after receiving the EAD card. Do not send a copy of your Social Security card to ISS.
9. Before you start working you must have your card in your hand. **You cannot begin practical training of any kind until the start date listed on your EAD, this includes volunteering in approved volunteer**
training programs (see ISS first), training and orientation for an upcoming opportunity. Remember, your employment/training must be directly related to your major.

**Reporting Requirements While on OPT:**

While on OPT, you must report any changes to personal or employment information within 10 days of the change. To report, log into myISS at [https://connect.iss.purdue.edu](https://connect.iss.purdue.edu) and navigate to the “OPT Reporting” e-form group in the “F-1 Optional Practical Training” category. Use this e-form group to report all changes to personal and employment information within 10 days. You must inform ISS each and every time your information changes. Also use this e-form to periodically validate information while on OPT. This e-form may also be used to request a new travel signature while on OPT. Use the following e-forms to report:

**Upload an OPT-Related Document**
- Receipt Notice, Approval Notice, EAD, Job Offer Letter

**Reporting OPT Employment Information**
- Starting employment with new employer, Employer name change, Work location change, Supervisor change, Job title and job description change, Changes in full-time vs part-time employment

**Report Employment End Date**
- Report the end date of employment

**Report No Longer On OPT**
- Change to a new degree program at Purdue University
- Permanent departure from the U.S. before the end of your OPT if you decide to end your work early and forfeit the remainder of your OPT

**Travel Signature Request on OPT**
- to indicate if you would like an I-20 printed after filling out e-forms to update information
- and/or to request a travel signature

**REQUIRED: Personal Information on OPT**
- Legal name, Living address, Phone number, Email

**REQUIRED: Submit your OPT Report to ISS**
Note: to submit your request fully to ISS, you must submit this e-form. If you do not submit this e-form, ISS will not be notified of your update requests. You will receive an email confirmation once you have successfully submitted the e-form group.

**Travel on OPT:**

International travel while on OPT or while OPT is pending is possible, but you should exercise caution. Please also be sure to check Purdue ISS’s updates about Immigration Changes before travelling: [https://www.iss.purdue.edu/ImmigrationChanges/](https://www.iss.purdue.edu/ImmigrationChanges/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Until graduation/program end date:</th>
<th>After graduation/program end date:</th>
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<tr>
<td>You must present the following documents to the officer at the port-of-entry:</td>
<td>You are strongly advised not to travel outside the U.S. before you receive your EAD card. The following documents must be presented upon reentry to the U.S.:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Valid passport</td>
<td>• Valid passport</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport</td>
<td>• Valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I-20 with travel signature dated within six months of your reentry to the U.S.</td>
<td>• I-20 with travel signature dated within six months of your reentry to the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I-797c Notice of Action Receipt from USCIS (recommended)</td>
<td>• Valid EAD</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Job offer letter (recommended)</td>
<td>• A job offer letter from a prospective employer or a job letter from a current employer.</td>
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**Additional Resources:**

Detailed information about OPT: [http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/OPT.cfm](http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/OPT.cfm)

Information on OPT STEM Extension: [http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/STEM.cfm](http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/STEM.cfm)