OPT Final Instructions

Application Checklist:

You will receive an I-20 with an OPT recommendation and a printout from your SEVIS record regarding whether or not you have had CPT. Once you have received these items, follow instructions below.

Double check your I-20 for accuracy:

- On page 1:
  - Under “Program of Study”, check your program end date. ISS may have adjusted the program end date. The date should be before your OPT requested start date.
  - Under “Remarks”, should have a comment about OPT
  - Under “School Attestation”, should have Designated School Official signature
  - Under “Student Attestation”, you should **sign and date the I-20**.

- On page 2:
  - Under “Employment Authorizations”, this is where your OPT recommendation is listed. Check to make sure the “type”, “full/part-time”, “start date”, and “end date” match what you intend to apply for. The “status” should say “requested.”
  - Under “Travel Endorsement”, should have Designated School Official signature.

*If you have any questions regarding the accuracy of your I-20, contact ISS immediately.* If it looks fine, sign and date the I-20, then make a photocopy. You will use the copy for your application and keep the original.

Double check your I-765 for accuracy:

ISS often sees mistakes on the following numbers:

- #1: Name should match what is listed on your I-20 (in the correct order)
  - Family Name (Surname/Primary Name on I-20)
  - First Name (Given Name on I-20)
  - Middle Name (Can be additional names that appear in Given Name on the I-20)
- #2: Only write in this section if you have legally used a different name in the U.S.
- #6: Make sure your date of birth is correct and matches what is on your I-20
- #10: If marked “No”, nothing else should be marked in 11, 12, or 13
- #20: If applying for post-completion OPT, mark (C)(3)(B)
- Certification: Make sure you sign, date, and write phone number
- Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant: Only write in this section if someone else prepared your I-765 for you

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.
- Filing Fee - You may pay by check, money order, cashier’s check, or credit card. (If using credit card, must also include **Form G-135-., Authorization for Credit Card Transactions.**) Visit [https://www.uscis.gov/forms/our-fees](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 by hand in blue ink.**
- 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 of other past I-20s.
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.

Regardless of what shipping method you choose, ISS recommends you 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>Mail your application to:</th>
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</table>
| Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands. | **For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:**  
USCIS  
PO Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036  
***only use G-1145 if sending to this location*** | **For Express mail and courier deliveries:**  
USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S  
Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034 |
| Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia | **For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:**  
USCIS  
PO Box 660867  
Dallas, TX 75266 | **For Express mail and courier deliveries:**  
USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067 |

If you need to update the EAD card mailing address, contact USCIS. 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
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
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. 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.

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/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Until graduation/program end date:</th>
<th>After graduation/program end date:</th>
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<tbody>
<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>
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<tr>
<td>• I-20 with travel signature dated within six months of your reentry to the U.S.</td>
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<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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Reporting Requirements While on OPT:

Updates While OPT is Pending:

- **Employment Information:**
  - Employment information cannot be reported until on an approved period of OPT. The OPT Reporting e-form only becomes visible in myISS once you are on an approved period of OPT.

- **Personal Information:**
  - Please report biographical changes in myISS under “Biographical Information” and address changes under “F-1 and J-1 Student Services – Address Update (U.S. Residential)”.

- **OPT-Related Documents:**
  - Upload your receipt notice, approval notice, EAD card, or job offer letter. The “Upload an OPT-Related Document” is available to you while your OPT application is pending and also once you are on your approved period of OPT. Note that this e-form is NOT meant for you to upload any OPT application documents, Social Security cards, or credit cards.
Updates While on Approved Period of OPT:

Once you are on your approved period of OPT, you will use the “OPT Reporting” e-form group in the “F-1 Optional Practical Training” category to report any changes to personal and employment information within 10 days of the change. 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 or reprinted I-20 while on OPT. Use the following e-forms to report:

Report 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

Travel Signature/Reprint Request on OPT
- Indicate if you would like an I-20 printed after filling out e-forms to update information
- And/or to request a travel signature
  - NOTE: when requesting a travel signature, please ensure that you have already reported your employment information here. If in doubt, please report the information again, and we will check your record to ensure up-to-date information.

Personal Information on OPT
- Legal name
- Living address
- Phone number
- Email

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

Updates if Ending OPT:
Use the “Report No Longer on OPT” e-form if you are ending your period of OPT for any reason, including changes of visa status, transferring to a new school, starting a new degree program, or departing the U.S. before the end of your OPT.

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)