

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Application Information

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Eligible students can apply to receive up to 12 months of OPT employment authorization before completing their academic studies (pre-completion) and/or after completing their academic studies (post-completion).

Eligibility:

- Must have remained enrolled for at least one academic year, in status and in good academic standing
- Employment must relate to student's major area of study

Steps:

1. Request approval from DSO up to 90 days before or 60 days after program completion. DSO will make recommendation by noting in SEVIS and endorsing I-20.
2. Complete [Form I-765](#) (Enter (c)(3)(a) for pre completion and (c)(3)(b) for post completion on questions 27 of app.) within 30 days of I-20 endorsement.
3. Gather documentation:
 - a. Letter from DSO providing recommendation for OPT
 - b. Endorsed form I-20
 - c. Transcript showing student has been enrolled full time for at least one year
 - d. Copy of form I-94, Passport, Visa
 - e. Copy of last EAD (if applicable)
 - f. Two identical passport style photographs
 - g. Copy of driver's license (if applicable)

Once Approved:

- If USCIS approves the application, the student will receive a Form I-766, "Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS. Use this EAD card to apply for your social security number (if you do not yet have one).
- Submit employment information in the SEVP student portal. Portal information will be emailed to you once OPT is approved.
- Student must begin working within 90 days of receiving their employment authorization from USCIS.
- Once OPT has ended, student has a 60-day grace period to leave the country or enroll in a new program. New Program must begin within 5 months of OPT completion.

How to pay (\$410):

- Pay by money order, personal check, or cashier's check made payable to "Department of Homeland Security"
- Pay by credit card using [form G-1450](#)
- Request a fee waiver using [form I-912](#)

Where to file: For students living in Texas, send completed packet to either of the following addresses:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For FedEx, UPS, and DHL

USCIS Attn: NFB AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067