OPT F-1 STUDENTS

Office of International Programs

Justin R. Ball  
Director  
jball@shsu.edu  
936-294-4607

Ricardo Williams  
International Student Advisor  
rwl062@shsu.edu  
936-294-3892
Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- What is OPT?
- OPT Facts
- STEM Extension OPT
- Applying for OPT
- OPT Reporting & Travel Requirements
What is OPT?

• Optional practical training is temporary employment authorization by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that allows F-1 students to gain practical work experience (on- or off-campus) by applying their academic knowledge to a position directly related to their area of study.

• Pre-Completion
• Post-Completion OPT: 12 Months
• Available to all majors
• Students in certain area of study may be eligible for a 24 month extension near the end of the 12 month period.
OPT Facts

- To be eligible, you must have completed at least one full academic year of study (fall and spring semesters only)
- Post-completion OPT is granted to students who will work AFTER graduation/degree completion.
- You should apply for OPT BEFORE you graduate/finish coursework
- The earliest you can apply for post-completion OPT is 90 days before your graduation or completion date.
- You do not need to have a job to apply for OPT
OPT Facts, continued

• Have not engaged in a full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for over 12 months at the same educational level.
• You are only eligible for 12 months of full-time OPT for each higher degree level earned. The 12 months begin with the start date on the EAD card.
• MUST work in a position directly related to your field of study
• You choose the date you wish to begin working.
• Start date MUST be within 60 days of graduation
OPT: Post-Completion, continued

• Can begin immediately after the program completion date but no later than two months (within 60 days), following program completion.

• Application must be received by USCIS within 60 days after program completion.

• If your OPT is approved you will be issued an EAD card, which you must have BEFORE you begin working.

• Employment must be full-time (20+ per week).

• May not exceed 90 aggregate days of unemployment.
**Post-completion OPT Time Frame**

- **Degree complete date (end date on I-20)**
- **OPT application deadline**: Apply up to 60 days after your degree completion (end date on I-20)
- **90 days**
- **60 days**
- **12 months**
- **60 days**

- **Apply up to 90 days before your degree completion (end date on I-20)**
- **OPT start date**: Choose a date within this 60-day period
- **Engage in OPT**
- **60-day grace period to apply for OPT STEM Extension, transition to another status, or return to home country**
OPT 24 Month Extension

- Eligibility depends on your area of study and the willingness of the employer to register in a government system called E-Verify.
- Application must be filled prior to the end date on your 12 month OPT card.
- Applicants can continue working with just a receipt notice even after the original OPT card expires.
- Students can only apply for this extension twice.
- Must file a new application, with a new fee.
Unemployment during your OPT period

- 90 day rule (During the initial 12 months)
- 150 Day rule (During the 36 months)

From the start date on your OPT card.
Applying for OPT

• You will need the following documents with you to apply for OPT
  • Complete the I-765 Form
  • Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance
  • Copies of Passport & Visa
  • Copies of I-94
  • Copy of receipt showing the OIP OPT Fee ($75) has been paid.
    • Authorization Code is OPT
  • Two passport-regulation photos which are less than 30 days old.
  • Any EAD cards or employment records from previous jobs in the US
  • A personal check, money order, or cashier’s check for $410, payable to Department of Homeland Security
  • Photocopy of current I-20 with OPT recommendation from DSO

• Please see OIP for more information on applying for STEM OPT extension. A few additional items are required.
# Application For Employment Authorization

**USCIS**
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

**Form I-765**
OBS No. 1615-0040
Expires 05/31/2023

---

**To be completed by an attorney or Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)-accredited representative (if any).**

**START HERE - Type or print in black ink.**

## Part 1. Reason for Applying

I am applying for (select only one box):

a. Initial permission to accept employment.

b. Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document, or correction of any 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.

c. Removal of my permission to accept employment.

(Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document.)

## Part 2. Information About You

**Your Full Legal Name**

1. Family Name (Last Name)
2. Given Name (First Name)
3. Middle Name

**Other Names Used**

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in Part 4.

**Additional Information**

2a. Family Name (Last Name)
2b. Given Name (First Name)
3a. Middle Name

4a. Family Name (Last Name)
4b. Given Name (First Name)
Part 2. Information About You (continued)

Place of Birth

List the city/town/village, state/province, and country where you were born.

19a. City/Town/Village of Birth

19b. State/Province of Birth

19c. Country of Birth

19d. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

Information About Your Last Arrival in the United States

20a. Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)

20b. Passport Number of Your Most Recently Issued Passport

20c. Travel Document Number (if any)

20d. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)

20e. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or status)

20f. Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)

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)(3)(C) for STEM extensions)

28a. Degree

28b. Employee's or Self-Employed Employee's Name as Listed in E-Verify

28c. Employee's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Certification Number

29. Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (A)(3)(B) or (C)(3)(B) in Item Number 27, and you are a nonimmigrant in the United States, provide the nonimmigrant category identification number (if any)

30. Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (A)(3)(C) or (C)(3)(C) in Item Number 27, have you EVER been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime?

31. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

32. Date of Your Last Arrival Into the United States, On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)

33. Place of Your Last Arrival Into the United States

34. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)

35. Immigration Status at Your Last Arrival (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or status)

36. Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or no status)

37. Current Immigration Status or Category (for example, B-2 visitor, F-1 student, or status)

38. Employee's E-Verify Certification Number or a Valid E-Verify Certification Number

39. Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (A)(3)(B) or (C)(3)(B) in Item Number 27, and you are a nonimmigrant in the United States, provide the nonimmigrant category identification number (if any)

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 30, refer to Special Filing Instructions for Those With Pending Assume Applications (K) in the Required Documentation section of the Form I-765 Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

(A)(3)(B) (C)(3)(B) for STEM extensions
G-1145
Applying for OPT, continued

• We will mail your application for you, but if you want, you can mail your application to:
  • USCIS Dallas Lockbox (USPS only)
    PO Box 660867
    Dallas, TX 75266
  • USCIS Dallas Lockbox (courier only, FedEx, DHL, UPS)
    Attn: AOS
    2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business
    Lewisville, TX 75067

• Recommended to get some sort of tracking for your package.
**OPT Receipt Notice**

The above case has been received by our office and is in process.

Please verify your personal information listed above and immediately notify the USCIS National Customer Service Center at the phone number listed below if there are any changes.

Please note that if a priority date is printed on this notice, the priority date does not reflect earlier received priority dates.

If you have questions about possible immigration benefits and services, filing information, or USCIS forms, please call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call the NCSC TDD at 1-800-767-1833. Please also refer to the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this notice or the status of your case, please contact our customer service number. You will be notified separately about any other case you may have filed.

---

**NOTICE OF ACTION**

**Form I-797C, Notice of Action**

**THIS NOTICE DOES NOT GRANT ANY IMMIGRATION STATUS OR BENEFIT.**

The above case has been received by our office and is in process.

Please verify your personal information listed above and immediately notify the USCIS National Customer Service Center at the phone number listed below if there are any changes.

Please note that if a priority date is printed on this notice, the priority date does not reflect earlier received priority dates.

If you have questions about possible immigration benefits and services, filing information, or USCIS forms, please call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call the NCSC TDD at 1-800-767-1833. Please also refer to the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this notice or the status of your case, please contact our customer service number. You will be notified separately about any other case you may have filed.

---

**RECEIVED**

**JUL 20 2015**

**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**USCIS Office Address:**

USCIS
Texas Service Center
P.O. Box 851488
Mesquite, TX 75158-1488

**USCIS Customer Service Number:**

(800)375-5283

---

If this is an interview or biometrics appointment notice, please see the back of this notice for important information.
Checking Application Status

Case status on-line available with Receipt Number

This notice does not grant any immigration status or benefit.

NOTICE TYPE
Receipt

CASE TYPE
L-765, Application for Employment Authorization

RECEIPT NUMBER
SRC1590392504

RECEIVED DATE
July 09, 2015

NOTICE DATE
July 13, 2015

USCIS ALIEN NUMBER

PAGE
1 of 1

DATE OF BIRTH
April 02, 1990

PAYMENT INFORMATION:
Application/Petition Fee: $380.00
Biometrics Fee: $0.00
Total Amount Received: $380.00
Total Balance Due: $0.00

NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS
Tracking your Application

- https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do
- Use your receipt number from your I-797
OPT Card
Reporting, Volunteering and Travel Requirements while on OPT
Employer / Volunteer Info

• OPT is NOT restricted to an E-Verified Employer

• Reporting Information
  • Employer Name
  • Employer Address
    • City, State, Zip Code
  • Employer EIN #
  • Starting Date
  • Your title
  • Supervisor’s Info
    • Name
    • Phone #
    • E-mail
Volunteering

- USCIS allows volunteering on OPT
- Must still be directly related to your major
- Must be at least 20 hours or more weekly
- Obtain a “Letter of Commitment/Volunteer” for your records
Travel During OPT

• While your OPT is **pending**, traveling outside the U.S. is okay. Carry your **OPT receipt** notice along with other immigration documents.

• Once your OPT is approved, a valid **EAD card is required to re-enter the U.S.**
Travel During OPT

• You are still on an F1 Student Visa
• Traveling out of the US is always risky, but if you choose to do so, in order to return to the U.S. you must have
  • Valid Passport (valid at least 6 months beyond entry date)
  • Valid F1 Student Visa
  • I-20 (which has been endorsed for OPT)
  • Valid travel signature (valid for 6 months from date signed)
  • Employment Authorization Document (EAD/OPT card)
  • Letter of Employment (on employer’s letterhead, stating your name, job title, brief description of duties, and a general idea of OPT start date; if you have already started, a letter confirming employment and knowledge of your travel plans)
  • 2-3 recent pay stubs
• Dependents must have their own I-20, passport, F2 visa and copy of the F1’s I-20, OPT card and employment letter
Questions?