

F-1 OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) APPLICATION PACKET

This OPT application packet includes:

- OPT Student Request and Academic Adviser Verification Instructions including Eligibility Requirements, When to Apply, How to Request the OPT I-20 from ISSS, Materials required to send to USCIS, Where to Mail the Completed Application, Information about the EAD card, and Requirements while on OPT.
- The OPT Request Form to be completed by the student, signed by the Academic Adviser, and submitted to ISSS.
- Instructions for completing USCIS Form I-765

Related USCIS Forms:

- Application for Employment Authorization (USCIS Form I-765): z.umn.edu/i765
- E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance (USCIS Form G-1145): z.umn.edu/g1145
- Authorization for Credit Card Transactions (USCIS Form I-1450): z.umn.edu/g1450

Form I-765 Instructions for F-1 Optional Practical Training

0. I am applying for: Check the box next to “Permission to accept employment.”
1. Full Name: Print family, first, and middle names. Use all capital letters. If you do not have a middle name, write “(N-A)” . If your name is too long, you can include a second page with your complete name as it is written in your passport. See the attached example.
2. Other names used: If you have not used other names, write “(N-A)”
3. U.S. Mailing Address: Use your current address or a residential address that will be valid for 3 months after submission of application. USCIS mail cannot be forwarded to a new address by the postal service. Discuss address options with an ISSS adviser.
4. Country of Citizenship or Nationality: Item 1 of I-20
5. Place of Birth: See passport
6. Date of Birth: See passport
7. Gender: Check one
8. Marital Status: Check one
- 9.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
- Mark Yes if you have a Social Security number, even if you lost the card.
- Mark No if you never had a Social Security number.
- 9.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN).
- NOTE: You are not required to request a SSN or card using this application. Completing item numbers 10-13.b. is optional. You can discuss this option with an ISSS adviser.
10. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? This is optional. It is not required. Mark Yes if you want a SSN and card OR if you need a replacement card. Mark No if you already have a SSN and card or if you don’t want to apply for one now.
11. Consent for Disclosure: If you want a SSN (or replacement card) issued to you, you must consent to having all the information in your OPT application sent to SSA. Mark Yes if you agree. If you mark No, you will not get an SSN with this application.
- Father’s and Mother’s Names. These are required for SSA.

Father's Name

12.a. Family Name (Last Name): Enter your father's last name

12.b. Given Name (First Name): Enter your father's first name

Mother's Name (Provide your mother's birth name). Enter your mother's name when she was born.

13.a. Family Name (Last Name): Enter your mother's last name

13.b. Given Name (First Name): Enter your mother's first name

14. Alien Registration Number or Form I-94 Number: Use the 11-digit number on most recent I- 94

15. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS? F-1 curricular practical training (CPT) authorized by ISSS **is not** employment authorization from USCIS. If you have previously submitted an employment authorization application to USCIS for approval (including for H-1B), check "yes" and provide additional information requested in item 15.

16. Date of Last Arrival or Entry into the U.S., On or about: See most recent stamp in passport or I-94

17. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.: U.S. city and state where you went through U.S. immigration.

18. Status of Last Entry: See most recent stamp in passport or I-94

19. Current Immigration Status: Write "F-1 Student"

20. Eligibility Category: The eligibility category for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training is: (c) (3) (B)

21. Write "N-A" in each of the 3 blocks

22. Write "N-A"

23.a. Write "N-A"

Signature, Date of Signature, and Telephone Number: Sign, date, and write your phone number

If your complete name does not fit in Item 1, type your complete name similar to the example below on a blank paper. Sign, date, and submit with your I-765:

Maria-Josephina Caroline Smithsonjohnson

I-94 number 12345678910

Page 1

My complete name is as follows:

1. Full Name

Family Name

First Name

Middle Name

Smithsonjohnson

Maria-Josephina

Caroline

Maria-Josephina Caroline Smithsonjohnson

<today's date in mm/dd/yyyy>

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) FOR STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

SUMMARY

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment directly related to a student's major field of study, and is generally used before or after completion of an academic program. OPT enables students to gain work experience in their field of study. 12 months of OPT is available per degree level for students of any major as long as the subsequent degree is at a higher educational level. Students on post-completion OPT are limited to a maximum of 90 days of unemployment. Students with certain majors in science, technology, engineering or math may be eligible for a 24-month extension of post-completion OPT. International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) must recommend OPT for a student. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) then provides final approval and issues an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Individuals must have an EAD before they can begin OPT employment. OPT authorization granted by USCIS cannot be changed or voided after EAD card is issued.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Students must complete the online OPT workshop at z.umn.edu/opt prior to submitting the application.
- Completed one full academic year of full-time study
- Maintained Valid F-1 status
- Employment must be in the student's major field of study
- Have not been authorized full-time CPT (Curricular Practical Training) for 12 months or more at the level for which the student will apply for OPT

NOTE: Students lose their OPT eligibility if they depart the U.S. during their grace period and USCIS has not received their OPT application prior to their departure.

OPT CATEGORIES

1. Pre-completion (rarely used)
 - a. Academic Year
During fall and/or spring semesters and student has not completed required coursework. On- and off- campus work combined may not exceed a total of 20 hours per week.
 - b. Vacation Period
Authorization may be part-time or full-time.
2. Post-completion
 - After completion of the degree program

WHEN TO APPLY

- **Pre-completion** Applications: Can be submitted to ISSS 100 days before your requested employment starting date.
- **Post-completion** Applications: Can be submitted to ISSS 100 days before your expected date of completion. OPT applications must be received by USCIS no earlier than 90 days before and no later than 60 days after the student's date of degree completion. Applications received outside this window will be denied.

Step 1: Request an OPT recommendation from ISSS

Submit these items to ISSS during walk-in hours or a scheduled appointment. ISSS will prepare a new I-20 in 7 business days. ISSS cannot accept your application for processing unless these items are completed:

- Student Request/Academic Adviser Verification Form
- Form I-765* (Use most recent version from ISSS website.)
- Certificate of completion of the OPT Online Workshop (paper or pdf)

* Instructions for completing Form I-765 can be downloaded from uscis.gov (go to "FORMS").

Step 2: Assemble the OPT application materials

Staple the application materials together in the following order:

1. Check or money order, payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" for the OPT application fee. For current fee information, go to uscis.gov, click on "FORMS" and scroll down to I-765.
2. Two identical passport-style color photos taken within 30 days of filing your application. Do not use a photo previously used for a passport or visa. The instructions with Form I-765 provide detailed photo requirements. Print full name and most recent I-94 number in pencil on the back of each photo. Place the photos in a clear plastic bag or an envelope and staple it to the application. Do not put staple holes in the photos. Learning Abroad Center (230 Heller Hall, 612-626-9000) offers photo services.
3. Original Form I-765 (Keep a copy for your records).
4. Photocopy of I-20 page 1 with your signature and page 2 with OPT recommendation.
5. Print of the most recent electronic I-94 at cbp.gov/i94. If you have a paper Form I-94, photocopy of both sides of Form I-94 (copy the back side even if it is blank). Do not mail the original paper Form I-94.
6. Photocopy of biographical page of passport.
7. Photocopies of as many as possible of the following that contain your name and photo: entry visa stamp with a photo, driver's license or state ID, student ID, and any previously issued EAD.

8. Photocopies of pages 1 and 3 of all previous I-20s issued before June 2015 and page 1 and 2 of I-20s issued after June 2015. Do not mail original I-20s.

We also recommend you submit a G-1145 E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance form. This form should be **paperclipped on top** of stapled application materials, and it can be downloaded uscis.gov (go to "FORMS").

Keep a copy of all of these documents for your records.

Step 3: Mail the OPT application to the appropriate USCIS Lockbox

OPT application must be received by USCIS no later than 30 days after the "date issued" on student's OPT I-20. Applications received after this date will be denied. It is the student's responsibility to mail the OPT application to USCIS. Mail the application materials from Step 2 by certified or express mail to obtain a signed receipt. Keep the receipt for your records.

Use the Phoenix Lockbox address if the address you indicated on FORM I-765 is in 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 Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

For USPS Certified/
Express Mail:
USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For Overnight/Courier
Deliveries (Non-USPS):
USCIS, Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Use the Dallas Lockbox address if the address you indicated on FORM I-765 is in 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, U.S. Virgin Islands, Vermont, Virginia, or West Virginia.

For USPS Certified/
Express Mail:
USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For Overnight/Courier
Deliveries (Non-USPS):
USCIS, Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121,
Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

You are responsible for mailing your OPT application to USCIS.

NOTE: Based on information provided by USCIS, we strongly advise you not use the electronic e-file application available on their website. While it appears that it could help speed the application process, due to a number of factors, it is likely to delay the processing of your application by several days or weeks.

Step 4: Wait for EAD to be mailed from USCIS

- It takes approximately 2 to 4 months for USCIS to process your request and mail your EAD to the address on Form I-765. To find current processing times for I-765 (OPT) applications, go to z.umn.edu/usciscase.
- Several weeks after you apply, you should receive a receipt notice (Form I-797) in the mail from USCIS. Go to z.umn.edu/usciscase to check your application status or contact the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.
- If there is a problem with the OPT application, USCIS will mail a Request for Evidence to the applicant. If this occurs, bring the Request for Evidence and the copy of the OPT application materials to ISSS for assistance.
- You may not begin employment until you have received your EAD and the start date is current, even if your requested start date has passed.
- You may not continue any on-campus employment after the completion date in block 3 of your OPT I-20, even if you have not yet completed your degree. Any on or off-campus employment after this completion date must be with OPT authorization.
- The EAD will reflect the dates of your employment authorization.

Step 5. Reporting Requirements while on OPT

- After your EAD is issued, F-1 OPT regulations require that you report address and phone changes, start and end of employment, and additions of an employer to SEVIS within 10 days of the change. SEVP (Student Exchange Visitor Program) has made it possible for you to enter and update address and phone changes and employer information on your own.
- On the employment start date of your EAD, you will get an email from do-not-reply.SEVP@ice.dhs.gov. This message will have login information to the SEVP Portal. There will be a link in the email with instructions on how to set up a Portal Account.
- Create a Portal Account immediately after you receive the email. The link to login and set up an account will be active for 31 days from the date you receive the email. Once you have the account, you will login to the portal and report address, phone, and employer information within 10 days of any change.
- Please Note: You are required to set up a SEVP Portal Account upon receiving the email from SEVP, however, ISSS will continue to accept address changes and employment information submitted through the online Report OPT Employment Form until June 30, 2018. Starting July 1, ISSS will no longer be responsible for this reporting and you will be required to use the SEVP Portal for all address changes and employer information updates.

REQUIREMENTS WHILE ON OPT

Go to iss.umn.edu/fstudent/opt-requirements.html for requirements while you are on OPT (including travel information).

ACADEMIC ADVISER VERIFICATION

Academic adviser should complete the section below.

To the Academic Adviser:

- **Do not sign this form if the "Student Request" section has not been completed.**
- Optional practical training (OPT) is work authorization that allows F-1 students to gain practical work experience in their field of study.
- Students most often use OPT to work for one year after completion of their degree, known as "post-completion OPT."
- Students are not required to have an employment offer to apply.
- If you have questions, call an ISSS adviser at 612-626-7100.

By signing this form I am verifying the following degree completion date:
(If you have questions, refer to the definition provided under #10).

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Month	Day	Year					

Academic Adviser Signature

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Month	Day	Year					

Name (print)

Phone

Department or College

Comments:

ISSS will complete this section:

Type of OPT:

- Pre-completion
- Post-completion. All coursework finished by completion date.
- Post-completion. All program requirements will be completed.

Completion date: # of Months:
Month Day Year

OPT dates: to
Month Day Year Month Day Year

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the OPT application process with student | <input type="checkbox"/> Previous OPT at this degree level? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 12 months full-time CPT? | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Plan/Holds/Registration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Info | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel discussed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check Assistantship end date, if any | <input type="checkbox"/> Send no earlier than 90 days prior to program completion date |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check CPT end date | <input type="checkbox"/> Completed OPT online workshop |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Give I-20 due date slip to student |

Date submitted to ISSS
Month Day Year

International student adviser initials

Adviser Comments