

F-1 Optional Practical Training Seminar

Syracuse University
Center for International Services

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

OPT is authorization for “training” before or after completion of your degree in a position directly related to your program of study.

How long can OPT Training be authorized for?

- All F-1 students are eligible for one year of authorization at each degree level
 - 12 months at the Bachelor's level +
 - 12 months at the Master's level +
 - 12 months at the Ph.D. level
- Some F-1 students may be eligible for additional OPT (STEM extension) if they meet all the requirements

What Makes OPT Optional?

- You are not required to do it, you do not have to apply for OPT
- You have some choice about when you can apply for it
- It is not something required for your degree or a course you can register for in your curriculum; you would use Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for that

Must the Training Be Related to my Major?

- The training must be in your major field of study as indicated on your I-20
 - All majors/programs of study should be listed on your I-20
- It cannot be in a minor
- It cannot be in a previous major/degree not included on your current I-20
 - Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, now doing a Master's degree in History-OPT would have to be in History

Do I Need a Job Offer to Apply for OPT?

- An offer for the training is not necessary to apply for OPT
- You do not need to wait for a job offer to apply for OPT



Who Authorizes OPT?

- The Center for International Services recommends the OPT by issuing a new I-20
 - not like CPT that we authorize
- OPT is approved and authorized by USCIS (US Citizenship & Immigration Services)



Who is Eligible for OPT?

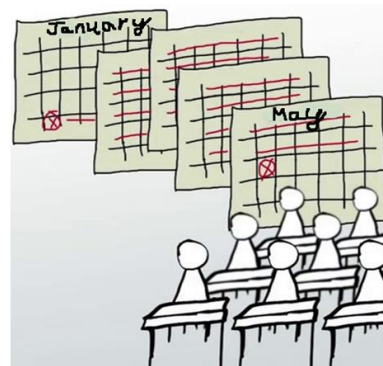
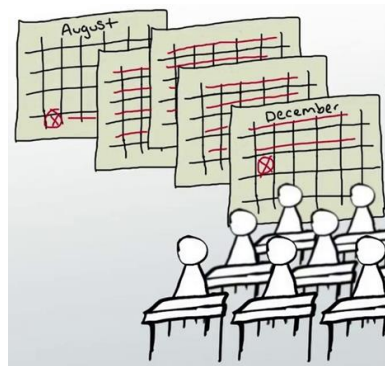
OPT is a benefit of F-1 status

- You must currently be in lawful F-1 status-you must be physically present in the U.S.; you cannot apply for OPT from outside the U.S.
- J-1 students are not eligible for OPT but are eligible for Academic Training
- J-2s, H-4s, L-2s, etc. are not eligible for OPT but may have other employment authorization

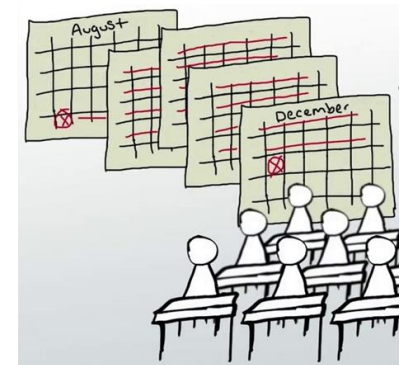
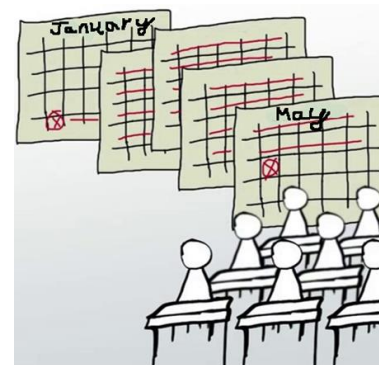
Who is Eligible for OPT?

You must have been a full-time student for at least one academic year (Fall and Spring or Spring and Fall)

- no time spent in an English language program counts toward this one year full-time requirement
- time as a full-time student in another immigration status (H-4, L-2, J-2, etc.) does count toward the one year full-time requirement

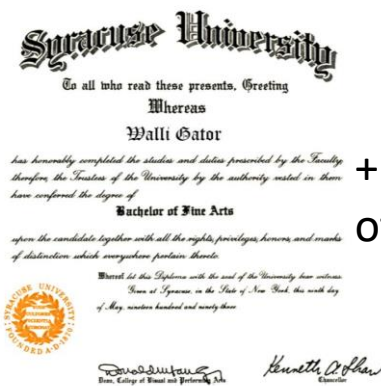


OR

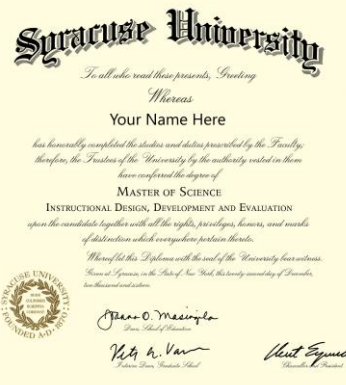


What Would Make Me Ineligible for OPT?

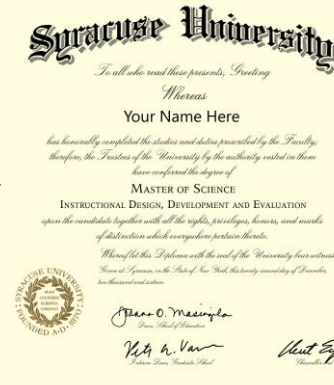
- You cannot have utilized an equivalent of 12 months of OPT at the same degree level or for a higher degree
 - Can do a Bachelor's degree and get 12 months of OPT then do a Masters degree and get 12 months of OPT and do a Ph.D. degree and get 12 months of OPT
 - Cannot do two Masters degrees and get two 12 month periods of OPT
- You cannot have done 365 days of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) at the same degree level



+ 12 Months
of OPT



+ 12 Months
of OPT



~~+ 12 Months
of OPT~~

Does Approval for CPT Affect How Much OPT I am Eligible for ?

- CPT is never deducted from OPT; you can use CPT and OPT
- But if you use 12 months of full-time CPT, then you will not be eligible for any OPT
- You can use as much part-time CPT and “up to 364 days” of full-time CPT and still be eligible for OPT
 - USCIS is closely examining extended periods of full-time CPT authorization

When Can I Use OPT?

Pre-Completion of program (before program end date on your I-20)

- During annual/summer vacation- Part-time or Full-time
- While school is in session- Part-time
- After you have completed all course work and are working on your thesis or dissertation- Part-time or Full-time

Most students use CPT for these experiences because opportunities for Internships, Practicum, Field Experience are plentiful at SU

Post-completion of program (start date of OPT is after the program end date on your I-20)-when most students use OPT

How Much OPT am I eligible for?

Maximum authorization = 12 months

If you use any pre-completion OPT (prior to completion of your program) :

- Full-time authorization is subtracted from the twelve months
 - three months of full-time summer OPT would leave you with 9 months of OPT
- Part time authorization is subtracted from the 12 months at $\frac{1}{2}$ the rate
 - four months of part-time authorization would leave you with 10 months of OPT

When Can/Should I Apply for OPT?

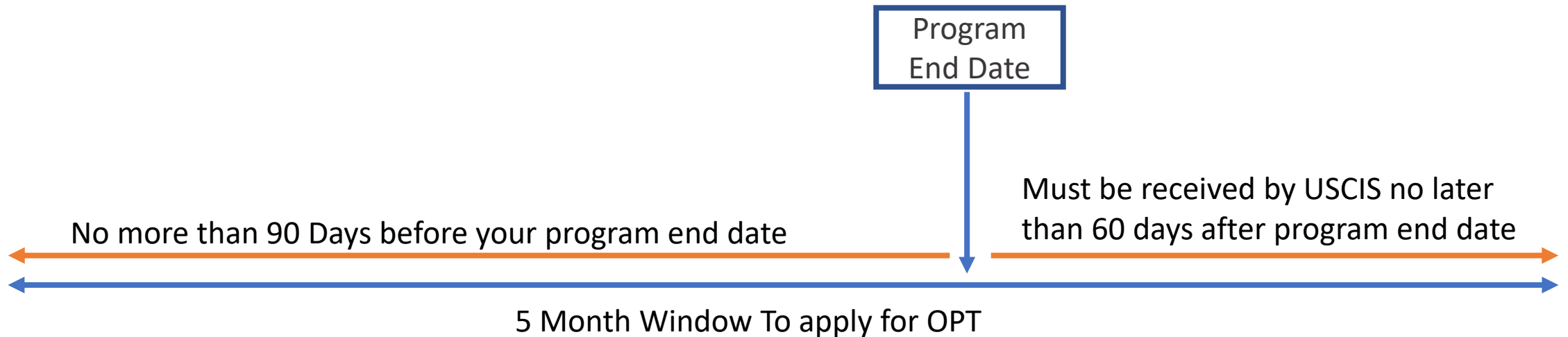
If Applying for **Pre-Completion OPT**

- If applying during your 1st year of study
 - You can apply no more than 90 days before completing your first academic year
 - because you are not eligible for OPT until you have been a full-time student for two semesters
- If applying after your 1st year of study
 - You can apply no more than 90 days prior to the work authorization start date you request

When Can/Should I Apply for OPT?

If applying for **Post-completion OPT**: there is a 5 month window for application

- No more than 90 days/3 months prior to your program end date and up to 60 days/2 months after your program end date
- Your application must be *received* by USCIS no later than 60 days/2 months after your program end date



How much does it cost to apply for OPT?

Effective April 1, 2024

USCIS Filing fee for OPT increased to **\$470**

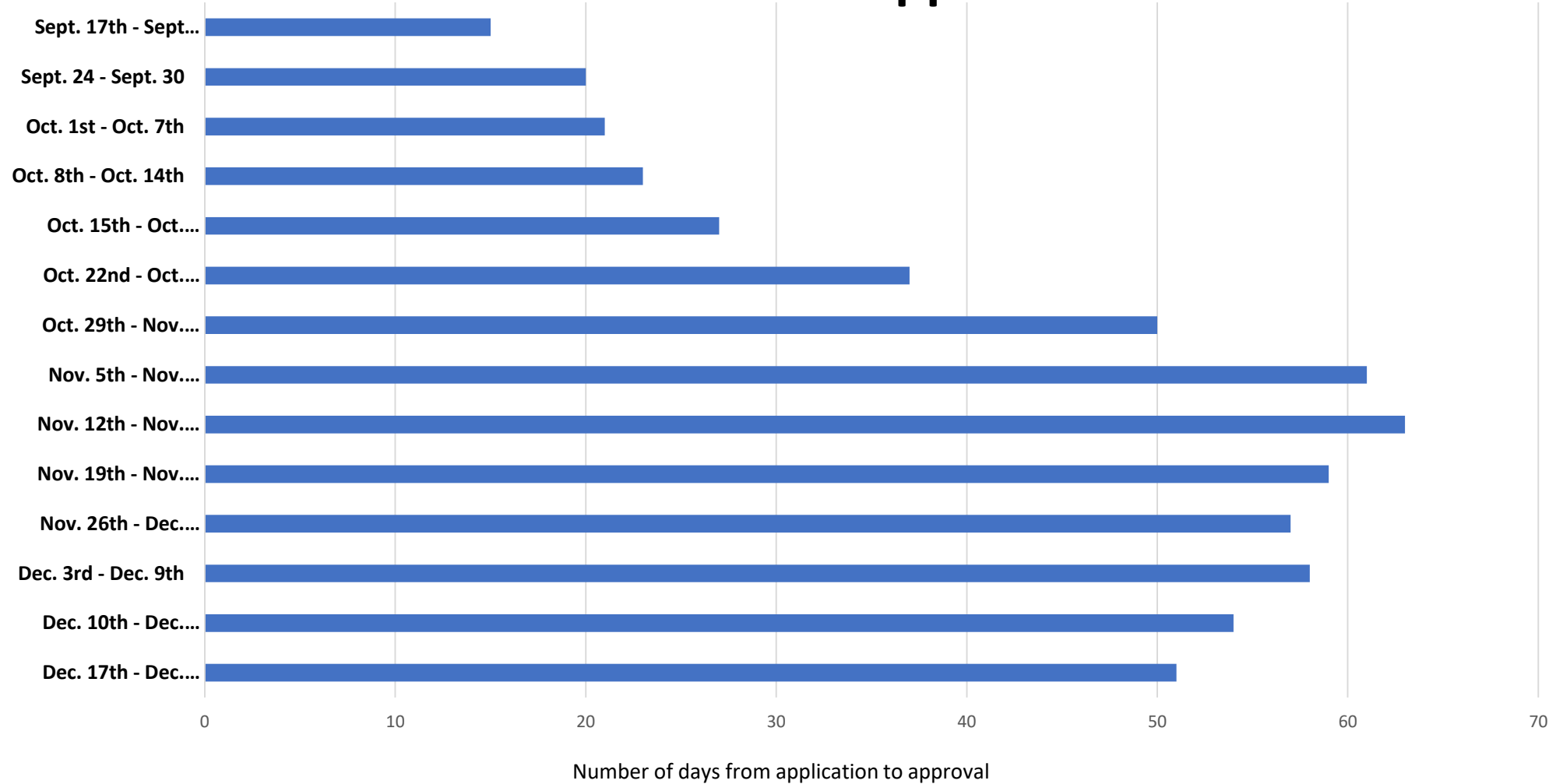
- Friends who applied last year paid less

How long does it take for USCIS to approve OPT?

- USCIS reports that 80% of OPT applications are processed within 45 days
- Again, the earlier you apply, the quicker your processing time
 - May graduates who apply in February experience faster processing times (weeks) than those that wait until April/May to apply (months)
 - December graduates who apply in September experience faster processing times (weeks) than those that wait until December to apply (months)
- Including a job offer letter does NOT make your application get processed any faster

Why Apply Early?

Fall 2023 OPT Applications



Can my OPT application be expedited?

- An application will only be expedited if you can document specific criteria set by the USCIS:
 - Severe financial loss to company or person
 - Emergency situation
 - Humanitarian reasons
 - Nonprofit organization whose request is in furtherance of the cultural and social interests of the United States
 - Department of Defense or national interest situation
 - USCIS error
 - Compelling interest of USCIS
- It is extremely difficult to get an application expedited

Premium Processing

- Guarantees 30 days processing time
 - not an approval
 - a guarantee they will look at your application within 30 days
 - our experience is 3-5 days
- No expedite of the production of your EAD card nor mailing of it to you
 - Usually takes an additional 7-10 days for EAD card to be produced
 - Usually takes an additional 7-10 days for EAD card to be mailed to you

How much does Premium Processing cost?



Premium Processing Fee = \$1685



Filing Fee for Form I-765 = \$470



Total = \$2155

You can:

- file Request for Premium Processing when you file your Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization OR
- you can request it after filing, while Form I-765 is pending

We advise you apply early enough to avoid having to use premium processing in order to begin a job in a timely fashion!

OPT Application Process Overview

To get here from our website > Immigration Status > Employment > Optional Practical Training (OPT) – F-1 > OPT Application Process

OPT Application Process

The OPT application process first requires you to obtain an OPT recommendation I-20 from the Center for International Services and then submit an application to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) online. **DO NOT** submit an online application to USCIS without first obtaining your OPT recommendation I-20.

+ Step 1: Obtain an OPT Recommendation Letter from your Academic Department

+ Step 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date

+ Step 3: Request an OPT Recommendation I-20

+ Step 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

+ Step 5: Create USCIS Account & Complete I-765

+ Step 6: Optional I-765 Review

+ Step 7: Submit and Pay

STEP 1: Obtain an OPT Recommendation Letter from your Academic Department

- Obtain a Recommendation Letter from your department printed on departmental letterhead
- You will need to Upload this letter to your request for an OPT Recommendation I-20
- Do NOT ask your department to send it to the Center for International Services

Sample Advisor's Letter for Optional Practical Training

DEPARTMENTAL LETTERHEAD

MEMORANDUM

TO: Slutzker Center for International Services

FROM: Name
Title

RE: Recommendation for Practical Training
for (name of student)

DATE: Current Date

SIGNATURE:

Sample 1: Practical Training after the completion of the program of study

This letter is written to confirm that the above named student completed/will complete all requirements for the Bachelor's/Master's/Doctoral degree in student's major/program of study on Month Day, Year. In order for him/her to receive the full benefit of his/her education, it would be beneficial for him/her to receive practical experience in the field of _____ (field of study) in this country. Therefore, I recommend that s/he be granted practical training.

Sample 2: Practical Training after the completion of all course requirements

The above named student is a full-time undergraduate/graduate student in the Department of _____. S/he has completed all course requirements for the Bachelor's/Master's/Doctoral degree in _____ and is working on his/her thesis/dissertation/equivalent (please specify Master's project, comprehensive exam, etc.). S/he expects to complete the degree by Month Day, Year.

In order for student's name to receive the full benefit of his/her education, it would be beneficial for him/her to receive practical training in the field of _____ in this country.

Sample 3: Practical Training During Vacation Periods

The above named student is a full-time undergraduate/graduate student in the Department of _____ expecting to complete a Bachelor's/Master's/Doctoral degree by Month Day, Year. The Department of _____ recommends that s/he be authorized practical training to engage in employment related to his/her program of study during his/her vacation period. We consider such an experience beneficial to a student's program of study.

Sample 4: Part-Time Practical Training during the school year

The above named student is a full-time student in the Department of _____ expecting to complete a Bachelor's/Master's/Doctoral degree by Month Day, Year. The _____ department recommends that s/he be authorized practical training to engage in employment related to his/her field of study part-time (20 hours/week or less) during the academic year. We consider such an experience beneficial to a student's program of study.

STEP 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date

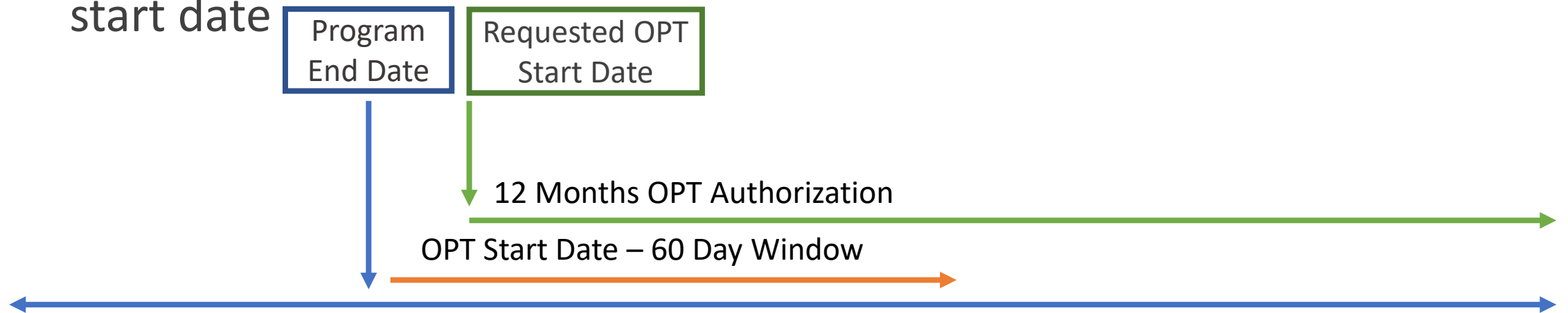
Pre-Completion OPT

- may begin any day after you complete two semesters as a full-time student and end any day within 12 months of your requested start date

STEP 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date

Post completion OPT

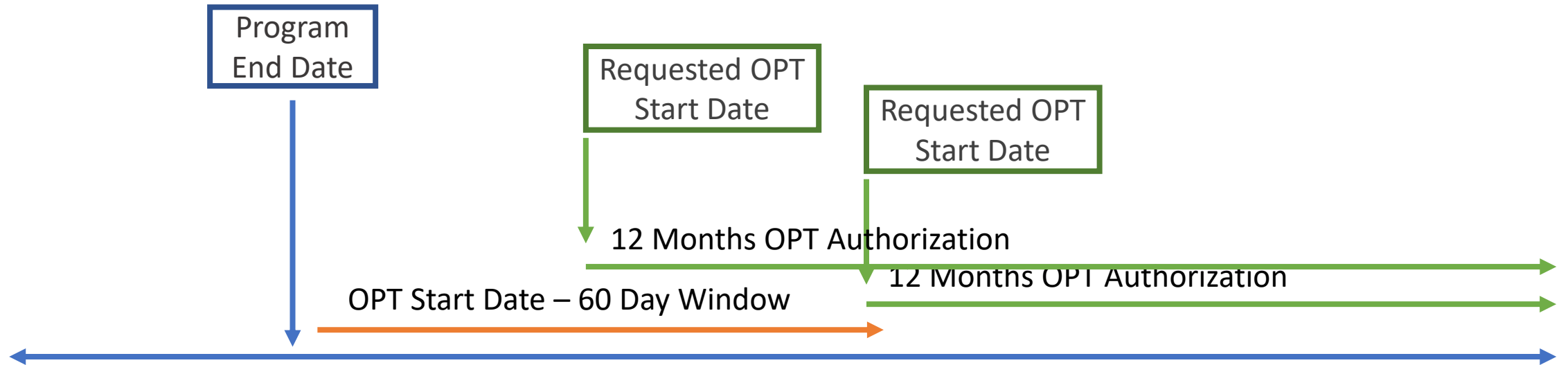
- There is a 60 day “window” for your OPT start date
- OPT may begin any day after your program end date up to no later than 60 days after your program end date
- If you have a job and know when you will start and that start date is within 60 days after you complete your program, choose that start date



STEP 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date

If you do not have a job offer, you still have to choose a start date

- You may have to make an educated guess
 - If you have not yet applied for jobs or have not even written your resume yet, you may want to choose the last possible date to begin OPT
 - If you have begun your job search, you may want to choose a start date in between

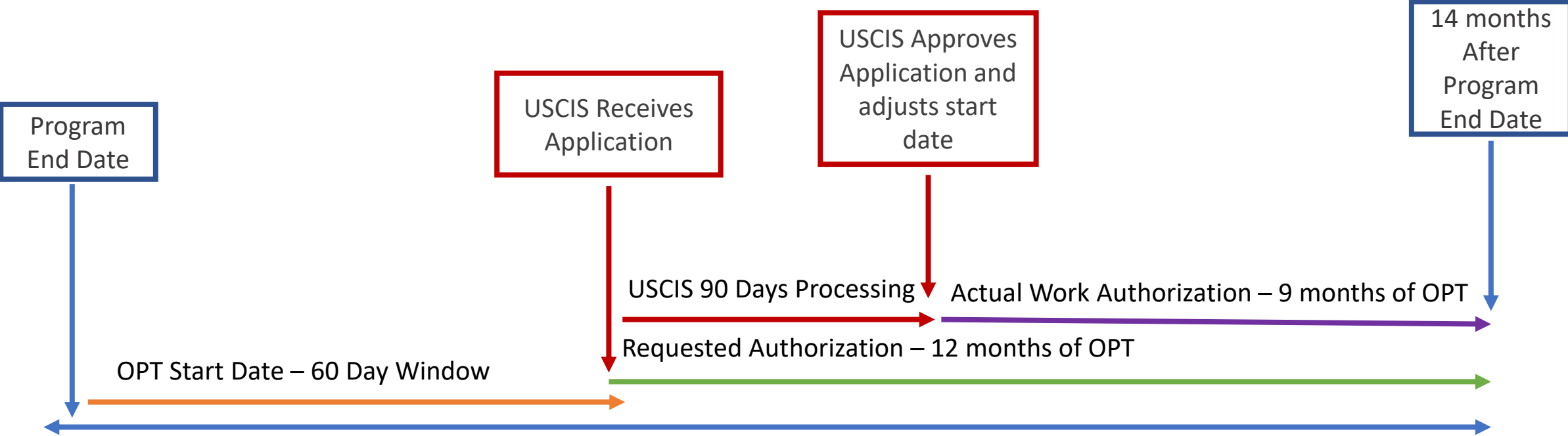


STEP 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date

Post-Completion OPT end date must be no later than 14 months after your program end date regardless of the OPT employment start date

- If you apply early, your OPT will likely begin on the start date you request
- If USCIS has not approved your application by your requested start date, it will begin on the date USCIS approves it
- If on the date USCIS approves your OPT they can still approve 12 months of OPT, you will be approved for 12 months.
 - If not, you will be approved until no later than 14 months after your program end date
 - You may actually be approved for less than 12 months of OPT


STEP 2: Determine your Requested OPT Start and End Date




STEP 3: Request an OPT Recommendation I-20


1. Log in to the International Student and Scholar (ISSS) Portal through MySlice.
2. Go to the Student Request Center.

International Student/Scholar



 Change Picture	Name: [Redacted]	Education Level: BACHELOR'S
	Visa Type: F-1	Campus Site: Syracuse University Main Campus SEVIS F
	Student ID: [Redacted]	Program Dates: 08/29/2022 - 12/19/2023
	SEVIS ID: NOC [Redacted]	SEVIS Status: Active

1 Welcome to the International Student and Scholar Portal! 2 Personal & Program 3 Student Request Center



Through this portal you will be able to submit requests for immigration benefits and access documents related to your immigration status. You will need to refer to the [Center for International Services website](#) for detailed information. Immigration related information is located under the immigration status tab.

To make a request for immigration benefits, click on the “Student Request Center” above and follow all instructions. Please allow at least 3-5 business days for processing of requests submitted through this portal. After submitting a request you may check on the status of that request in your Student Request Center. You may find the following statuses:

- **PENDING:** You have started a request but it has not been submitted to the Center for International Services.
- **SUBMITTED:** Your request has been submitted for review.

STEP 3: Request an OPT Recommendation I-20

3. Find the Optional Practical Training (OPT) Request.
4. Complete the Questionnaire.
5. Upload the Required Documents:
 - Advisor's Letter
 - Most recent I-94 and Travel History
6. Read the Next Steps and Confirm.
7. Submit Request.



Optional Practical Training
(OPT) Request

1 OPT Employment Required *

OPT Employment
Please see
Requester
MM/DD/YYYY

2 Previous Comments Required *

3 Document Upload Required *

Document Upload (File Upload) Required *

4 Next Steps (Signature Document) Required *

Document Advisor's
Description
Please upload
A [sample](#)

After submitting your request for OPT your application will be reviewed by a Center for International Services Advisor and a new I-20 recommending the OPT will be prepared. You will be able to print this I-20 by going to the "Documents" section in the Student Request Center. After printing this I-20, **you must sign and date in ink on the bottom of page 1** before uploading it to your I-765 application for employment authorization. You **MUST** submit your I-765 **within 30 days** of when your OPT Recommendation I-20 is issued.

- Your I-20 is only a recommendation for OPT and you must submit an OPT application to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
- You must not begin employment until you have received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and it is at least the start date of the authorized OPT period.
- You may only work in a position directly related to your field of study during the dates specified on the EAD.
- Post-completion OPT requires that you engage in employment at least 20 hours per week to maintain your immigration status.
- You may be unemployed for an aggregate of 90 days during post-completion OPT.
- You must report employment and changes in employment within 10 days through the SEVP Portal or through MySlice using the International Student and Scholar portal.
- You are also required to report changes in address and contact information within 10 days through the SEVP Portal or through MySlice using the International Student and Scholar portal.
- Travel signatures during OPT are only valid for 6 months. You are responsible for requesting a travel signature through MySlice using the International Student and Scholar portal if you are going to travel outside of the U.S. during OPT.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information presented.

Enter comments to display to the student

Document I-94 Arrival

Previous

Submit Save

Next

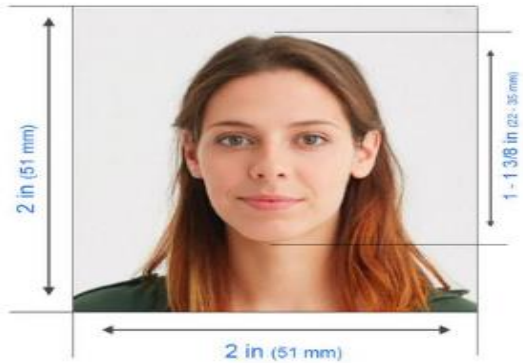
STEP 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

While you are waiting for your OPT I-20 you should prepare digital files of the following for your I-765:

- A [passport style photograph](#). 2 X 2 inches, white or light background, no glasses.
 - Your [most recent I-94](#).
 - Your passport biodata page (with photo and expiration date) and most recent F-1 visa.
 - Any previous Employment Authorization Document (EAD) from USCIS if you have had employment authorization in the past (e.g., OPT for previous degree).
 - Any I-20s authorizing CPT and/or OPT
- You will also need your OPT Recommendation I-20 from ISSS Portal once it is available

STEP 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

- Obtain a 2" x 2" inch photo of yourself (no eye glasses allowed)



- The photo must be from within the last 30 days, do NOT use passport or visa photos that you might have if they were not taken within the last 30 days

STEP 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

Downloading your OPT Recommendation I-20 from the ISSS Portal:

- When your OPT Recommendation I-20 is available in your ISSS Portal, you will receive an email to the personal email you provided in the OPT Request (not your Syracuse University email)
- Steps to retrieve your I-20:
 - Go to the ISSS Portal link in the email
 - Click on username
 - Enter the non syr.edu email address
 - Select Forgot Password and follow the directions provided to reset your password

Dear {Student Name},

S
Syracuse
University

User Login

Welcome to Syracuse University's Center for International Services International Student and Scholar Portal! Currently enrolled students and students on post-completion OPT should log in below by selecting the button titled NetID Login and log in with your Syracuse University NetID and password. Students who have applied for the STEM Extension and students with approved STEM Extensions should log in by selecting the button titled Username and log in with their email address and password. If you have questions about logging in, or are having problems logging in, please contact the Center for International Services.

[NetID Login](#) | [Username](#)

Username *
Non-SYR email address

Password *
.....

Remember Username?

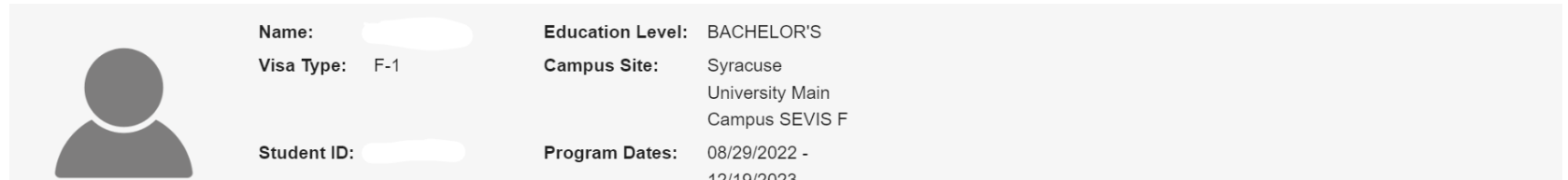
[Login](#)

[Forgot your password?](#)

STEP 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

Downloading your OPT Recommendation I-20 from the ISSS Portal (continued):

- Steps to retrieve your I-20:
 - Once you are logged in, navigate to the Student Request Center
 - Find the Documents section
 - Download, print and sign your I-20



Name: [Redacted] Education Level: BACHELOR'S
Visa Type: F-1 Campus Site: Syracuse University Main Campus SEVIS F
Student ID: [Redacted] Program Dates: 08/29/2022 - 12/19/2023

Documents

Navigation: Home > My Profile > My Documents > Documents > **3** Student Request Center

Document Name	Document Type	Uploaded On	Uploaded By	Request
OPT I-20.pdf	Current I-20	11-29-2023	Mary Idzior	<p>access documents related to your immigration status. You can also access information related to your immigration status. Immigration related information is located under the My Documents section.</p> <p>above and follow all instructions. Please allow at least 3-5 business days for processing. After submitting a request you may check on the status of that request in the My Documents section.</p> <p>enter for International Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SUBMITTED: Your request has been submitted for review.

STEP 4: Prepare Documents for OPT Application (I-765)

- You should print your I-20 from your ISSS Portal, sign and date it in ink, and then scan it.
- You will upload this I-20 to your I-765 application.
- You MUST submit your application to USCIS within 30 days of the date the OPT recommendation was made. This is the date your I-20 was signed by the CIS Advisor on page 1 and page 2 of the I-20

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID:

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME	GIVEN NAME	Class of Admission F-1 ACADEMIC AND LANGUAGE
PREFERRED NAME	PASSPORT NAME	
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP	
CITY OF BIRTH	DATE OF BIRTH	
FORM ISSUE REASON CONTINUED ATTENDANCE	ADMISSION NUMBER	

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME Syracuse University Syracuse University	SCHOOL ADDRESS CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL SERVICES, 310 Walnut Place, SYRACUSE, NY 13244
SCHOOL OFFICIAL TO CONTACT UPON ARRIVAL Ann Dievendorf International Student and Scholar Adviser	SCHOOL CODE AND APPROVAL DATE 80221470002000 02 OCTOBER 2022

PROGRAM OF STUDY

EDUCATION LEVEL BACHELOR'S	MAJOR 1 Business Administration and Management, General 52.0201	MAJOR 2 None 00.0000
PROGRAM ENGLISH PROFICIENCY Required	ENGLISH PROFICIENCY NOTES Student is proficient	EARLIEST ADMISSION DATE
START OF CLASSES 29 AUGUST 2022	PROGRAM START/END DATE 29 AUGUST 2022 - 06 MAY 2026	

FINANCIALS

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FOR: 9 MONTHS		STUDENT'S FUNDING FOR: 9 MONTHS	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 57,591	Personal Funds	\$ 0
Living Expenses	\$ 21,204	Funds From This School	\$ 0
Expenses of Dependents (0)	\$ 0	Family Funds	\$ 81,939
Health Insurance and Program Fees	\$ 3,144	On-Campus Employment	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 81,939	TOTAL	\$ 81,939

REMARKS

SCHOOL ATTESTATION

I certify under penalty of perjury that all information provided above was entered before I signed this form and is true and correct. I executed this form in the United States after review and evaluation in the United States by me or other officials of the school of the student's application, transcripts, or other records of course taken and proof of financial responsibility, which were received at the school prior to the execution of this form. The school has determined that the above named student's qualifications meet all standards for admission to the school and the student will be permitted to pursue a full program of study as defined by 8 CFR 214.2(f)(6). I am a designated school official of the above named school and am authorized to issue this form.

X *Ann Dievendorf* DATE ISSUED 10 OCTOBER 2022 PLACE ISSUED SYRACUSE, NY
SIGNATURE OF Ann Dievendorf International Student and Scholar Adviser

STUDENT ATTESTATION

I have read and agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of my admission and stay. I certify that all information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I seek to enter the United States temporarily, and solely for the purpose of pursuing a full program of study at the school named above. I also authorize the named school to release any information from my records needed by DHS pursuant to 8 CFR 214.3(g) to determine my nonimmigrant status. Parent or guardian, and student, must sign if student is under 18.

X
SIGNATURE OF: _____ DATE _____
NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN _____ SIGNATURE _____ ADDRESS (city/state or province/country) _____ DATE _____

ICE Form I-20 (04/30/2021) Page 1 of 3

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: (F-1) NAME:

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	13 FEBRUARY 2023	12 FEBRUARY 2024

CHANGE OF STATUS/CAP-GAP EXTENSION

AUTHORIZED REDUCED COURSE LOAD

CURRENT SESSION DATES

CURRENT SESSION START DATE 24 JANUARY 2022	CURRENT SESSION END DATE 12 MAY 2022
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TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT

This page, when properly endorsed, may be used for re-entry of the student to attend the same school after a temporary absence from the United States. Each endorsement is valid for one year.

Designated School Official	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
Ann Dievendorf - International Student Advisor		X <i>Ann Dievendorf</i>	10/11/2022	Syracuse, NY
		X		
		X		
		X		

ICE Form I-20 (04/30/2021) Page 2 of 3

STEP 5: Creating your USCIS Account & Completing the I-765



- Go to: <https://myaccount.uscis.gov>
- Create an account (or log in to an existing account once you have established an account)
 - You must use A PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS as you will not have access to your syr.edu email indefinitely
- After you have created your account the first time, you will log in each time after with your personal email and password; the system will send you a pin that you will enter
- You will do this each time you log in

STEP 5: Completing the I-765



Once you have logged in, click on:

- “File a form online” to begin your application process.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

Our Online Forms

- 11 forms available through USCIS online account
- Form I-765 is near the bottom of the list
- Note the eligibility categories

Select the form you want to file online.

- Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (I-90)
- Request for a Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings (N-336)
- Application for Naturalization (N-400)
- Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (N-565)
- Application for Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)
- Application for Citizenship and Issuance of Certificate Under Section 322 (N-600K)
- Petition for Alien Relative (I-130)
- Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (I-539)
- Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)
Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:
 - Pre-completion OPT - (c)(3)(A) eligibility category;
 - Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
 - a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

- Select “I-765 Application for Employment Authorization” from the drop down list.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Use this form to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if your immigration status allows you to work in the United States.

 **Note:** You may submit Form I-765 online only if your eligibility category is:

- (c)(3)(A) - F-1 student, pre-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(B) - F-1 student, post-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(C) - F-1 student, 24-month extension for STEM students (students



OPT applicants may file the I-765 Form online because you meet the eligibility category:

(c)(3)(B)

You do **not** apply under category

(c)(3)(c)

at this time because you are not applying for the STEM extension at this time.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ^

- Basis of eligibility
- Reason for applying**
- Preparer and interpreter information

About You v

Evidence v

Additional Information v

Review and Submit v

What is your reason for applying?

- Initial permission to accept employment
- Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error
- Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

- Yes
- No

[Back](#) [Next](#)

- You should select “Initial permission to accept employment.”
- If you have ever filed form I-765 before (even if it was denied), you should answer yes. You will give details about the previous application later in the form.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

- Mailing Address – the address your EAD card will be mailed to
 - If you will be moving - can be a friend or family member
 - Put friend or family member’s name in the “In Care of” box
 - If this is not your address, you will be asked to enter your physical address
- Physical Address – the address you live at on the day you file your application

Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

Yes

No

Where in the United States do you live?

Address line 1

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town

State

ZIP code

Provide a 5 or 9-digit ZIP code.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

Filling Out the Form— Your Immigration Information

Do you want the Social Security Administration to issue you a Social Security card?

- If yes, you need to give us authorization to submit your request to SSA
- Enter your father's first and last name, and your mother's first and last name



- If you do not already have a social security number (SSN), you can apply for it at the same time as you apply for your EAD card.
- Do NOT apply again if you already have an SSN.
- If you have lost your card, you apply for a replacement card through a local SSA office.

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

I-765, Application for
Employment
Authorization

Getting Started

About You

Evidence

2" x 2" photo of you

Form I-94 or passport

**Employment
Authorization Document**

Previously authorized CPT
or OPT

Form I-20

Additional Information

Review and Submit

Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization document (EAD) (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must upload a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a passport) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

[Choose](#) or drop files here to upload

Upload the Required Documents:

- 2 x 2 Photo
- Form I-94-USCIS does not require the Travel History
- Employment Authorization Document or Government ID
 - Upload Passport and visa here
- Previously Authorized CPT or OPT
 - Only upload I-20s that include CPT or OPT
- Form I-20
 - Only upload signed OPT Recommendation I-20

STEP 5: Completing the I-765

The image displays two screenshots from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website. The top screenshot, titled "Filling Out the Form—Review & Submit", shows a "Your fee" section indicating a filing fee of \$410 and an "Alerts and warnings" section with a red alert stating "There are errors in About You: Your immigration information". The bottom screenshot, also titled "Filling Out the Form—Review & Submit", shows a summary of the application information and a "View draft snapshot" link. A red arrow points from the "View draft snapshot" link to the "Review the I-765 form information" section. A yellow highlight is placed over the text "something that may need correction" in the summary section.

- Before moving to payment, the application will check for errors and notify you if you need to edit your response.
- It will **NOT** check your answers for accuracy – you must make sure that the data you provided in your application is correct. An “error” simply means you may have missed something on the application or formatted something incorrectly.
- If an error is **highlighted in red**, it **must be corrected** before you can submit your application.
- A **“yellow” error** calls your attention to something that **may need correction**. Review it to make sure your information is correct.
 - Most likely it is that you need to upload CPT I-20s but if you have none, you have nothing to upload

STEP 6: Optional I-765 Review

If you would like your I-765 reviewed by a CIS Advisor – DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO USCIS



- **SAVE** a draft of your I-765
 - We will review your application for completeness, you need to review spelling, document numbers, etc.
- Come to the Center for International Services during Advisor on Call hours for your application to be reviewed:
 - Monday – Friday from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm.

STEP 7: Submit and Pay



**Filling Out the Form—
Applicant's Declaration & Certification**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Applicant's statement
You must read and agree to the statement below.

I can read and understand English, and have read and understand every question and instruction on this application, as well as my answer to every question.

Applicant's signature
You must provide your digital signature below by typing your full legal name. We may deny your application if you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents. We will record the date of your signature with your application.

Enter your full legal name here

- After review, log back in to your USCIS account and your saved I-765 application.
- Complete a final review of your application.
- Sign and submit the application.
- You will be redirected to pay the application fee. It can be paid by credit or debit card.
- You **MUST submit** your application to USCIS **within 30 days** of the date the OPT **recommendation** was made!

Changing Requested Dates of OPT

- If you have not submitted your application to USCIS, you are not cancelling or withdrawing your application-you are changing your requested dates
 - the Center for International Services can cancel the OPT recommendation in your SEVIS record and reprocess an OPT Request
 - Submit a new request for OPT with the new requested dates in MySlice>ISSS Portal
 - Your application will go back in the queue and be processed in the order it was received-allow additional 3-5 days processing
- If you really don't know what OPT start date you want, you should wait to request your I-20 recommending OPT

Cancelling or Withdrawing an OPT Application

In what circumstances might I think about cancelling or withdrawing my application?

- You learn that you will not be graduating
- You decide to continue for another degree
- You decide to leave the U.S.

If any of these situations occur, please see an Advisor at the Center for International Services

Cancelling or Withdrawing an OPT Application

- If you have submitted your application to USCIS
 - it may or may not be possible to cancel or withdraw your application or changes your requested dates of OPT
 - you will not receive a refund of your filing fee
- If USCIS has approved your OPT application
 - you cannot withdraw your application
 - you may use your OPT to work up to 20 hours per week while completing your degree

Checking the Status of your Pending Application

Once you receive your USCIS receipt number either electronically or by Form I-797 paper receipt notice:

Access the **USCIS Case Status Search Page**

<https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do>

Enter your “IOE Application Receipt Number”
(ex: IOE2390012345)

It will inform you if:

- your application has been received
- USCIS has requested further information for your application
- Your application has been approved
- Your EAD card has been mailed

CASE STATUS ONLINE

Use this tool to track the status of an immigration application, petition, or request.

Enter a Receipt Number ?

CHECK STATUS

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT



When Can I begin working?

In order to begin “working”:

You must have received your EAD card; AND

It must be the day of or after the EAD start date



Do I have to be Employed during OPT?

- “Employment” is required to maintain F-1 status while on OPT
- You cannot accumulate more than 90 days (aggregate) of “unemployment” during initial OPT authorization period but you can accrue up to 90 days of unemployment.
- Days of unemployment exist; unusual for a student to not have days of unemployment unless they have a job with a fixed start date before they apply for OPT; could look suspicious to immigration for a student to have 0 days of unemployment-life is not like that



What is considered “Employment”?

To avoid accruing days of “unemployment” you must work at least 20 hours per week in your field.

It can be:

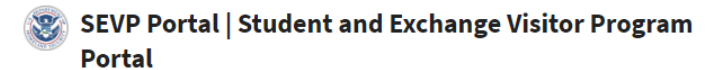
- Paid employment
- Unpaid employment: as a volunteer or unpaid intern as long as this practice does not violate labor laws (except STEM Extension)
- Employment through an agency or consulting firm
- Work for hire: individual performs services on a contractual basis instead of an employment basis-payment usually reported for tax purposes on a Form 1099
- For multiple employers at the same time
- For short-term multiple employers at different times
- As a Self-employed business owner

How Do I Report Employment While on OPT?

After your OPT start date is reached, you will receive an email from the Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) instructing you to create an SEVP Portal Account.

You will use the SEVP Portal account to report any changes within 10 days of such changes to your:

- address
- Foreign address
- Telephone number



Sign In

Attention: Only students who have OPT approved may use the SEVP Portal. You must create an account and set a password before using this log in page. Go to [Portal Help](#) for more information.

Email

Password

Login

[Reset Password](#)

Other Reporting Requirements While on OPT?

You will also use the SEVP Portal to report your Employment Information:

- Name of Employer
- Address of Employer
- Start Date of Employment
 - This is the date you actually begin working for the employer-it is rarely/not always the start date of your OPT/EAD card
- End Date of Employment-if you end employment and begin employment with another employer

What if I Lose MY EAD Card?

If you have not begun working yet or will change employers, you will need to apply to USCIS for a Replacement EAD

- Another I-765
- Another photo
- Copies of documents
- Another Filing Fee

If you will continue to work for the same employer, you may not need to apply for a Replacement EAD

Can I Travel Outside the U.S. While on OPT?

If Authorized for Pre-Completion OPT

- Requirements are the same as travel while in F-1 status
- Passport, valid F-1 visa, I-20 signed for Travel on Page 2 within last 12 months

If Authorized for Post-Completion OPT

- Passport
- Valid F-1 visa
- I-20 signed for Travel on Page 2 within last 6 months
- EAD card
- Documentation of employment-letter of recent date, recent pay stub

Can I Travel Outside the U.S. While my OPT is Pending?

- Yes, if you are still enrolled as a full-time student
 - May graduates apply for OPT in February and travel during Spring break
 - December graduates apply for OPT in September and travel during Thanksgiving break
- If you have already completed your program of study: Travel is **not** recommended.
 - No basis for readmission to the U.S.
 - No longer a student
 - OPT not yet approved

Regulatory language: Students approved for OPT may be readmitted to the U.S. to resume employment

I-9s, Social Security and Taxes

- **I-9:** All employees in the U.S. must complete an I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Form with their employers within 3 days of starting employment.
- **E-verify:** Some employers participate in an electronic verification of identity and employment eligibility; this is not yet required by law
- **Social Security:** Employment in the U.S. requires a Social Security Number (SSN). If you do not have an SSN, you may apply for a SSN at the same time that you apply for OPT or once you receive your EAD
- **Taxes:** See IRS [Publication 519](#), US Tax Guide for Aliens.
 - **Social Security and Medicare Taxes:** Typically, non-resident F-1 students with authorized OPT are exempt from Social Security (F.I.C.A) and Medicare taxes as long as you continue to declare non-resident status for tax purposes.
 - **Income Taxes:** Federal, state, and local taxes will be withheld from your paycheck by employers unless you qualify for a tax treaty exemption. (More information also available at the IRS website)

H-1B Status

The next usual employment status for F-1 students is H-1B status

- H-1B status
 - temporary (maximum time period is 6 years) worker
 - in a specialty occupation (position requires the minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a specific field)
- Annual limit (cap) on the number of H-1Bs that can be approved:
 - 65,000 for those with at least a Bachelor's degree
 - an additional 20,000 for those with a U.S. Masters or higher degree
- H-1Bs become available on October 1 of every year

H-1B Status

- The number of applications for H-1B status has exceeded the number of H-1Bs available every year for the last several years
- Employers file an electronic registration to compete for an H number for a set time period beginning in March
- Many people whose employers will register for an H will not get chosen in this “lottery” system-will not be eligible to file an H-1B petition
- If not enough applications received, then more “lottery winners” are notified they can file. This year, many H-1B approvals were withdrawn because of layoffs/economic conditions and more H numbers became available during the year

OPT Cap Gap and H-1Bs


- If your registration is chosen and your employer files an H-1B petition for you, you may be eligible for a Cap Gap extension of your OPT
- If your OPT expires before your H-1B can take effect on October 1, your OPT will be automatically extended to cover the gap in employment authorization between the end date of your OPT and the start of the H-1B on October 1

Cap Gap and H-1Bs

- H-1B petition must request a Change of Status
- Cap Gap extension of OPT is not available to those whose:
 - H-1B is filed as Consular Notification-will apply for an H-1B visa abroad
 - OPT is valid until/past the date the H-1B change of status can take effect on October 1
 - H-1Bs are filed by exempt employers-universities and related research institutions
- Extension of F-1 status and OPT work authorization are automatically terminated upon rejection, denial, or revocation of H-1B petition.

Cap Gap and H-1Bs

- If you or your employer have not received a receipt notice for an H-1B from USCIS, then your SEVIS record is not likely to have the cap gap applied to it and we will not be able to produce an I-20 with the cap gap.

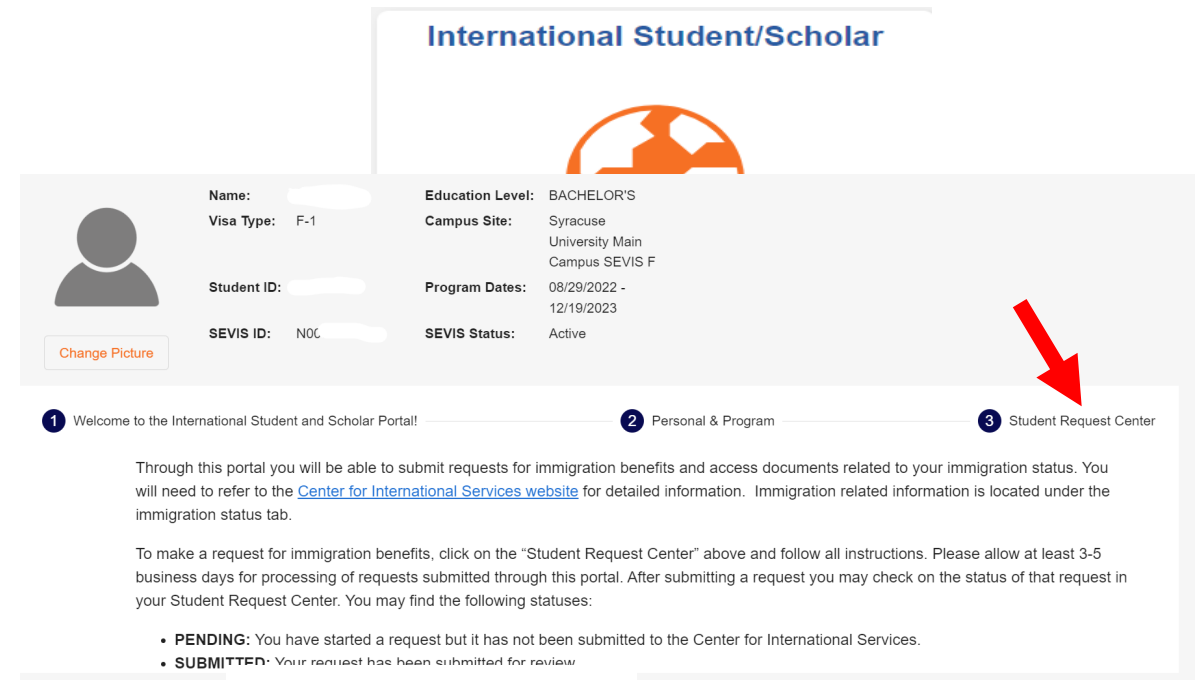
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA			
I-797A NOTICE OF ACTION		DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES	
Receipt Number WAC1234567890	Case Type I129 - PETITION FOR A NONIMMIGRANT WORKER	Received Date 04/12/2018	Priority Date Petitioner CORPORATION INC
Notice Date 11/20/2018	Page 1 of 2	Beneficiary A123 456 789 SAMPLE, ROHIT	Notice Type: Approval Notice Class: H1B Valid from 11/15/2018 to 09/15/2021
CORPORATION INC c/o JOHN SAMPLER SAMPLER LAW PLLC 123 MAIN ST STE 101 CITY ST 90210			
<p>The above petition and change of status have been approved. The status of the named foreign worker(s) in this classification is valid as indicated above. The foreign worker(s) can work for the petitioner, but only as detailed in the petition and for the period authorized. Changes in employment or training may require you to file a new Form I-129 petition. Since this employment or training authorization stems from the filing of this petition, separate employment or training authorization documentation is not required. The I-94 attached below may contain a grace period of up to 10 days before, and up to 10 days after the petition validity period for the following classifications: CW-1, E-1, E-2, E-3, H-1B, H-2B, H-3, L-1A, L-1B, O-1, O-2, P-1, P-2, P-3, TN-1, and TN-2. H-2A nonimmigrants may contain a grace period of up to one week before and 30 days after the petition validity period. The grace period is a period of authorized stay but does not provide the beneficiary authorization to work beyond the petition validity period. The decision to grant a grace period and the length of the granted grace period is discretionary, final and cannot be contested on motion or appeal. Please contact the IRS with any questions about tax withholding.</p> <p>The petitioner should keep the upper portion of this notice. The lower portion should be given to the worker. He or she should keep the right part with his or her Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record. The I-94 portion should be given to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection when he or she leaves the United States. The left part is for his or her records. A person granted a change of status who leaves the U.S. must normally obtain a visa in the new classification before returning. The left part can be used in applying for the new visa. If a visa is not required, he or she should present it, along with any other required documentation, when applying for reentry to this new classification at a port of entry or pre-flight inspection station. The petitioner may also file Form I-824, Application for Action on an Approved Application or Petition, to request that we notify a consulate, port of entry, or pre-flight inspection office of this approval.</p> <p>The approval of this visa petition does not in itself grant any immigration status and does not guarantee that the alien beneficiary will subsequently be found to be eligible for a visa, for admission to the United States, or for an extension, change, or adjustment of status.</p> <p>THIS FORM IS NOT A VISA AND MAY NOT BE USED IN PLACE OF A VISA.</p>			
Please see the additional information on the back. You will be notified separately about any other cases you filed.			
California Service Center U. S. CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SVC P.O. Box 30111 Laguna Niguel CA 92607-0111 Customer Service Telephone: 800-375-5283			
PLEASE TEAR OFF FOLD IN PRINTED GELSON AND RETURN TO ORIGINAL SOURCE IF AVAILABLE.			
Detach This Half for Personal Records Receipt# WAC1234567890 I-94# 123456789 01 NAME SAMPLE, ROHIT CLASS H1B VALID FROM 11/15/2018 UNTIL 09/25/2021 PETITIONER CORPORATION INC, 456 MAIN ST STE 101 CITY ST 90210		1234567989 01 Receipt Number WAC1234567890 US Citizenship and Immigration Services 194 Departure Record Petitioner: CORPORATION INC 14. Family Name SAMPLER 15. First (Given) Name ROHIT 16. Date of Birth 08/02/1992 17. Country of Citizenship INDIA	
FORM I-797A [REV. 08/01/16]			

How Do I Request a Cap Gap I-20?

After your employer has received the I-797 H1B receipt notice or approval notice

1. Log in to the [International Student and Scholar \(ISSS\) Portal](#).
2. Go to the Student Request Center on the right side of the page.
3. Go to the Cap-Gap I-20 Request icon.
4. Complete the Questionnaire.
5. Upload your H-1B Application Receipt or Approval Notice.
6. Submit the Request.

Within 3-5 business days you should receive an email that your Cap-Gap I-20 has been processed and is available in the ISSS Portal.



The screenshot shows the 'International Student/Scholar' portal interface. At the top, there is a header with the title 'International Student/Scholar' and a logo. Below the header, there is a user profile section with a placeholder for a picture and a 'Change Picture' button. The profile information includes:

Name:	[Redacted]	Education Level:	BACHELOR'S
Visa Type:	F-1	Campus Site:	Syracuse University Main Campus SEVIS F
Student ID:	[Redacted]	Program Dates:	08/29/2022 - 12/19/2023
SEVIS ID:	N0C [Redacted]	SEVIS Status:	Active

Below the profile information, there are three navigation tabs: 1. Welcome to the International Student and Scholar Portal!, 2. Personal & Program, and 3. Student Request Center. A red arrow points to the 'Student Request Center' tab. Below the tabs, there is a paragraph of text explaining the portal's purpose and a list of request statuses: PENDING and SUBMITTED.



Cap-Gap I-20
Request



STEM Extension of OPT

Some F-1 students may be eligible to apply for an additional 24 months of STEM OPT.

The F-1 student must:

- Have earned a degree in a STEM field
- Be currently authorized for OPT
- Work for an employer that:
 - participates in E-verify
 - is willing to complete a [Form I-983](#): Training Plan that requires the employer to identify:
 - goals and objectives for work-based learning
 - oversight and supervision that will be provided to the student during the training
 - assessment and evaluation that will be undertaken
- And the STEM Extension requires the employer to agree to increased reporting requirements and government site visits.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

OMB APPROVAL NO. 1653-0054
EXPIRATION DATE: 7/31/2021

TRAINING PLAN FOR STEM OPT STUDENTS
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Optional Practical Training (OPT)

SECTION 1: STUDENT INFORMATION (Completed by Student)		
Student Name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name): _____		Student Email Address: _____
Name of School Recommending STEM OPT: _____	Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned: _____	SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT (including 3-digit suffix): _____
Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information: _____	Student SEVIS ID No.: _____	STEM OPT Requested Period (mm-dd-yyyy): From: _____ To: _____
Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: _____		
Level/Type of Qualifying Degree: _____		
Date Awarded (mm-dd-yyyy): _____		
Based on Prior Degree? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Employment Authorization Number: _____		
SECTION 2: STUDENT CERTIFICATION		
I declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that the statements and information made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that the law provides severe penalties for knowingly and willfully falsifying or concealing a material fact, or using any false document in the submission of this form.		
I certify that:		
1. I have reviewed, understand, and will adhere to this Training Plan for STEM OPT Students ("Plan");		
2. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity if I believe that my employer is not providing me with appropriate training as delineated on this Plan;		
3. I understand that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may deny, revoke, or terminate the STEM OPT of students whom DHS determines are not engaging in OPT in compliance with the law, including the STEM OPT of students who are not, or whose employers are not, complying with this Plan;		
4. My practical training opportunity is directly related to the STEM degree that qualifies me for the STEM OPT extension; and		
5. I will notify the DSO at the earliest available opportunity regarding any material changes to or deviations from this Plan, including but not limited to, any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any nontrivial reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Plan that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week that I engage in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 20-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule.		
Signature of Student (Sign in ink): _____		
Printed Name of Student: _____		Date (mm-dd-yyyy): _____

STEM Extension of OPT

- Submit a timely STEM extension application
USCIS must receive the STEM application **prior to EAD expiration**
but no more than 90 days before OPT end date-NOT like OPT
when you can apply after you complete your program
- Have maintained valid F-1 status
 - reported all changes of personal and employment info
 - have not accumulated more than 90 days of unemployment during OPT

Application Process for STEM Extension of OPT

- Similar to OPT
 - Request Recommendation from the Center for International Services on a new I-20 through the ISSS Portal in MySlice
 - Must submit copies of diploma, I-94, I-983 and EAD card
 - I-20 returned to you for you to submit with your application to USCIS
- Approval by USCIS in the form of an EAD
- Will need to look at the Center for International Services website to get up to date instructions

Syracuse University
Center for International Services

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[Home](#) / [Immigration Status](#) / [Employment](#)

Employment

As an international student, you may want to gain some work experience while you are in the U.S. or earn some income while you are in school. In this section, you will find information on the rules and regulations of on-campus employment, including about social security numbers, Optional Practical Training (OPT), and Curricular Practical Training (CPT), Cap-Gap extension and filing your taxes.

▶ [On-Campus Employment](#)

▶ [Off-Campus Employment](#)

▶ [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\) - F-1](#)

▶ [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\) - F-1](#)

▶ [Cap-Gap Extension](#)

▶ [STEM Extension](#)

Search

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STEM Extension of OPT

- Cannot accrue a total of 150 days of unemployment over the 36 month OPT period
- Reporting Requirements:
 - Must report the following within 10 days of the change:
 - legal name, residential or mailing address, email address, employer name, employer address
 - Must report above info to the Center for International Services every 6 months even if there is no change
- Automatic extension of status and work authorization up to 180 days while a timely filed STEM extension OPT application is pending
- Can still benefit from the cap-gap provision

Immigration Status After F-1 Status

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

3:30 pm

Room 114, Peter Graham Room

Bird Library

Andrea Godfread Brown, Berardi Immigration Services

Watch the Center for International Services Newsletter for Updates!