

PREPARING THE APPLICATION PACKET FOR USCIS

OPT EXTENSION CHECK LIST:

1. *Sign* the OPT Extension I-20. You keep the original.
2. *Make a copy* of OPT Extension I-20 for the USCIS.
3. Items to include in your final application packet to USCIS:
 - PHOTOCOPY of the entire OPT Extension I-20. (*Do not send the original as this is for your record*)
 - Original, signed I-765 Form <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf>
 - At top, mark *“Renewal of my permission to accept employment”*
 - Item #11: Have you ever received an EAD card before? => Mark *“Yes”*
 - Which USCIS Office=*the place where you received your EAD Card*
 - Dates=*Dates of EAD validity*
 - Results=*Granted*
 - Documentation=*Photocopy of EAD*
 - Item #17:
 - For your *“Degree”* use what is listed in #5 on your SEVIS I-20.
 - Eligibility category is (c)(3)(C) (small c, number 3, Capital C)
 - Signature: Make sure your signature is between the two lines.
 - PHOTOCOPY of most current I-94 card (*front and back sides*)
 - PHOTOCOPY of passport page with photo and expiration date
 - PHOTOCOPY of previously issued EAD card, *as requested in Item #11 of I-765*
 - Check payable to *“U.S. Department of Homeland Security”* for \$380.00:
 - *Write* Three hundred eighty dollars
 - *Write* your date of birth and I-94 number on FRONT of the check, and
 - Do not write on back of the check
 - Two (2) US Style Passport Photos
 - *Write* your name and I-94 number on the BACK of each photo
 - Verification of graduation from SVU. One of the following documents would be accepted by USCIS:
 - Official SVU transcript, or
 - Unofficial transcript, or
 - Copy of SVU diploma showing degree earned and program of study

Mailing instruction:

A. If you live 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.

Mail your application to: USCIS Phoenix Lockbox

A.1 For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

USCIS, PO Box 21281, Phoenix, AZ 85036

A.2 For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS, Attn: AOS, 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85034

B. If you live 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, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

Mail your application to: USCIS Dallas Lockbox

B.1 For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS, PO Box 660867, Dallas, TX 75266

B.2 For Express mail and courier deliveries:

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

C. E-Notification: If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your Form I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility, complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance and clip it to the first page of your application.

Frequent Asked Questions on OPT Extension

17 MONTH EXTENSION OF OPT FOR F-1 STUDENTS WITH STEM DEGREES

▪ When does the student need to file for the extension?

The student must ensure the Form I-765, the supporting evidence, and the fee payment reaches the proper USCIS Service Center before his or her current OPT expires. USCIS recommends that students file within 90 and 120 days of the expiration date of the current OPT.

▪ How and where does the student file the extension?

The student should follow the directions published on the USCIS Web site for filing a Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. The student should file with the USCIS Service Center serving the area of the student's current residence.

▪ What is the fee for the application for the STEM extension?

The fee is the current amount for filing a Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, as listed on the USCIS Web site. At the time this guidance was published, the fee was \$380.

▪ What documents will meet the USCIS requirements on the Form I-765 for a copy of the student's degree?

The student may provide one of the following documents in order to meet these requirements:

- . Official transcripts
- . Unofficial transcripts
- . Copy of the diploma showing the level and program of study

▪ What does the student need to know about the employer in order to complete the Form I-765 when applying for the STEM extension?

The student must have the employer's name as listed in E-Verify and the employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number. This information must be listed in item 17 of the Form I-765.

▪ When does the student's period of STEM extension OPT start?

If the student has properly filed for a STEM extension, the student's period of STEM extension OPT starts the day after the expiration of the student's original period of optional practical training.

▪ Can the student work with an expired employment authorization document while a STEM extension is pending?

Yes. 8 CFR 214.2(f)(11)(i)(C) and 8 CFR 247a.12(c)(6)(iv) automatically extends the student's work authorization for up to 180 days while the student's STEM extension application is pending.

▪ Can the student change employers while the STEM extension application is pending?

Yes. However, if the STEM extension period has started, the employer must also be an E-Verify employer. The student must report the change in employment to his or her DSO.

- **Can the student travel outside of the United States if his or her employment authorization document expires and the OPT extension request is pending?**

No. The student must wait to receive the new employment authorization document.

- **Student responsibilities while on STEM extension OPT**

Students pursuing a period of STEM extension OPT must:

- a. Work in a paid position for an E-Verify employer at least 20 hours per week
- b. Work in a position related to the STEM degree
- c. Report to their DSO within 10 days of:
 - . Legal name changes
 - . A change in residential or mailing address
 - . Changes in employer, giving the employer name and employer address
 - . Loss of employment
- d. Send the DSO a validation report every six months starting from the date the STEM extension starts and ending when the student's F-1 status ends or the STEM extension ends, whichever is first. Windows for this six months reporting is 15 days before and 31 days after each reporting due day. Student's status will be terminated if student fails to make the six months report. The validation report must include the student's:
 - . Full legal name
 - . SEVIS identification number (if requested by the school)
 - . Current mailing and residential address
 - . Name and address of the current employer
 - . Date the student began working for the current employer

Students pursuing a period of STEM extension OPT must **not**:

- a. Work in a paid position for any employer that is not an E-Verify employer
- b. Have more than 120 days of unemployment time during the entire period of post-completion OPT (regular post-completion OPT and STEM extension OPT).