17-Month Extension of Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

Summary:
The 12-month limit on OPT can be extended by 17 months, for certain STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degree holders ONLY.

Visit http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm to determine if your field and CIP Code are included in the list.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Currently authorized for post-completion OPT and working for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to your field of study.
- Completed a Bachelor’s, Master’s or Doctoral degree in a field on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) STEM Designated Degree Program list.
- At the time of application you must be employed.
- You must have a job-offer or be employed by an employer registered with the “E-Verify” federal verification system.
- Have not received a 17-month OPT extension for a prior STEM degree. The STEM extension can only be granted once per person in a lifetime.

When to Apply:
Apply to USCIS up to 120 days before your current EAD expires. Keep in mind, ISS needs at least five working days to process your I-20 recommending the STEM extension.

Step 1: Request OPT Recommendation from ISS
ISS must process a recommendation for your OPT request. Five working days are required to process a recommendation for OPT. Please submit the following items to an ISS adviser. ISS cannot accept your application for processing unless all these items are completed and submitted:

- Student Request Form
- Form I-765 (Use most recent version from ISS website)
- Valid Passport/ Form I-94

*Instructions for completing form I-765 can be downloaded from the USCIS website at http://www.uscis.gov (go to “FORMS”) or on page 4 of this application packet.

Step 2: Assemble the Application Materials
OPT applications must be received by USCIS before your current EAD card expires. Clip 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 ($380).
2. Two color photos. The instructions with the Form I-765 provide detailed photo requirement information (passport photos). Print full name and most recent Form I-94 number in pencil on the back of each photo. Place the photos in a clear plastic bag or envelope and clip it to the application.
3. Original Form I-765 (Keep a copy for your records)
4. Photocopy of all previous I-20’s, including your new I-20, page 1 with your signature and page 3 with OPT recommendation.
5. Photocopy of your last EAD card.
6. Print-out of the most recent electronic I-94 at https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html. If you have a paper Form I-94, a photocopy of both sides of Form I-94 (copy the back even if it is blank). Do not mail the original paper Form I-94.
7. Photocopies of as many as possible of the following that contain your name and photo: Identity page of your passport, entry visa stamp with a photo, driver’s license or state ID, student ID, and any previously issued EAD.
8. Photocopy of your diploma or final transcript

*G-1145 E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance form (optional). This form can be downloaded from the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov (go to “FORMS”). The purpose of the form is to request that you receive an e-mail or text message notification when your application reaches the USCIS lockbox.

Keep a copy of the above documents and application for your records. Paperclip G-1145 on top of the application materials. Mail the application by registered or express mail to obtain a signed receipt. Keep the receipt for your records.

Step 3: Mail the OPT Application to the Appropriate USCIS Lockbox
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 (please see next page for address).
For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mail:
USCIS
PO BOX 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For Express mail only:
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. Vermont, Virgin Islands, Virginia, or West Virginia.

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mail:
USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

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

NOTE: Based on the information provided by USCIS, we strongly advise you not to 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.

You are Responsible for Mailing your OPT application to USCIS

Wait for EAD to be Mailed from USCIS

- It takes approximately 2 to 3 months for USCIS to process your request and mail your EAD to the address listed on Form I-765.
- Several weeks after you apply, you should receive a receipt notice (Form I-797) in the mail from USCIS.
- Students who file a timely application can continue employment while the extension application is pending, until a final decision on the I-765 or for 180 days, whichever comes first.

The EAD will reflect the dates of your employment authorization.

Travel Outside the US During Your 17-month Approved OPT Extension

Travel with these items: Passport with valid visa stamp, EAD card, Letter of Employment, I-20 form with valid travel signature.

(Travel signatures are only valid for 6 months)

NOTE: Per SEVP guidance, overseas travel is not recommended when your 17-month OPT extension application is pending and your EAD has expired.

Step 4: Important Reporting Requirements While on your 17-month OPT Extension

ISS is required to have a copy of your EAD. Upon receipt of your EAD, email a copy (front and back) to naug0026@d.umn.edu, include your student ID number.

SEVIS is now requiring verification that you are actively employed along with the name and address of your current employer at 6 months and again at 12 months after the start date of your 17-month extension whether or not there has been a change to this information. Please email ISS with your employer info every 6 months, even if it does not change.

You are required to send the information to ISS at naug0026@d.umn.edu at least 15 days before and no more than 31 days after the due dates. Failure to submit your current employer’s name and address at these intervals will result in termination of your F-1 status.

NOTE: You are responsible for keeping track of these dates! ISS will not send you a reminder!

Additional Reporting Requirements:

- You are required to update your mailing address and/or name change in the University System within 10 days of any changes.
- You are required to report changes to the name and address of your employer or any interruption in your employment to ISS within 10 days of any change.
- Accumulated unemployment during the entire OPT authorization period may not exceed 120 days. Employment must be 20 hours per week or more. Volunteer work or unpaid internships in your field count as employment. Keep written documents of all employment.
- Notify ISS if you change your visa status or permanently depart the U.S. before your OPT period ends.
• Official admission to a new degree program and transfer to a new school during OPT will void any remaining time on your EAD. This time cannot be re-captured at a later date.

• IF you have accumulated 120 days of unemployment, you will no longer be in F-1 status. If you contact ISS with this information before your status expires, you will have a 60 day grace period to depart the U.S. or to gain another status. IF your F-1 status expires, you are required to leave the U.S. immediately and you will not receive a grace period to depart the U.S.

• Students enrolled at UMD (Grad 999 or other courses) are required to maintain the Student Health Benefit Plan Insurance unless they qualify for a waiver.

(www.shb.umn.edu/duluth/international-students/student-health-benefit-plan.htm)
INSTRUCTIONS

Form I-765
Application for Employment Authorization
(F-1 Optional Practical Training 17 Month Extension)

0. Put an “X” in the box next to “Renewal of my permission to accept employment”

1. Name: Print last, first, and middle names. Write “family name” or “last name” with all capital letters. If you do not have a middle name, write “(none).”

2. Other Names Used: If you have not used other names, write “(N/A).”

3. Address in the U.S.: Use 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. If correspondence will be “in care of” a trustworthy friend or family member in the U.S., write the person’s name in block 2 (i.e., C/O John Doe) and the person’s address in block 3. If an address outside Minnesota is used, the OPT application might need to be sent to a USCIS service center other than the Nebraska Service Center.

4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality: Block 1 of 1-20

5. Place of Birth: See passport

6. Date of Birth: See passport

7. Gender: Check one

8. Marital Status: Check one

9. Social Security Number: See Social Security card

10. Alien Registration Number or I-94 Number: F-1 Students: Use the 11-digit number on most recent I-94

11. Have You Ever Before Applied for Employment Authorization from USCIS? F-1 curricular practical training (CPT) authorized by ISS is not employment authorization from USCIS. If you have previously submitted an employment authorization application to USCIS for approval, check “yes” and provide the USCIS service center that adjudicated your employment authorization as indicated by your EAD card number (e.g. LIN, CSC, WAC, etc.), the dates of your employment authorization, and if it was granted, denied, etc.

12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S.: See most recent stamp in passport or I-94

13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.: U.S. city where applicant went through U.S. port of entry.

14. Status of Last Entry: See most recent stamp in passport or I-94 (i.e. F-1 student, etc.)

15. Current Immigration Status: F-1 student

16. Eligibility Category: The eligibility category for 17 month extension for S.T.E.M. students is: (c) (3) (C)

17. Degree: List the degree and major as they appear on your I-20. Employers Name as Listed in E-verify: Ask employer – it may be different than common employer’s name. Employer’s E-verify Company Identification Number: Ask employer

18. Leave this item blank.

Signature, Telephone Number, and Date: Write these items just below the words. (It is very important that you keep your signatures between the two horizontal lines)
Student Request

Student should complete this portion.

Student’s Name

Family

First

Middle

UMD Student ID #

SEVIS ID #

Email

Phone

Academic Major (I-20)

Degree Level (I-20) e.g. BA, BS, MA, MS, PhD

Visa Expiration Date

Passport Expiration Date

Month/Day/Year

Month/Day/Year

Have you sent a copy of your current EAD to ISS?

Yes No

Have you reported your employment information to ISS?

Yes No

Have you updated your current mailing address on OneStop website?

Yes No

Have you ever been granted employment authorization for 17-month extension of OPT?

Yes No

Living Expenses:

Living expenses: $ (minimum of 13,592)

Expenses of dependents: $ 1 dependent $8,148 2 dependent $11,448 3 dependent $14,110 4 dependent $ 16,788

Total Expenses: $

Sources of Funding:

Personal funds/savings: $ Funds from another source: $

Specify source:

Total Funding: $

Current EAD dates from: to:

Month/Day/Year

Month/Day/Year

17-month extension dates from: to:

Month/Day/Year

Month/Day/Year

Describe your employment during the 17-month extension:

Employer Name:

Employer Address:

City State Zip

STATEMENT: I have read the attached cover pages regarding optional practical training and fully understand the implications of the authorization. The information I have provided is true and correct.

Signature

Month/Day/Year
ISS will complete this section:

☐ Previous OPT
☐ Previous 17-month stem extension
☐ Completed degree
☐ Address checked
☐ Travel discussed
☐ Passport expiration

Date submitted to ISS ______________

Month/Day/Year

Date I-795 Received ______________

120 Days Prior = ______________

Adviser’s initials ______________