17-month Extension for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training

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

STEM Fields include:
Actuarial Science. CIP Code 52.1304. Computer Science Applications:
   CIP Codes 11.xxxx (except Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, which are CIP Codes 11.06xx)
Physical Sciences. CIP Codes 40.xxxx. Science Technologies. CIP Codes 41.xxxx. Medical Scientist (MS, PhD). CIP Code 51.1401

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 US 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 employment verification system.
• Have not received a 17-month OPT extension for a prior STEM degree.

When to Apply:
Apply up to 120 days before your current EAD expires.

Application Step 1: Request OPT recommendation from ISS
ISS must process a recommendation for your OPT request.
7 working days are required to process a recommendation for OPT. Please submit the following items to an ISS adviser during general walk-in hours or a scheduled appointment. ISS cannot accept your application for processing unless all these items are completed and submitted:
• Student Request Verification Form
  Form I-765* (Use most recent version from ISS Web site.)
  Valid passport / Form I-94
  * Instructions for completing I-765 can be downloaded from the USCIS website at (go to “FORMS”):
  http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis

Application Step 2: Submit the following items to USCIS.

   OPT applications must be received by USCIS before your current EAD card expires.
• Original Form I-765
• Photocopy of I-20 page 1 with your signature and page 3 with OPT recommendation.
• Photocopy of your last EAD card.
• Photocopy of both sides of Form I-94. Copy the back even if it is blank. Do not mail the original Form I-94.
• Two color photos. The instructions with Form I-765 provide detailed photo requirement information. 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 an envelope and staple it to the application. Learning Abroad Center (230 Heller Hall, 612-626-9000) offers photography service.
• Photocopies of as many as possible of the following that contain your name and photo: the identity page of your passport, entry visa stamp with a photo, driver's license or state ID, student ID, and any previously issued EAD.
• Photocopy of your diploma or a final transcript.
• Check or money order, payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" for the OPT application fee.

Keep a copy of the above documents for your records. Staple the application materials together in the following order: Form I-765, photocopy of I-20, copies of identity verification, and the photocopy of Form I-94. The small pieces (bag/envelope containing photos and check) should be placed on the top and stapled with the entire application. Do not put staple holes in the photos. Mail the application by registered or express mail to obtain a signed receipt. Keep the receipt for your records.

MAILING INFORMATION
Use the Phoenix Lockbox address if you will be living in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

For Minnesota:

USCIS Phoenix Lockbox
P.O. Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85034

To send by Express Mail, it is recommended that you go to a US post office and send your documents by Certified US Postal Express Mail to the address printed below. Be sure to request a return receipt to verify delivery.

Note: Some students have experienced problems sending documents by private courier such as Federal Express, DHL, UPPS, etc. Also, private couriers will not ship to a PO Box number. If you still prefer to use this method, use the address below:

By express mail only:

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

Use the Dallas Lockbox address if you will be living 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

USCIS Dallas Lockbox
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX  75266

By express mail only:

USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S, State Hwy. 121, and Business Suite 400
Lewiston, TX
It is highly recommended that you include the Form G-1145: "E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance" with your application in order to receive an e-mail and/or text message that your Form I-765 has been received at a USCIS Lockbox facility. In the following weeks, a paper receipt with an official receipt number will be mailed to you informing you that your application has been sent on to and received by a USCIS Service Center and is being processed.

**Wait for USCIS to mail the EAD**

- 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 approximate processing times for I-765 (OPT) applications go to [https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp](https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp).
- 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 new EAD will reflect the dates of your employment authorization.

**Travel outside the US during your 17-month approved OPT extension**

**Bring your:**

- Passport with valid visa stamp
- EAD card
- Letter of Employment
- I-20 form with valid travel signature

**NOTE:** *Per SEVP guidance, April 2010, overseas travel is not recommended when your 17 month OPT extension application is pending and your EAD has expired.*

**Travel signatures are only valid for 6 months.**

**IMPORTANT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS WHILE ON YOUR 17** **MONTH OPT EXTENSION**

SEVIS is now requiring the University of Minnesota to report 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.

You are required to send the information to ISS at pokeefe@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 F1/T status.

NOTE: You are responsible for keeping track of these dates! ISS will not be sending 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 any change to the name and address of your employer to ISS within 10 days of any change (the above reporting requirement is in addition to the reporting of any changes).
- Accumulated unemployment during the entire OPT authorization period may not exceed 120 days
- Notify ISS if you change your visa status or permanently depart the U.S. before your OPT period ends.
**17-Month Extension for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Student Request Verification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student Request</strong></th>
<th><strong>Student should complete this portion.</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLEASE PRINT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Student's name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. University of Minnesota ID #</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. E-mail address</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Field of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Update your financial information for the first 12 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Living expenses: $____________________ ($12,361 minimum)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses of dependents: $ ______________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 dependent $8,004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 dependents $11,256</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 dependents $13,860</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 dependents $16,512</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenses: $____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Sources of funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal funds/savings: $ ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funds from another source: $ ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specify source: ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total funding: $____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. My 17-month extension will begin on ______________________ and end on ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Describe your employment during the 17-month extension: ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Employer name: ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer mailing address: ______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>State</td>
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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.

Student signature ______________________ Date ______________________
**ISS Adviser's Tasks**

- Previous OPT
- Previous 17-month stem extension
- Completed degree
- Address check
- Number of days unemployed
- Travel discussed
- Passport expiration

Current OPT dates

Adviser's initials: Date: