OPT Final Instructions

When you receive your OPT I-20, sign it and make a copy. Include the copy in the application and keep the original. Assemble your application documents in the following order. Staple or clip the entire packet together. All forms and copies should be single-sided.

- Completed Form G-1145 (Optional, but recommended.)
- 2 U.S. passport-sized photos (taken within 30 days and never used for any other purpose) in a small plastic bag. Write your name, birthdate, and I-94 number in ballpoint pen on the back of each photo.
- Check or money order current date (not a future date) made payable to: "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" (Do not sign the back of the check!) Check the Filing Fee section for the current fee for the I-765.
- Completed original Form I-765. **Make sure to sign the I-765 form.**
- Photocopy of I-20 with OPT recommendation. **Sign the original and then make a copy**. Keep the original I-20. Only send a copy.
- Photocopy of passport biographical page
- Photocopy of most recent F-1 visa (all students except Canadian citizens)
- Photocopy of front and back of I-94 OR printout of most recent electronic I-94 (travel history not necessary)
- Printout of CPT Employment page from your SEVIS record (provided by ISS)
- Photocopy of any I-20s showing Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization. If you have not had CPT, you do not need to include I-20 photocopies (not even of your current I-20).
- Photocopy of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) cards (if you were previously authorized for OPT or economic hardship)
- Photocopy of job offer letter, if you have one
- Any other documents personally recommended for you by ISS (optional)

Make a photocopy of your entire application packet before sending to USCIS. Additional filing instructions available on Form Filing Tips | USCIS

Mailing Instructions:

IMPORTANT: <u>You must file Form I-765 while in the United States.</u> Make sure all the information in your packet is correct and complete. You are responsible for mailing your OPT application to USCIS in a timely manner. **USCIS must receive your application within 30 days of the date your I-20 was issued** (the dates on I-765, check, and photos must also be less than 30 days old), **and before the end of your 60-day grace period.** ISS recommends you send your application packet via USPS and use tracking to monitor when your packet is received by USCIS.

Mailing Address:

USCIS provides the address where you send the I-765 OPT application **here**.

If you need to update the EAD card mailing address, contact ISS for advice. To avoid unnecessary complications, ISS recommends you file your OPT application with a mailing address that will remain valid for at least four months.

Additional Resources:

Detailed information about OPT: http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/OPT.cfm
Information on OPT STEM Extension: http://www.iss.purdue.edu/PracticalTraining/STEM.cfm

What Happens After You Apply for OPT

1. Check your I-20 program end date (on first page in "Program of Study" section): **this is the LAST DAY you may be employed as a student**. You may not work in any capacity until you receive your EAD and your authorized OPT start date arrives.
2. If you are a bachelor's or master's non-thesis student and do not graduate as expected, contact ISS immediately. **Do not let your I-20 expire.**
3. You will receive an electronic notification when USCIS receives your application if you submitted Form G-1145.

4. Within approximately three weeks, you will receive a hard copy receipt notice. Please check this notice for accuracy and inform ISS if anything is incorrect. This will have your official receipt date and case number, which you can use to track the status of your application on the USCIS website: https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus
5. If you receive a Request for Evidence, please submit this eform: **MyISS>F-1 Optional Practical Training> Respond to an OPT Request For Evidence**.
6. You may check the USCIS Processing Time Information website to get an estimation of how long each USCIS office is taking to process I-765 forms: https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/
7. If approved, an EAD will be sent to the address used on the I-765 Form. Check the EAD for accuracy and inform ISS if anything is incorrect. Make two copies of the card: one for yourself and send one to ISS.
8. If you applied for a Social Security Number by using the I-765, your Social Security card will be sent to the address used on the I-765. **Do not use the ISS address.** You should receive the Social Security card approximately two weeks after receiving the EAD card. **Do not send a copy of your Social Security card to ISS.**
9. Before you start working you must have your card in your hand. **You cannot begin practical training of any kind until the start date listed on your EAD, this includes volunteering in approved volunteer training programs (see ISS first), training and orientation for an upcoming opportunity.** Remember, your employment/training must be directly related to your major.

Reporting Requirements While on OPT

While on OPT, you must report any changes to personal or employment information within 10 days of the change. To report, go to **MyISS>F-1 Optional Practical Training>OPT Reporting**. Use this e-form group to **report all changes** to personal and employment information within 10 days. Also, to maintain F-1 OPT status, you must have **less than 90 days of unemployment**: use these eforms to report employment and avoid days of unemployment. Finally, this e-form may also be used to **request a new travel signature** while on OPT. Use the following e-forms to report:

Reporting OPT Employment Information
- Starting employment with new employer, Employer name change, Work location change, Supervisor change , Job title and job description change, Changes in full-time vs part-time employment

Report Employment End Date
- Report the end date of employment

Personal Information on OPT
- Legal name, Living address, Phone number, Email

Travel Signature Request on OPT
- to indicate if you would like an I-20 printed after filling out e-forms to update information
- and/or to request a travel signature

Finalize your OPT Report
Note: to submit your request fully to ISS, you must submit this e-form. If you do not submit this e-form, ISS will not be notified of your update requests. **You will receive an email confirmation** once you have successfully submitted the e-form group.

Other eform options in F-1 Optional Practical Training:

Upload an OPT-Related Document
- Receipt Notice, Approval Notice, EAD, Job Offer Letter

Report No Longer On OPT
- **Change in visa status**, including approval of H1-B petition, other approval of adjustment of status, or any other change in immigration status. You must submit proof of approval for any change in status.
- **Transfer to another school** to start a new degree program
- **Change to a new degree program** at Purdue University
- **Permanent departure** from the U.S. before the end of your OPT if you decide to end your work early and forfeit the remainder of your OPT

Travel on OPT

International travel while on OPT or while OPT is pending is possible, but you should exercise caution. Please also be sure to check Purdue ISS's updates about Immigration Changes before travelling: https://www.iss.purdue.edu/ImmigrationChanges/

Until graduation/program end date:	After graduation/program end date:
You must present the following documents to the officer at the port-of-entry: • Valid passport • Valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport • I-20 with travel signature dated within six months of your reentry to the U.S. • I-797c Notice of Action Receipt from USCIS (recommended) • Job offer letter (recommended)	You are strongly advised not to travel outside the U.S. before you receive your EAD card. The following documents must be presented upon reentry to the U.S.: • Valid passport • Valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport • I-20 with travel signature dated within six months of your reentry to the U.S. • Valid EAD • A job offer letter from a prospective employer or a job letter from a current employer.