

Components Of

Optional Practical Training



1 Final Semester of Study

Only F-1 students in their final semester of study are eligible to apply for OPT.



2 OPT Application for OPT I-20 Opens in ISSP Connect

90 days before program date. Select an OPT start date within 60 days after your program end date.
Apply Early!



4 Last Day to Submit Application to USCIS

60 days after program end date



3 Submit Online USCIS application

DO NOT submit USCIS application until after you receive your Form I-20 with OPT information on page 2. Failure to upload OPT I-20 to your USCIS application will result in denial.



5 Receipt Notice

You will immediately be provided a receipt notice after your submit and pay for your OPT application on USCIS. Keep this with your records.



If you receive a "Request for Evidence" please take action immediately by consulting with an ISO Advisor.



Remember, you are limited to 90 cumulative days of unemployment. If you exceed 90 days, your SEVIS record may be terminated.



6 EAD Card

3-5 months is the average processing time to receive your approval by means of OPT Employment Authorization Document Card.



7 Reporting Requirements

Any changes to employment or personal information must be reported to SEVP Portal within 10 days. You must inform ISO if you decide to end OPT or start new educational program.

Options After Post-Completion OPT



Further Education

OPT is granted once per degree level. OPT STEM can be granted twice, but only once per degree level. Outside of employment, you can remain in the United States by pursuing a new degree program.



OPT STEM Extension

If you are in a STEM program, you are eligible for an additional 2 years of employment. Apply 90 days before your OPT authorization expires. Visit issp.virginia.edu for more information.



Change Your Status

Examples: Change of status to H1b through employer, or change of status to F-2 through spouse. Contact an immigration attorney to learn more about other visa types to remain in the United States.



Depart the United States

After OPT authorization ends, you are permitted 60 days to remain in the United States, after which you must depart or change your status.