



24-Month STEM OPT Extension Guide

What is OPT extension?

The STEM OPT extension is a 24-month period of temporary training that directly relates to an F-1 student's program of study in an approved STEM field. On May 10, 2016, this extension effectively replaced the previous 17-month STEM OPT extension.

Can I apply for OPT Extension?(Eligibility)

- Be a current **F-1** student
- Have been **granted OPT** and currently be in a valid period of OPT
- Have earned a **STEM Degree** (Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral) from a certified institution during the application of the OPT STEM extension. Check it through: <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>
 - o STEM Degrees previously earned from a certified institution: while engaged in a 12- month non-STEM degree based OPT period a previously earned STEM degree maybe used to get an extension.
 - o STEM Degrees earned in the future from a certified institution: a 12-month OPT STEM extension maybe pursued.
- Working in a paid position for participating **E-Verified** employer.

How to apply for OPT Extension?(Needed Documents & Process)

Step 1: Fill out the I-983 form with your employer.

- SEVIS School Code for Lewis is CHI214F11210000
- CIP code can be found on your I-20 next to your "major" in the "program of study".
- The Start Date of your OPT extension should be the end date of your OPT period.
- Download the form
via: <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/i983.pdf>

Step 2: Preparing the following documents before coming to the Office (Similar to OPT application)

- **I-765 form.** Please fill out the form online or by handwriting in black pen within the box. Find the tips on page 5 to 8.
Download the form via: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-765.pdf>
- **A copy of your Transcript and Diploma.**
- **A copy of your EAD card.** A copy of your current EAD card both front and back.
- **A copy of your ID page and visa page on your passport.** Both of these pages must be readable. Visa page must include your latest US visa stamp.
- **A copy of your previous I-20s.** A copy of all of the I-20s that you have ever had.
- **A copy of your I-94.** If your last entry is before April 2013, please make a copy of your I-94 that you have got when you entered the U.S. from Immigration. If your last entry is after April 2013. Please print your I-94 via: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>
- **A cashier's check or money order of \$410 and pay to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security".**

The filing fee for Form I-765 is \$410, effective 12 a.m. Eastern U.S. time, December 23, 2016. You must also pay an \$85 biometric services fee, for a total of \$495, if you are:

- Requesting consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA);
- A beneficiary of an approved employment-based immigrant petition and you are facing compelling circumstances; or
- A spouse or unmarried dependent child of a beneficiary of an employment-based immigrant petition who is facing compelling circumstances.

There is no biometric services fee for any other eligibility category.

- **Two passport style photos.** no older than 30 days
- **(Additional) A copy of your I-983 form.** Do not send the original form. USCIS does not require sending I-983 form. I-983 form is for DSO only.
- **(Additional) G-1145 form.** Use this form to request an electronic notification when USCIS accepts your immigration application. Complete the information below and clip this form to the first page of your application package. Download the form via: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf>

Step 3: Make an appointment with ISS.

Please make sure every document is well-prepared.

If you cannot come to Office, please email the copy of all of the required documents to us and give us your current address.

Step 4: During the appointment, we will:

- Issue you a new I-20.

If you cannot come to Office, we can mail the above document to you.

Step 5: Mail all of the documents to USCIS by the applicant.

Mail all the document that requested above, **except I-983 form, within 30 days** by Certified Mail and Courier Service with return receipt requested to:

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
Attn: AOS
1 820 E. Skyharbor Circle S.
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

In about 2-3 weeks, you should receive a receipt notice (I-797) in the mail.

Note: If your mailing address on your I-765 form (Question#3) is not in Illinois, please find your filing address via: <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/forms-information/uscis-phoenix-and-dallas-lockbox-facilities>

Step 6: Report to the ISS when you got approval.

It's very important and your responsibility to report to our office. Once you get your new EAD card, please send us a copy of your EAD card both front and back (Readable pictures are acceptable). Please remember you are still a F-1 student even though you are doing OPT Extension. Please note: If you cannot find a job within 60 additional days (exceed total 150 days of unemployment, which includes OPT period), you are able to stay in the U.S only for 60 days.

What do I need to do When I'm doing my OPT extension?

You are responsible for reporting changes to Office to maintain legal f-1 status.

- If you made any changes with regards to the items listed below, report them to Office within 10 days of the change.
 - o You legal name
 - o Mailing/residential address
 - o Email address

- Employer's name
- Employer's address
- Regularly meet with the Office at least every 6 months to confirm if there have been any or no changes to the information listed above.

How do I receive my EAD card?

USCIS began the use of the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) Signature Confirmation Restricted Delivery service to mail the secure documents, like EAD card and green card, beginning April 30, 2018. As part of the new delivery method, **applicants must present identification to sign for their documents upon delivery.**

- **Receive by applicants:** ID and signature are required upon delivery.
- **Receive by others:** Applicants also have the option to designate an agent to sign on their behalf by completing the Postal Service's PS 3801 form, Standing Delivery Order. PS 3801 form can be download through : <https://about.usps.com/forms/ps3801.pdf>
- **Receive by an Authorized Representative of a Hotel, Apartment House, or the Like.** Applicants also have the option to designate an agent to sign on their behalf by completing the Postal Service's PS 3801-A form, PS Form 3801-A, Agreement by a Hotel, Apartment House, or the Like. PS 3801-A form can be download through : <https://about.usps.com/forms/ps3801a.pdf>

Can I update my profile and employment information by myself?

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) Portal is an important tool that lets students on post-completion optional practical training (OPT) and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) OPT meet their legal reporting requirements. Students can use the SEVP Portal to report these changes, or they can ask a designated school official (DSO) report it for them.

SEVP is not Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and students cannot access SEVIS system. The Portal shares information SEVIS, but does not give students direct access to SEVIS. Only students with approved post-completion OPT or STEM OPT can create Portal accounts.

When your OPT has been approved and is active, check your email inbox for an email notice that includes a link to the SEVP Portal registration pages.

In the SEVP Portal, students on STEM OPT are able to do:

- **Update profile information**, including Biographic information, address, and phone number.

- **Edit current employment Information.** STEM extension is different from Post-completion OPT. Students can only edit most of parts of current employment information.

The Portal does not remove the need for a student to work with a designated school official (DSO) at the student's school. **DSO is still important to students because DSO can help you when:**

- **Email Change:** Email is your user name for SEVP. You cannot change your email address in the Portal. The Portal will send you an email with a temporary password when DSO requests email change through SEVIS system.
- **Initial Portal Account Creation email Resending Request:** If you didn't receive a notification email from USCIS to create your portal account once your OPT has been approved and is active, DSO is able to request a resending of the Initial Account-Creation Email through SEVIS system.
- **Portal Account Unlock:** The Portal will lock your account after three failed attempts to log in to the SEVP Portal. DSO may help you unlock your account by requesting in SEVIS system. You will receive an email to unlock the account. See more detail in the SEVP Portal - Student User Guide.
- **Employment Information Update:** DSO is still able to update the information for students in the SEVIS system as before. If students need to change the employment information, DSO can add it with a new completed Form I-983 from you, and update and delete it.

Data Flow between SEVIS and the SEVP Portal:

- Student-changed data is passed from the Portal to SEVIS immediately.
- DSO-changed data is passed from SEVIS to the Portal once a day.

For more detailed information for SEVP Portal, please review **SEVP Portal - Student User Guide** from USCIS

through: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/assets/sevp_portal_student_user_guide.pdf

Additional Information – Grace Period before receiving new EAD card

If you file your STEM OPT extension application on time and your OPT period expires while your extension application is pending, USCIS will automatically extend your employment authorization for **180 days**. This automatic 180-day extension ceases once USCIS adjudicates your STEM OPT extension application.

Additional Information – Legal unemployment

Unemployment during OPT is allowed for a limited amount of days by the law. Taken from the USCIS website:

If you received...	You may be unemployed for...	For a total of ... <i>(during the OPT period)</i>
Initial post-completion OPT only	Up to 90 days	90 days
17-month extension	An additional 30 days	120 days*
24-month extension	An additional 60 days	150 days*

*If you are granted an additional 7-month extension in addition to your 17-month STEM-OPT (for a total of 24-month STEM OPT extension) then you may be unemployed for a total of 150-days during the OPT period



Tips for Filling Out the Form I-765



Application For Employment Authorization

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form I-765
OMB No. 1615-0040
Expires 02/28/2018

For USCIS Use Only	Fee Stamp	Action Block	Initial Receipt	Resubmitted
			Relocated	
			Received	Sent
			Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid To _____ Subject to the following conditions: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Application Denied - Failed to establish: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c) <input type="checkbox"/> Economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)		<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied
		<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant is filing under section 274a.12 _____ A# _____		

► **START HERE** - Type or print in black ink.

I am applying for:

- Permission to accept employment.
- Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).
- Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document).

1. Full Name

Family Name	First Name	Middle Name

2. Other Names Used (include Maiden Name)

Family Name	First Name	Middle Name

3. U.S. Mailing Address

Street Number and Name	Apt. Number	
Town or City	State	ZIP Code

4. Country of Citizenship or Nationality

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5. Place of Birth

Town or City	State/Province	Country

6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

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I am applying for: Check the box of "Renewal of my permission to accept employment"

Q1: Write your last name in capital letters. Your first and middle names must be capitalized

Q3: If using a friend's or relative's address, write c/o followed by their name



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USCIS
Form I-765
OMB No. 1615-0040
Expires 02/28/2018

For USCIS Use Only	Fee Stamp	Action Block	Initial Receipt	Resubmitted
			Relocated	
			Received	Sent
			Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid From _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Authorization/Extension Valid To _____ Subject to the following conditions: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Application Denied - Failed to establish: <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c) <input type="checkbox"/> Economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)		Approved Denied A# _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant is filing under section 274a.12 _____		

Q9: Check "Yes" to Q9.a. And write down your SSN to Q9.b.

7. Gender Male Female
8. Marital Status
 Single Married Divorced Widowed
- 9.a. Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 9.a., provide the information requested in Item Number 9.b.

- 9.b. Provide your Social Security number (SSN) (if known)
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10. Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card? (You must also answer "Yes" to Item Number 11., Consent for Disclosure, to receive a card.)
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "No" to Item Number 10., skip to Item Number 14. If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 10., you must also answer "Yes" to Item Number 11.

Q10-13: Leave these blank

11. Consent for Disclosure: I authorize disclosure of information from this application to the SSA as required for the purpose of assigning me an SSN and issuing me a Social Security card.
 Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Numbers 10. - 11., provide the information requested in Item Numbers 12.a. - 13.b.

Father's Name

12.a. Family Name (Last Name)

12.b. Given Name (First Name)

Mother's Name (Provide your mother's birth name.)

13.a. Family Name (Last Name)

13.b. Given Name (First Name)

14. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or Form I-94 Number (if any)

15. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?
 Yes (Complete the following questions.)
Which USCIS Office? Dates
Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

No (Proceed to Item Number 16.)

16. Date of Your Last Arrival or Entry Into the U.S., On or About (mm/dd/yyyy)

17. Place of Your Last Arrival or Entry Into the U.S.

18. Status at Last Entry (B-2 Visitor, F-1 Student, No Lawful Status, etc.)

19. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

20. Eligibility Category. Go to the Who May File Form I-765? section of the Instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.
() () ()

21. (c)(3)(C) Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(3)(C) in Item Number 20. above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.

Degree Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify

Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a Valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number

Q14: Your Alien Registration number can be found online on your I-94

Q15: Check "Yes".

The office is either "Phoenix Service center" or "Dallas Service Center"

The Date is the start Date on your current EAD card

Q16 & 17: can be answered with the information found on your latest I-94

Q18: If you were a student on your last entry, write down "F-1 Student" for question 14

Q19: write down your current Immigration Status. If you are a student or graduating student write down "F-1 Student"

Q20: The category code for post – completion Training (OPT) Extension is (c) (3) (C)

Q21: Degree is the CIP code on your I-20

Q22-23: Since the eligibility category code is (c)(3)(C), there is no need to write anything in sections 22, and 23.

Do not forget to sign your form I-765. Try to sign within the box since they will use this signature for your EAD card.

Make sure to double check all the information you write on this form as a small mistake can cause serious delays and monetary penalties.

22. (c)(26) Eligibility Category. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(26) in Item Number 20, above, please provide the receipt number of your H-1B principal spouse's most recent Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-129.

23. (c)(35) and (c)(36) Eligibility Category

a. If you entered the eligibility category (c)(35) or (c)(36) in Item Number 20, above, please provide the receipt number of the Form I-140 beneficiary's Form I-797 Notice of Approval for Form I-140.

b. Have you EVER been arrested for and/or convicted of any crime? Yes No

NOTE: If you answered "Yes" to Item Number 23.b., refer to Item Number 5, Item H, or Item I, in the Who May File Form I-765 section of these Instructions for information about providing court dispositions.

Certification

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the Who May File Form I-765 section of the Instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Item Number 20.

Applicant's Signature

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

Telephone Number

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Applicant

I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.

Preparer's Signature

Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

Printed Name

Address