OPT STEM Extension Information Sheet

F-1 students who are currently authorized for OPT employment based on completion of a Bachelor’s degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM) field, as defined by DHS, may be eligible for a 24-month extension of OPT.

In order to be eligible for this extension, students applying for this benefit must:
- already be on valid OPT based on a STEM-eligible degree:
  https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension
- have had fewer than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT
- be employed by, or have a job offer from, an employer who is registered in the E-Verify employment verification system

There is a lifetime limit of two periods of 24-month STEM OPT; each occurring after a higher degree level has been obtained. A STEM degree obtained at a U.S. university prior to your current degree may be the basis for a STEM extension under certain circumstances.

See detailed information on the STEM Hub: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub

Materials required for the OPT STEM extension application:

**To International Advising Office:**
- Completed and signed “Request for 24 Month Extension of OPT”
- Completed Training Plan I-983 form

**To USCIS:**
- Completed and signed Form I-765 (see “Hints” below)
- Check or money order for $410, payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
- 2 color, U.S. passport-style, photographs (see “Guidelines” below) – write name and SEVIS ID on back in pencil.
- Copy of the front and back of your current OPT card
- Copy of new I-20 from International Advising Office, with recommendation for OPT extension (keep the original I-20)
- Copy of all previous I-20s
- Evidence that your degree meets the STEM degree/major requirements
  ONLY ONE of the following must be submitted with your application:
  - Official transcript (Request from Registrar’s Office)
  - Copy of the diploma that shows your degree level and program of study
- Copy of your current I-94 printout from cbp.gov
- Copy of your passport identity page (and any renewal pages) Passport must be valid at least 6 months into the future.
- Copy of F-1 visa
Submitting OPT Application to USCIS

- Be sure to sign your STEM OPT I-20 form when you receive it from the International Advising Office.
- Make a copy of the entire application before you submit it to the USCIS.
- Submit the application to the USCIS Lockbox with jurisdiction over the address you list on the I-765 form. See last page for addresses.


Hints for filling out Form I-765 –

- **Item #3** If you may move while this application is being processed, use a stable address such as your employer or Union’s International Advising Office. Mail from USCIS is not forwarded by the Postal Service.
- **Item #9** Use your U.S. Social Security Number.
- **Item #10** This is the 11-digit number on your most recent I-94
- **Item #11** Includes your current OPT information. You applied for your OPT through the USCIS OFFICE IN VERMONT.
- **Item #14** USCIS wants to know what your status was the last time you entered the U.S. For most students applying for OPT, it is “F-1”.
- **Item #15** This must be “F-1”.
- **Item #16** (C)(3)(C)
- **Item #17** Degree = your degree level and major; Employer’s name as listed in E-Verify; Employer’s E-Verify Identification Number (E-Verify information can only be obtained from your employer)

Guidelines for the “Two Passport Style” photos

- Photos must measure 2 inches by 2 inches.
- Head should be positioned directly facing the camera.
- Photo should capture from slightly above top of hair to middle of chest.
- Background should be plain white or off-white.
• Photos should be taken within the last 30 days prior to the extension application. Photos used for obtaining a non-U.S. passport or a U.S. visa stamp are generally not acceptable, as they are often not the correct size, and rarely taken within 30 days of the OPT application.

✓ Submit the STEM OPT application to USCIS within 90 days of your initial OPT expiration date.

✓ While the STEM OPT I-765 is pending with USCIS, you may continue to work for up to 180 days.