

# 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 \$380, 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](http://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

You may either submit the application on your own to the appropriate USCIS Service Center, or you may submit all of the above materials to the Office of International Affairs, and we will submit the application on your behalf. If you will submit directly to USCIS, please be aware of the following:

- 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.

Download I-765 form here: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf>

## 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 <u>not</u> 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”.  |
| <b>Item #16</b> | <b>(C)(3)(C)</b>   |
| 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.**

**Complete this form and email to pawlowism@union.edu**



**Request for 24 Month Extension of OPT**

(Return to International Advising Office)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

OPT Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employer

Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employer's E-verified number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's EIN number: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title and

Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full-Time \_\_\_\_\_ Part-Time \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing below, you verify that you understand and agree to adhere to the following DHS regulatory requirements:**

1. You are currently on Optional Practical Training (OPT) and are employed or have been offered employment for practical training in your major field of study.
2. Your current or future employer is enrolled in E-Verify. For more information, [visit E-Verify](#)
3. You have not been unemployed for more than 90 days while on OPT.
4. **You will report to International Advising at [pawlowism@union.edu](mailto:pawlowism@union.edu) within 10 days of each occurrence:**
  - any change in your home address each time that you move
  - any change in the name **AND/OR** the address of your employer by submission of a new [I-983 form](#)
  - the loss of your job at any time during your OPT authorization
5. Your employer agrees to notify the International Advising Office ([pawlowism@union.edu](mailto:pawlowism@union.edu)) within 5 days in the event of the **termination of your employment or your departure from the job.**
6. You and your employer agree to **submit an [I-983 form](#) to update your employment information** as soon as a material change occurs and within 10 days of each 12-month evaluation.
7. You will “check in” with the International Advising Office (via [pawlowism@union.edu](mailto:pawlowism@union.edu) with an e-mail titled “STEM OPT validation”) **every six months** during the STEM OPT extension from the start date listed on your new OPT card; at those check-ins, we need your mailing address as well as your employer’s name and address.
8. Your OPT will end if you accrue a total of 150 days of unemployment (counted from the start of your total OPT period), or if you transfer to another school.

*I affirm that I understand the information provided to me on this application form and on the supplemental “OPT STEM Extension Information Sheet”, and I agree to the conditions set forth as described by these documents.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (*this indicates your signature of this form*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If you live in:	Mail your application to:
<p>Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands.</p>	<p><b>USCIS Phoenix Lockbox</b></p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For Express mail and courier deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>
<p>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, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia</p>	<p><b>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</b></p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For Express mail and courier deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>