GUIDELINES FOR OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING APPLICATION (OPT)

General Information:

- Must have been in F-1 status for one full academic year (standard academic year consists of 9 months).
- OPT is authorized for a maximum period of 12 months.
- OPT Employment must be directly related to major field of study and degree.
- Student must have valid passport
- Offer of employment is not required as a condition of eligibility. The student is expected to work or be seeking employment
- Prior use of full-time Curricular Practical Training for one year or more eliminates eligibility for Optional Practical Training. Use of part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for Optional Practical Training.
- The OPT application can be submitted no earlier than 90 days before the program end date and no later than 60 days after the program end date.
- Student cannot begin employment until he or she receives the EAD from UCIS
- OPT status students cannot be unemployed more than 90 days total.
- 60 day grace period between program completion and start date of OPT.
- It may take up to 3 months for USCIS to process OPT applications

Application Procedure Check List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The DSO (Intl. Student Advisor) verifies that the student is in valid F-1 status and lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I-765 (Item 16 code):</strong> (c)(3)(A) for pre-completion OPT, (c)(3)(B) for post-completion OPT, and (c)(3)(C) for a 17-month extension for an F-1 student who has received a degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM), that appears on the STEM designated Degree Program List published on the SEVP website</td>
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<tr>
<td>$380 Check Payable to DHS – Department of Homeland Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two (2) Photos, <strong>WITH PENCIL</strong> print name and admission number on back (mail both photos with I-765)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passport: copy photo page, page with passport number and expiration date, most recent F-1 Visa stamp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopy of I-94 (back and front)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopy of EAD (valid or expired) if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSO and Student signature is required on updated I-20 (use blue ink only)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Copy of I-765, Check, Photos, Copies of Passport Pages, Copy of I-94, Copies I-20, Copy of EAD (if applicable) mail to:

USCIS Phoenix Lockbox

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

E-Notification: If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your Form I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility, complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance and clip it to the first page of your application.

**Timeline**

- Schedule appointment with Rose to review required documents and OPT application process
- Rose will review your documents and create a new I-20 to request OPT.
- You will need to sign new I-20 and then everything will be mailed to USCIS.
- You will receive a notice that they have received your application materials by text or email based on the information you submit on G-1145.
- Once you are approved for OPT, it could take up to 30 days to receive your EAD card. You cannot work until you have your EAD card in your hand.

**Tips**

- The signature that appears on the EAD card is scanned directly from the I-765. If any part of the signature crosses the line on which students are supposed to sign, the signature can be rejected. It is recommended that students write their signatures so that they fit within the lines of the signature section on Form I-765, so they can be scanned cleanly and applied to the EAD.
- Your check or money order should be made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security."