



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

International Student Services
 800 W. Campbell Rd., SSB34, Richardson, Texas 75080-3021
 (972) 883-4189 ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu

24-Month STEM OPT Application & Mailing Instructions

A. Verify the information on your STEM OPT I-20. If any of the following is incorrect, obtain a corrected I-20 before mailing.

- **Name.** The name on your I-20 should match the name in your passport.
- **Major & Degree.** The major and degree listed on page one of your I-20 should match your SEVIS degree name.
- **Length of OPT Extension Period.** The OPT STEM Extension start date on page 2 of your I-20 should reflect the day after your initial period of OPT ends. The end date should be 24 months later.

B. Assemble your STEM OPT application. Collect the documents listed and put them in the order listed. You can request the ISSO to review your application before sending. It is recommended that you make a copy of your complete application.

- **Form G-1145** (Optional). Authorizes USCIS to send you application processing updates via email/text. If this is desired, paperclip completed form on top of application packet.
- **Original Form I-765.**
- **2 U.S. size passport photos. No Glasses Allowed.** Lightly write your full name and A-number on back of each photo. Your A-number is the 9-digit "USCIS#" on your EAD card. Attach photos to top, left corner of Form I-765 (a plastic bag is supplied for your convenience).
- **\$410 check or money order.** Make payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security," write I-94 number at top or in memo section. Staple check midway down the left edge of Form I-765.
- **Copy of OPT Extension I-20.** Pages 1 and 2. I-20 must be less than 60 days old, signed by you and an ISSO advisor. If your I-20 is more than 60 days old, your application will be denied.
- **Copy of passport ID page.** Showing picture and expiration date.
- **Copy of I-94.** Front and back, or electronic I-94 print out.
- **Copy of F-1 visa.** Most recently issued visa, valid or expired **or I-797 F-1 approval notice.**
- **Copies of any former OPT EADs.** Front and back
- **Copy of diploma.** Related to this period of STEM OPT, or UT Dallas official transcript showing degree conferred.
- **Copy of your job offer letter, or other proof of current employment.** Other proof of employment may include an employment verification letter from your employer, or the prior three months' pay stubs.

C. Mail your application. Please do not attempt to deliver personally. USCIS must receive your application before the expiration of the current period of OPT, or within 60 days of the I-20 issuance date, whichever comes first.

If the address you put on the I-765 is in Texas or: AL, AR, CT, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MS, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, PA, PR, RI, SC, OK, TN, VT, VA, WV

If the address you put on the I-765 is in: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NV, ND, OH, OR, SD, UT, WA, WI, WY

| U.S. Postal Service | Express mail or courier | U.S. Postal Service | Express mail or courier |
|--|---|--|---|
| USCIS P.O. Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266 | USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 2501 S. State Hwy 121 Bus, Ste 400 Lewisville, TX 75067 | USCIS P.O. Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036 | USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Ste 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034 |

Ship your application:

- UT Dallas Copy Center located in the Visitor Center and University Bookstore Mon – Fri 8am to 5pm
- 819 W. Arapaho Rd. (at West Shore Dr., inside Joy's Hallmark), Mon - Sat 9:00 am - 5:30pm For more locations, see: <https://www.usps.com>

Keep your receipt notice: USCIS will mail a receipt notice to the address on the I-765, usually 2-3 weeks after receiving the application. You can use the receipt number to speak with USCIS about your application or to get status updates at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>.

If the card is mailed to a personal address, submit a copy of your EAD card to the ISSO to ISSODocuments@utdallas.edu. The ISSO will verify that the dates in the EAD card and the dates in SEVIS match. If the dates do not match, the ISSO will request a correction on your behalf. Although the dates not matching is not frequent, when that happens it impacts future benefits such as OPT Reporting and Cap Gap Extension.

D. Maintain your status while on STEM OPT.

Maintain appropriate STEM OPT employment. The Department of Homeland Security instructions regarding acceptable OPT employment may be found on the ISSO webpage.

- Employment must be for at least 20 hours a week
- All employment must be compensated. You may not volunteer for an employer during the STEM OPT extension.
- The employment must be directly related to the STEM degree that the work authorization was based upon. You and the employer make the determination of whether it is directly related.
- All employment must be with E-Verified employer.
- The employment must include a legitimate employer, employee relationship.
- Maintain the training plan as indicated by Form I-983.
- You may change employers as long as each job is directly related to the STEM degree that the work authorization was based upon. Please note that any new employment will require a new Form I-983 Training Plan and 24-Month Reporting Form.
- You are allowed to work for multiple employers while on a period of STEM OPT, however each employment must meet all of the student and employer requirements outlined above.

Stay within unemployment limits.

- F-1 alumni on post-completion OPT are allowed a maximum period of 90 days of unemployment.
- Students on the 24-month STEM OPT extension are allowed an additional 60 days of unemployment for a maximum period of 150 days of unemployment.
- Each day (including weekends) during the period when STEM OPT authorization begins and ends that you do not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment.
- STEM OPT authorization begins on the employment start date shown on your EAD.

Submit the OPT Reporting Form – 24 Month STEM Extension to the ISSO. Information regarding OPT requirements and links to the OPT Reporting form may be found on the ISSO webpage.

- Updates must be reported within 10 days of the start of your STEM OPT work authorization and within 10 days of any subsequent change.
- While on STEM Extension, you must validate your employment every 6 months by submitting the STEM OPT reporting form.
- You are required to update Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students, 12 months from your STEM EAD start date and include a progress report on accomplishments and skills or knowledge obtained. Employers must sign the 12 month evaluation as well.
- If you add or change employers you must submit a new Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students to the ISSO.
- You and your employer must report material changes to or deviations from the student's formal training plan on Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT outlined above.
- You and your employer must complete and submit to the ISSO a concluding 24 month evaluation on Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students.
- If you neglect to submit Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students to the ISSO within 10 days of the conclusion of the reporting period you will be in violation of your F-1 status.