OPT APPLICATION PROCESS

• **Step 1: Request OPT I-20**
  Submit the [OPT Academic Advisor’s recommendation form](#) to the ISSS Office. Your OPT I-20 will be ready for pick up 7-10 business days after submitting the OPT Request Form.

• **Step 2: Prepare and mail your OPT Application**
  While waiting to receive your new OPT I-20 from the ISSS Office, collect the items listed on the next page. These items are needed to apply for OPT. Please remember, your OPT application must be mailed from the United States.

• **Step 3: Receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD)**
  It can take the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) up to 90 days to process your OPT application. Employment cannot begin until you have received your EAD card.

• **Step 4: Report OPT Employment**
  As a student on OPT, you are required by US immigration regulations to report your employment information to the ISSS office.
OPT APPLICATION PROCESS: STEP 2

Prepare the following items to send to USCIS:

- Form G-1145
- Form-I 765
- Photocopy of paper 1-94 card (both sides) or electronic I-94 record (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/)
- Photocopy of F-1 visa stamp
- Photocopy of identity page(s) in passport
- Photocopy of OPT I-20
- Photocopies of all previous I-20’s
- 2 passport photos taken within the last 30 days (write name and I-94 number in pencil on back of both photos)
- Check or money order for $410
  
  Make payable to: U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Copy of any previous EAD card (if applicable)

PLEASE NOTE: Your OPT application must be received by USCIS no later than 30 days after your OPT I-20 has been issued. If it is received after 30 days, your application will be denied.
COMPLETING THE I-765 FORM

• Type the I-765 form online then print.
• Sign your name in blue ink.
• Your last name should be in all CAPS.
• It is highly recommended that the ISSS address is used on the I-765 form (see sample I-765 form for address).
• Question 14: Number from your online I-94 record.
• Question 20, the answer depends on the type of OPT authorization you are applying for:
  o Pre-Completion OPT (before you graduate): (c)(3)(A)
  o Post-Completion OPT (after you graduate): (c)(3)(B)
• It is highly recommended that the I-765 form is printed single sided.
• Click here for a sample of a completed I-765 form if you do not yet have a social security number.
• Click here for a sample of a completed I-765 form if you already have a social security number.
PASSPORT PHOTO INFORMATION

- The photo requirements for OPT applications must meet the same requirements for U.S. Passport Photos.
- More information regarding these requirements can be found at the US Department of State website.
- Passport photos must be 2” x 2” in size.
- Photos must be taken within the last 30 days.
- Write your name and I-94 number in pencil on back of photos.
- Passport photos can be taken at the following local locations:
  - CVS Pharmacy
  - Walmart: 2405 Vestal Parkway East
  - AAA Travel Agency: Campus Plaza, Vestal
include a check or money order for $410.

the check or money order should be made payable to: “u.s. department of homeland security”.

money orders can be purchased at any local bank or post office.

include your i-94 number in the memo section of the check.
MAILING THE OPT APPLICATION

• The address where you will mail your OPT Application is determined by the US mailing address that you listed on the I-765 form.

• If the address used on the I-765 form is from 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, mail your application to one of the following addresses:

  **US POSTAL SERVICE (Priority Mail):**
  USCIS
  PO Box 660867
  Dallas, Texas 75266

  **FEDEX, UPS OR DHL (Express Mail):**
  USCIS
  Attn: AOS
  2501 S. State Hwy 121 Business
  Suite 400
  Lewisville, Texas 75067

• If the address used on the I-765 form is from 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 Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, mail your application to one of the following addresses:

  **US POSTAL SERVICE (Priority Mail):**
  USCIS
  PO Box 21281
  Phoenix, AZ 85036

  **FEDEX, UPS OR DHL (Express Mail):**
  USCIS
  Attn: AOS
  1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S
  Suite 100
  Phoenix, AZ 85034
Approximately 2-4 weeks after your OPT application is received by USCIS, you will receive an I-797 Notice of Action (Receipt Notice).

Verify your name, date of birth and address on the I-797. If any of this information is not correct, call the USCIS National Customer Service Center number that is referenced on your Receipt Notice.
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT (EAD): STEP 3

- Approximately 90 days after your OPT application is received by USCIS, you will receive your EAD card.

- You cannot begin your employment until you have received your EAD card and before the start date listed on your EAD card.

- Review your EAD card to make sure your personal information is correct. If it is not, contact USCIS.

- Your EAD card can be presented to your employer as proof of your legal work authorization.

- Provide a copy of the front AND back of your EAD card to the ISSS Office.
REPORTING OPT EMPLOYMENT: STEP 4

- **Reporting Requirements:**
  - You must report your employment information to the ISSS office while on OPT. If you do not report your employment to the ISSS office, your immigration record will be terminated 90 days after your start date.
  - You will need to submit an [OPT Employment Update Form](#) under the following circumstances:
    - When your OPT employment begins
    - When your OPT employment ends
    - When you change your employer while on OPT
    - When you change your living address
    - When you are unemployed
  - If you change your living address while on OPT, you must submit the [Address Change for Students on OPT](#) form to the ISSS office.
  - When you have a change in your employment or living address, you must report the change to the ISSS Office within 10 days of the change.
  - While on OPT, you cannot exceed more than 90 days of unemployment. Days of unemployment begin from the start date listed on your EAD card.
  - After 90 days of unemployment, your immigration record will be terminated.