STEM OPT APPLICATION PROCESS

• **Step 1: Request OPT I-20**
Submit the [STEM OPT Extension Application](#) to the ISSS Office. The earliest you can apply for STEM OPT is 90 days before your Post-Completion OPT expires.

• **Step 2: Prepare and mail your STEM OPT Application**
You will need to submit the required items to USCIS **BEFORE** your current Post-Completion OPT end date.

• **Step 3: Receive the Employment Authorization Document (EAD)**
It can take United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) up to 90 days to process your OPT application. You can continue to work for up to 180 days after your current Post-Completion OPT expires while you wait for your STEM OPT EAD card.

• **Step 4: Report OPT Employment**
As a student on STEM OPT, you are required by US immigration regulations to report your employment information to the ISSS office every six months.
The purpose of the Form I-983 is to ensure that students continue a rigorous training program that builds on the skills obtained as a full time student.

You and your supervisor must agree on the components of the plan as follows: the role of the student in the work place, the goals and objectives of the proposed training, how the employer will provide oversight of the plan, and what set of measures and assessments will be used.

The Form I-983, along with the STEM OPT Extension application, must be submitted to the ISSS before you receive your new I-20. To receive your new I-20, please complete and submit pages 1-4 of the Form I-983. Please note, the I-983 form does NOT need to be submitted with your application to USCIS.

A full overview of the application requirements can be found on the Study in the States Hub.
STEM 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
- Copy of any previous EAD card(s) (Front & Back)
- Photocopy of diploma or official transcript confirming STEM degree
- Photocopy of STEM 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

PLEASE NOTE: Your STEM OPT Extension application must be received by USCIS no later than 60 days after your STEM OPT Extension I-20 has been issued OR before your Post-Completion OPT end date. If it is received after 60 days, or after you Post-Completion OPT end date, your application will be denied.
COMPLETING THE I-765 FORM

• Type the I-765 form online then print.
• Sign your name in blue ink.
• Check the third box: *Renewal of my permission to accept employment at the top of the form.*
• Your last name should be in all CAPS.
• Question 3: Make certain that the address you put in item #3 will be valid for the next 90 - 120 days, as this is where your receipt notice and EAD card will be sent. If you have any doubt what your address will be, you should use the ISSS office address.
• Question 14: Number from your online I-94 record.
• Question 20: Eligibility code: (c)(3)(C).
• It is highly recommended that the I-765 form is printed single sided.
• Click here for a sample of a completed I-765 form.
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:
  o CVS Pharmacy
  o Walmart: 2405 Vestal Parkway East
  o AAA Travel Agency: Campus Plaza, Vestal
CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

• 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 STEM 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 STEM 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 STEM OPT application is received by USCIS, you will receive 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 STEM OPT EMPLOYMENT: STEP 4

➢ Reporting Requirements:

• You must report/confirm your employment information and living address to the ISSS office while on STEM OPT Extension every 6 months. You can confirm your employment by submitting an OPT Employment Update Form and Address Change for Students on OPT Form.

• If you change your employer while on STEM OPT, or if your position at your current employment greatly changes, you must also submit an OPT Employment Update Form and a new Form I-983. You must submit the form to the ISSS Office within 10 days of the change. You must also submit a final evaluation signed by your previous employer. The final evaluation can be found on page 5 of the Form I-983.

• If you change your living address while on STEM OPT, you must submit the Address Change for Students on OPT form within 10 days of the change.

• You must submit an annual self-evaluation (found on page 5 of Form I-983) about the progress of your employment to the ISSS office. For more information about the annual self-evaluation, please visit the Students and the Form I-983 page.

• While on STEM OPT Extension, you cannot exceed more than 150 days of unemployment.