Optional Practical Training STEM Exention
Ph: 512-245-7966, Email: international@txstate.edu
www.international.txstate.edu

F-1 students approved for post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) based on a bachelor’s, master or doctoral degree in a certain STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) field may be eligible for the new 24-month STEM extension.

Additional Resources – Study in the States STEM Hub

Required documents for OPT Extension I-20
You will need to submit the following documents to the International Office for initial processing of your new OPT-Stem Extension I-20.

- Statement of Responsibility
- Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students, leave Section 5 pages blank these are for annual reviews (Instructions on how to complete)

Application Packet Checklist to USCIS- Please put in the following order from top to bottom
- Completed Form I-765 signed with original signature
  - Download and complete Form I-765 (https://www.uscis.gov/i-765)
  - DO NOT leave any questions blank, write “None” or “N/A” (Not Applicable) as needed
  - Item 3: Use your own address OR (if you are moving) you may use the International Office address for the return address: Written as: 601 University Dr., Thornton Int’l House | San Marcos | TX | 78666
  - Item 18: Entry visa status: (example: F-1 Student or H-4 Dependent)
  - Item 19: F-1 Student
  - Item 20: should be: “(c) (3) (C)” code for requesting OPT Stem-Extension
  - Item 21: student's degree and the employer's name and E-Verify ID number

- Staple the following to the top of your I-765 packet:
  - Check or money order for $410.00 made payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”
  - 2 passport-style photos taken within 30 days. Write your name and I-94 number in pencil on the back of the photos. See photo guidelines: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/News/passports/picture-perfect-passport.html

- Copy of OPT Extension I-20 with proper signatures from DSO and student
- Copy of your degree (transcript or diploma) in a STEM field on the DHS STEM-designated program list
- Copies of the following:
  - Passport, visa, and most recent I-94 (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home)
  - Approved OPT I-20 issued to you during the initial OPT period
  - Current OPT EAD Card
- Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145 (optional)

Processing
If you are approved for the extension, your application should then be mailed to the appropriate USCIS Service Center.

If you live in Texas, mail your application packet directly to USCIS using to your preferred delivery method:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS):
USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

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Statement of Understanding and Reporting Responsibilities for OPT-STEM Extension

1. An F-1 student who has properly filed Form I-765 prior to the end date of the 12-month OPT is allowed to maintain continuous employment for up to 180 days while USCIS adjudicates the OPT-STEM extension request.
2. USCIS will notify the applicant of the decision and if denied the applicant may not appeal the decision.
3. The 24-month OPT-STEM work authorization begins on the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT work authorization and ends 24 months thereafter, regardless of the date the actual extension is approved.
4. Employment must be traditional paid employment for at least 20 hours per week.
5. Must work in a paid position for only an E-Verified employer.
6. May not accrue more than 120 days of unemployment during the total period of OPT authorization or 36 months.
7. If the student mails the OPT STEM application directly to USCIS, the student is responsible for filing Form AR-11 (https://www.uscis.gov/ar-11), Alien’s Change of Address Card in order to notify Department of Homeland Security of any address change, especially if one occurs while the OPT-24 application is pending. Failure to do so may result in a delay in receiving the OPT-STEM Employment Authorization Document (EAD).
8. Complying with Reporting Requirements is mandatory in order to maintain lawful F-1 status.

10-Day Reporting Requirements
Within 10 days of any change in personal or employment information the student must report changes in the SEVP Portal (http://www.international.txstate.edu/optandstemextension/SEVP-Portal.html)
   • Full legal name, Current mailing and Residential address, Phone number and Email
   • Employer name, Employer address, Loss of employment, Date you began working for the current employer

6-Month Reporting Requirements
Every 6 months students will receive an automatic email from the International Office requiring a Validation Report regarding employment. Regardless of when you last updated your employment information in the SEVP Portal, students are required to reply to the International Office email. The report is due within 10 business days of when it is requested.
   • Name and address of the current employer, State date you began working for the current employer, Your full legal name, Current mailing and residential address, Phone number, and non-Texas State email address

Form I-983 Training Plan
Student must complete and submit to the International Office an annual self-evaluation describing the progress of the training experience. The assessment must be submitted no later than 10 days following the conclusion of the training period. The student must submit the assessments for the stated periods:
   • Initial: 12 months after the STEM OPT start date, and a
   • Final assessment: that recaps the training and knowledge acquired during the complete, 24 month training period.
A student must complete an assessment at the conclusion of the training opportunity; usually this is a final assessment due at 24 months, but possible any time during the period of authorized employment when employment ends. This final assessment must be submitted within 10 days following the conclusion of this training opportunity.

Acknowledgement
☐ I have been informed by this Statement of Understanding provided by the International Office at Texas State University of my responsibilities for maintaining status while on OPT-STEM.
☐ I understand that I am responsible to monitor the International Office and the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) website (https://www.ice.gov/sevis) for updates to any reporting requirements and that I will be responsible for complying with those requirements.
☐ Once received, I will email a copy of your OPT-STEM EAD card to international@txstate.edu.
☐ I understand that I am responsible for reporting all personal or employment changes/updates to the SEVP Portal.
☐ I understand that I must submit a request for a new OPT-STEM I-20 and DSO recommendation for OPT-STEM using the International Office website: http://www.international.txstate.edu/optandstemextension/optstem.html
☐ I have read and understand the statements above and certify that I take full responsibility for execution of the above-mentioned reporting requirements and I will not rely on the International Office to remind me of my responsibility.

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