

F-1: Optional Practical Training Application Instructions STEP TWO

Please complete the instructions below:

1. Sign and date your new Form I-20 with your OPT recommendation. This is the document that you should now keep with your passport and use for future international travel. It replaces your previously issued Form I-20s. **You must retain all Form I-20s that have been issued to you for your records.**
2. Your OPT Application should include the items below in the order listed:
 - _____ Original Form G-1145 (if you wish to receive an e-mail and/or text message confirming that your application has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility)
 - _____ Personal check or money order made out to U.S. Department of Homeland Security for \$380
(*Be sure your name and SEVIS ID# are on the front of the check.*)
 - _____ 2 photographs to USCIS specifications (*name and SEVIS ID number written on the back of each photo*)
 - _____ Original Form I-765
 - _____ Copy of new Wellesley College Form I-20 with OPT recommendation
 - _____ Copy of all previously issued Form I-20s
 - _____ Copy of Form I-94 (front and back)
 - _____ Copy of visa (unless you are Canadian) or Change of Status Approval Notice
 - _____ Copy of passport pages which show your name and the expiration date of your passport
 - _____ Copy of any previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (EADs)
 - _____ Special Registrants must show proof of Registration, and should provide a brief letter indicating their FIN # and stating the date and location of registration.
3. Send your application packet to the appropriate address by priority mail (USPS) with delivery confirmation.

By U.S. Postal Service

(USPS): USCIS
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

By Express Mail or Courier Service

(FedEx, UPS, etc.): USCIS
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121
Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

IMPORTANT: Make copies of all documents prior to mailing your application to USCIS!!



AFTER MAILING YOUR APPLICATION YOU WILL RECEIVE:

E-MAIL AND/OR TEXT MESSAGE (*if you submitted Form G-1145*): You will receive confirmation that your application has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility within 24 hours of its arrival.

NOTICE OF ACTION: Within approximately one month, you should receive a “**Notice of Action**” from USCIS. The “Notice of Action” means that your application has been received by the USCIS mailroom and has been forwarded on for processing. (**Please provide us with a copy of this notice if you received it directly.**) The notice contains your “**EAC Number.**” This receipt number can be used to check the status of your application online at the following link: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION: You may receive a second notice indicating that additional documentation is required for your application. Contact the International Student Advisor (ISA) about how to proceed should this occur. It may take two to three MORE months from the date USCIS receives the requested supplemental documentation to approve your application.

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT (EAD): If there are no problems with your application, you should receive your EAD **within approximately three months.**

1. Inspect your card for accuracy and contact the USCIS Customer Service Center at 800-375-5283 if there are any errors.
2. Make 2 photocopies of your card as soon as you receive it. Send one to Slater International Center and keep the other copy in a safe place.
3. Employment may not start before the start date indicated and must end no later than the end date specified on the EAD.
4. If you lose your EAD you must apply for a replacement by submitting a new Form I-765, another \$340 check, two new photographs, and a copy of your previous application to the USCIS Vermont Service Center.

Note: If you do not complete your degree by the date originally specified, you will NOT be eligible to work with the EAD you receive. You must return this card to USCIS immediately, and you should contact your International Student Advisor (ISA) for assistance. Failure to do so may result in a violation of your F-1 status.

MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS WHILE ON OPT

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an extension of F-1 status. While you are on OPT, you are still in F-1 status and must follow the regulations in order to maintain your F-1 status.

1. Maintain employment during OPT—you must be actively seeking employment or be employed. If you are unemployed for a total of 90 days during the 12 month OPT period, you will no longer be maintaining your F-1 status.
2. Report any change of name or address, to the Slater International Center within 10 days of the change.
3. Report the name and address of your employer and any changes to your employment (including termination of employment) to the Slater International Center.

TRAVEL & RE-ENTRY TO THE UNITED STATES

You must have a valid travel signature on your Form I-20 to travel and re-enter the United States in F-1 status.

Pre-Completion OPT

If you have **not completed your degree requirements** and you have **pre-completion OPT**, you may travel and re-enter the United States with a valid passport, Form I-20 with a valid travel signature (within the past 6 months), a valid F-1 visa and financial support documentation.

Post-Completion OPT

If you apply for post-completion OPT you must consider your future travel plans to determine what you will need to do.

Before your degree completion you may travel while your post-completion OPT application is pending.

Once you have completed your degree your OPT application must be approved and you must have a job or proof of a job offer in order to re-enter the U.S.

You should be prepared to present the following documents when re-entering the U.S. while on OPT:

- **Valid F-1 visa** - If your F-1 visa has expired and you must travel outside of the U.S., you will need to apply for a new visa at a U.S. Consulate outside of the U.S.
Please note that you may remain in the U.S. with an expired visa as long as your EAD, Form I-94, and passport are valid.
- **Valid passport** (passport must be valid at least six months into the future)
- **Valid EAD** - The EAD is marked, “Not valid for re-entry.” **This simply means that the card alone is not sufficient for re-entering the U.S. for those who have completed their degree requirements and have post-completion OPT.**
- **Form I-20** with OPT recommendation (Note: the travel signature on page 3 should be less than six months old)
- **Proof of employment** – A letter from your current or prospective employer which indicates that you have a temporary job offer and that you will be employed for the duration of your OPT.

NOTE: If you should you re-enter the United States in visa waiver or tourist status, you will no longer be eligible for OPT.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Social Security numbers are unique identification numbers assigned by the U.S. Federal Government. They are required for those who are employed in the United States. If you do not already have a Social Security number, you may obtain one once you have received your Employment Authorization Document (EAD). For more information please review the “Obtaining a Social Security Number” handout available at Slater International Center.