



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) STEM EXTENSION PACKET

Step 1: Print out this OPT packet and mail the required documents and all supporting materials, to OISS (*See page 2 for List of Application Materials*).

Mail to:
Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS)
Northern Kentucky University
University Center 366
Highland Heights, KY 41099
Attn: OPT Extension Request

Step 2: Designated School Official (DSO) in OISS will email you upon receipt and contact you if further information is required.

Step 3: Your new I-20 with an OPT Extension recommendation will be ready within 5 business days. You will receive an email from your DSO when your application packet has been mailed back to you.

Step 4: **Mail entire packet to U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services.** (*See page 3 for Mailing Instructions.*)

Important Note: Plan on requesting an OPT Extension at least 90 days prior to the expiration date of your current EAD card in order to prevent gaps in employment!



LIST OF APPLICATION MATERIALS

Please prepare the following materials and mail them to OISS:

1. The attached **OPT Extension Employer Recommendation Form**, with the top portion completed by your intended OPT dates, and the bottom portion completed by your Employer.
2. This **List of Application Materials**.
3. Signed and dated **Mailing Instructions Form**, included in this packet.
4. Completed **Form I-765**, included in this packet.
 - a. Please put (c) (3) (C) in item #16.
 - b. Complete item #17 with your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number/E-Verify Client Company Identification Number with whom you are seeking the 17-month extension.
5. Copy of previously issued EAD card for OPT.
6. Copies of all previous I-20's (including those from former schools).
7. A copy of your passport identification page
8. A copy of your F-1 visa.
9. A copy of the front and back of your I-94 card.
10. Copy of your degree.
11. Two US passport-style photographs. USCIS specifications for these photographs can be found at www.travel.state.gov/passport/pptphotos/index.html, and you may refer to "Businesses that Can Prepare EAD Photos" in this packet. **Lightly print your name and I-94 Number on the back of each photo with a pencil.** The photos should be placed in an envelope or plastic bag and stapled to the application so that they do not get lost. Be careful not to staple through the photographs themselves.
12. A check or money order for **\$340** payable to the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**.
13. A complete set of photocopies of items 3-10 for your OISS file.
14. A pre-paid return envelope so that your application materials can be returned to you.

Upon receipt of the above materials, a Designated School Official (DSO) in OISS will review your application to ensure it is completed correctly. If everything is in order and the DSO determines that you meet all eligibility requirements for the 17 month OPT Extension, he/she will issue you an updated SEVIS Form I-20 with an endorsement on page 3 recommending that USCIS approve your application.



MAILING INSTRUCTION FORM

Regular Postal Service Address

If you live in Kentucky and KY address has been listed on I-765 then OPT Extension application materials must be mailed out to:
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services
Texas Service Center
P.O. Box 851041
Mesquite, TX 75185-1041

Regular Postal Service Address

If you live in Ohio and OH address has been listed on I-765 then OPT Extension application materials must be mailed out to:
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services
Nebraska Service Center
P.O. Box 87765
Lincoln, NE 68501-7765

If you live in any other state or you wish to mail your application by courier/express deliveries, please refer to appropriate page on Form I-765 Instructions.

Tip #1: DO NOT mail any original I-20's to USCIS. Only mail copies of your original I-20's within 30 days of the issuance and DSO endorsement of OPT Extension I-20.

Tip #2: It is very strongly recommended that you mail your application materials via UPS, FedEx or some other express mail to ensure accurate and timely delivery. Be sure to obtain a tracking number for your mailing.

IMPORTANT! During your period of OPT work authorization, you are required to keep OISS informed of the following changes:

- Travel outside the United States (OISS must still provide your travel authorization signature)
• Change of address
• Employer's address
• Change of employer or employment status
• Change of phone number and/or e-mail
• Change of status (i.e. H-1B, F-2, Lawful Permanent Resident)

Please submit any change notifications to OISS by emailing them to oiss@nku.edu.

I understand that it is my responsibility to mail all appropriate OPT application materials directly to U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service at the above address.

Signature

Date



GENERAL INFORMATION

Optional Practical Training is defined as “temporary employment for practical training directly related to the student’s major area of study.” An F-1 students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields who has maintained lawful F-1 visa and is currently pursuing their 12 months of Optional Practical Training (OPT), may apply for a 17-month extension of OPT provided that their employer is enrolled in the E-Verify system.

The maximum amount of time for which OPT may be granted is 29 months full-time.

Students applying for the OPT Extension should apply 90 days prior to the expiration date of their current EAD. However, as long as a student makes a timely filed application for the OPT Extension, the student may continue to work for 180 days beyond the expiration date of the current EAD card.

During your period of your OPT Extension, you are still considered to be in F-1 student status.

Therefore, you must keep OISS informed of any of the following:

- Changes in your name
- Changes in residential and mailing addresses
- Employer’s name and address
- Employment status

Employer reporting requirements: Employers of students on OPT who are requesting the 17-month extension must report to OISS within 48 hours after the student leaves employment with that employer.

Report to OISS every six (6) months: Students who request the 17-month OPT Extension must agree to report to OISS every six months from the date the OPT extension starts to verify this information. This information should be emailed to oiss@nku.edu.

You will have a 60 days grace period after the expiration date on your EAD. You may leave the U.S., change your status, or transfer to a new degree program during that time, but you may not continue to work under OPT after your 29 months work authorization has been exhausted.

If you choose to begin a new degree program full-time, whether at NKU or at another institution, during your authorized period of OPT, you will loose any OPT time remaining on your EAD. You will be required to cease employment upon release of your SEVIS record from NKU to the new institution or upon issuance of a new Form I-20 for a different program.

Please note that there is no option to further extend the OPT. When the 29 months have been completed, the student must seek another immigration status if he/she wishes to remain in the United States to continue employment. **Also, once OPT has been granted you cannot cancel it. You have to use it or you lose it.**



EMPLOYER RECOMMENDATION FORM

TOP SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Name: _____ E-mail: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

I am requesting a 17-month extension to my OPT and agree to report to OISS any changes in my name, mailing or residential address, employer address or employment status. I also agree to verify this information with OISS every 6 months while on OPT.

Signature _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER

TO: Employers of students on OPT eligible for a 17-month extension.

The student referenced above is applying for a 17-month extension of Optional Practical Training (OPT), an employment authorization provided by the regulations of the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). OPT is employment in a job related to the student's major field of study and is intended to enhance and supplement the formal classroom education. Such employment must be officially recommended by a Designated School Official (DSO), duly recognized by USCIS, in the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS). Before this authorization can be granted, OISS must confirm that the employer is enrolled in the US Citizenship and Immigration Services' E-verify employment verification system. The Employer must also agree to report to OISS within 48 hours if the student leaves employment. Please complete the form below and return it to OISS so that we may process this student's request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact an OISS Designated School Official (DSO) at 859-572-5177.

THE INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED IN ITS ENTIRITY BY THE EMPLOYER, NOT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT.

On behalf of _____ I, _____ attest that the
(Name of Employer) (Employer's Representative)
student referenced above is employed in my company. I further agree to report to OISS within 48 hours of when this student leaves employment with my company.

Employer Representative's Name (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify: _____

Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number: _____

