



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT) STEM EXTENSION PACKET

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

Mail to:

**Center for International Affairs (CIA)
California State University Channel Islands
Rm. 2119 Sage Hall
One University Drive
Camarillo, CA 93012-8599**

Or

E-mail to: international@csuci.edu

Step 2: Designated School Official (DSO) in CIA 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.*)

Step 5: Once accepted you must purchase health insurance from Wells Fargo and you must keep your insurance valid for the duration of your OPT.

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 or e-mail a copy to CIA:

1. A copy of 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. A copy of this **List of Application Materials**.
3. A copy of signed and dated **Mailing Instructions Form**, included in this packet.
4. A copy of completed **Form I-765**, downloadable at www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf.
 - 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. A copy of your degree.
11. Copy of 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. Copy of a check or money order for **\$380** payable to the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**. Please note that the fee is subject to change.
13. **Health Insurance Policy purchased from Wells Fargo for the duration of your OPT.**

Upon receipt of the above materials, a Designated School Official (DSO) in CIA 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

For **California**, the OPT Extension application materials must be mailed out to:

**USCIC Phoenix Lockbox
USCIS
PO Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036**

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 at <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765instr.pdf>

Tip #1: DO NOT mail any *original* I-20 to USCIS. Only mail copies of your original I-20 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.

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IMPORTANT! During your period of OPT work authorization, you are required to keep **your insurance updated** and you must keep CIA informed of the following changes:

- Travel outside the United States (*CIA 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 CIA by emailing them to international@csuci.edu

I understand that it is my responsibility to mail all appropriate OPT application materials directly to U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service at the address listed on I-765.

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”. F-1 students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields who have maintained lawful F-1 visa and are 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 so you must always have valid health insurance and you must keep the CIA informed 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 CIA within 48 hours after the student leaves employment with that employer.

Report to CIA every six (6) months: Students who request the 17-month OPT Extension must agree to report to CIA every six months from the date the OPT extension starts to verify this information. This information should be emailed to international@csuci.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 CSUCI or at any other institution, during your authorized period of OPT, you will lose any OPT time remaining on your EAD. You will be required to cease employment upon release of your SEVIS record from CSUCI 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.**

