
Applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Rev. 5/4/2021
Read USCIS Instructions

- This is a general guide to help you complete Form I-765. It is your responsibility to ensure that your I-765 is completed correctly, fully (with sufficient supporting documents and required evidence) and is filed in a timely manner.

- Please read the Instructions for the Form I-765 at [https://www.uscis.gov/I-765](https://www.uscis.gov/I-765)

- Following this guide does **not** guarantee approval of your OPT by USCIS and should not be construed as legal advice.
Create an Account

- Visit [https://myaccount.uscis.gov/](https://myaccount.uscis.gov/)
- Create an account
- A USCIS Account confirmation email will be sent to you. Follow the instructions in the email to confirm your account. It is important that you timely check your Inbox and/or other folders for the email with instructions on confirming your account.
Terms of Use

Carefully read the terms of use and click “I Agree” to the acknowledgement.

VII. Acknowledgment

By clicking “I agree”, I acknowledge that I have read the Terms and understand and will comply with them. I agree to abide by the Terms and understand that if I do not accept the Terms, I am not eligible to access or use USCIS online electronic immigration system. I understand that any violations of these Terms and any criminal activity will result in immediate suspension and/or termination of my access to and use of USCIS online electronic immigration system and that I may be subject to administrative or civil action as allowed by law, or criminal prosecution.

I Agree
Follow the prompts to create a password and verification method. Please keep your login credentials confidential. Then provide answers to five security questions.
USCIS Account

Click on My USCIS to begin your application.

Welcome to your USCIS Account

Select what you want to do

Edit My Profile
Editing your profile includes email, password, phone number, security questions, two-step verification and backup code.

Login to a USCIS Service
Apply for immigration benefits, find tools and resources to assist in preparation for naturalization, and search for doctors in your local community.

Select “I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor.”

Account Type

Select an account type:

- I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor.
  - USCIS only offers certain benefit types for online filing. Please refer to uscis.gov for further guidance.
  - You cannot file an H-1B Registration with this account type.

- I am a Legal Representative.
  - I am an attorney eligible to practice law in the United States.
  - I am an accredited representative of a qualified organization that is recognized by the Department of Justice in accordance with 8 CFR part 1292.

Submit
Begin your Application

Click on “File a form online.” Then select “Application for Employment Authorization (I-765).” Then, click “Start Form.”

Welcome To Your USCIS Account
Select What You Want To Do

- Add a paper-filed case
- File a form online
- Enter a representative passcode
- Verify your identity

File A Form
Once you start your form, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Select the form you want to file online.

- Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (I-90)
- Request for a Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings (N-336)
- Application for Naturalization (N-400)
- Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (N-565)
- Application for Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)
- Application for Certificate and Issuance of Certificate Under Section 322 (N-600K)
- Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)
  Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:
  - Pre-completion OPT - (c)(7)(A) eligibility category;
  - Post-completion OPT - (c)(7)(B) eligibility category or
  - a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(7)(C) eligibility category.
  For all other eligibility categories, you must submit a paper Form I-765.
- Petition for Alien Relative (I-130)
- Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (I-539)
Things to Keep in Mind

Security Reminder
If you do not work on your form for more than 30 days, we will delete your data in order to prevent storing personal information indefinitely.

Biometric services appointment
USCIS may require that you appear for an interview or provide biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) at any time to verify your identity, obtain additional information, and conduct background and security checks, including a check of criminal history records maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), before making a decision on your application or petition. After USCIS receives your application and ensures it is complete, we will inform you in writing if you need to attend a biometric services appointment.

If you are inactive for 30 days, you will lose the work that you have done on your application.

By filing online, you may be requested to appear in-person for an interview or provide your fingerprints, photo, and/or signature.

If you receive a notice from USCIS to appear for an interview or biometric services appointment, please contact your OISS advisor.
For Post-Completion OPT, select (c) (3) (B) from the dropdown menu.

What is your eligibility category?

- c(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT
- c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT
- c(3)(C) STEM Extension
Getting Started: Reason for Applying

Select **Initial** if this is your first time applying for OPT.

Select **Replacement** if your OPT was authorized, but your EAD card was lost, stolen, damaged, or needs to be corrected and the correction is NOT due to USCIS error.

Select **Renewal** if you have applied before for OPT.

If this is your first time applying for OPT, answer **No**. If you have applied for OPT or EAD card in the past, answer **Yes**.

What is your reason for applying?

- Initial permission to accept employment
- Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error
- Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

- Yes
- No
Getting Started: Preparer & Interpreter Information

Is someone assisting you with completing this application?

- Yes
- No

Answer: No.
About You: Your Name

Type your name exactly as it appears on your passport.

What is your current legal name?
Your current legal name is the name on your birth certificate, unless it changed after birth by a legal action such as marriage or court order. Do not provide any nicknames here.

- Given name (first name)
- Middle name
- Family name (last name)

Have you used any other names since birth?
Other names used may include nicknames, aliases and maiden names.

- Yes
- No

Provide the other names you have used.

- Given name (first name)
- Middle name
- Family name (last name)

If you do not have additional names that have been used on official documents, click No.
About You: Your Contact Information

Enter your contact information.

How may we contact you?

**Daytime telephone number**

**Mobile telephone number (if any)**

☐ This is the same as my daytime telephone number.

**Email address**

This address is where your I-797 receipt notice, approval notice, and EAD card will be sent. Typically we recommend that you put OISS's address. However, since all staff are working remotely due to COVID-19 and mail is checked sporadically, **please use a secure address that is valid for several months** to avoid documents being sent to incorrect or old addresses. You must be listed as physically residing there with USPS or have indicated the person living at the residence in the "In care of name" section.

**What is your current U.S. mailing address?**

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

- **In care of name (if any)**
- **Address line 1**
- **Street number and name**
- **Address line 2**
- **Apartment, suite, unit, or floor**
- **City or town**
- **State**
- **ZIP code**
About You: Your Contact Information

Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

- Yes
- No

Where in the United States do you live?

Address line 1

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town  State  ZIP code

If your mailing address and physical address are different, provide your current physical address.
About You: Describe Yourself

Select your Gender and Marital Status.

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female

What is your marital status?
- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
About You: When & Where Were You Born

Your city, town, or village, as well as state or province of birth should be typed as indicated on your birth certificate.

When completing this section, use the dropdown menu to select your country of birth. If the country’s name has changed or no longer exists, select the name of the country as it was named when you were born. If that name is not listed, select the name of the country as it is named today if the name has changed.

Remember to use U.S. date formatting: month/day/year.
About You: Your Immigration Information

List ALL of the countries that you are a citizen or national.

What is your country of citizenship or nationality?
List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

List the entire I-94 Number found on your I-94 (from most recent entry into the United States). You can print your current I-94 at https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94.

Fill in the blanks with the information directly from your passport.

Use the dropdown menu and select F-1 Student here. *If you are not currently an F-1 Student, please see an OISS advisor.

Type your current SEVIS ID number, which can be found on the top left corner of your I-20.
About You: Other Information

You will only have an A-Number if you were previously in immigration status such as H1B, H4, etc., or if you've had OPT authorized in the past. If you have a prior EAD card, please enter the USCIS number on the EAD card. If you do not have an A-Number, leave this blank.

If you do not have a USCIS Online Account Number (most F-1 students do not), click "I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number."

Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

- Yes
- No

Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?

- Yes
- No

If you do not have a Social Security Card and would like to request one, click Yes.
If you do not have a Social Security Card and clicked “Yes” for a new Social Security Card, complete this Section by:

- Checking “Yes” to the “Consent for Disclosure.”
- Type your father’s first and last names.
- Type your mother’s first and last names.
Evidence: Passport Photo

Follow the prompts and upload a recent passport photo.

It must be taken within 30 days of your application.

It must meet U.S. standards (2 inches x 2 inches)

*Failure to submit a correct photo will trigger a biometrics appointment.*
Evidence: Form I-94

You can print your current I-94 at https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94

I-94, Arrival And Departure Record

Upload a copy of one of the following:
- Your Form I-94, Arrival Departure Record (front and back);
- A printout of your electronic Form I-94; or
- Your passport or other travel document.

If you were admitted to the United States by CBP at an airport or seaport after April 30, 2013, CBP may have issued you an electronic Form I-94 instead of a paper Form I-94. You may visit the CBP website to obtain a paper version of an electronic Form I-94. CBP does not charge a fee for this service. Some travelers admitted to the United States at a land border, airport, or seaport, after April 30, 2013, with a passport or travel document, who were issued a paper Form I-94 by CBP, may also be able to obtain a replacement Form I-94 from the CBP website without charge.

If your Form I-94 cannot be obtained from the CBP website, it may be obtained by filing Form I-102, Application for Replacement/Initial Nonimmigrant Arrival Departure Record, with USCIS. USCIS does charge a fee for this service.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIFF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator’s certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 5MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload
Evidence: EAD or Government ID

If you have an unexpired EAD card, upload a copy of the front AND back of the EAD card.

If you do not have an unexpired EAD card, then upload a copy of a government issued identification that shows your picture, name, and date of birth, such as the biographic page of your foreign passport.
Evidence: Previous I-20s

Upload ALL I-20s with previous CPT authorizations or previous OPT authorization. If you are not sure or think you are missing an old I-20, contact your OISS advisor.

If you did not have CPT or OPT authorization in the past, you can skip this step.
Evidence: I-20

I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status

Upload a copy of the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status endorsed by the Designated School Official (DSO). For the (c)(3)(B) eligibility category, your DSO must have entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record within 30 days of you submitting Form I-765. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request. For the (c)(3)(C) eligibility category, the Form I-20 must have been endorsed by the DSO within 60 days of submitting Form I-765.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator’s certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drag files here to upload

Your I-20 with OPT recommendation will be issued to you after you have submitted your OPT request in iHome.

You must print, sign, and date the I-20 and then upload it to the online application.

For post-completion OPT, you must submit your online application within 30 days of an OISS advisor issuing your I-20.
If you have an I-20 with a different SEVIS number, click “Add a response” and add the following information from your previous I-20:

- Previous SEVIS ID
- Name of School
- Program Start and End Dates
Review Your Application

Check your application before you submit

We will review your application to check for accuracy and completeness before you submit it.

We encourage you to provide as many responses as you can throughout the application, to the best of your knowledge. Missing information can slow down the review process after you submit your application.

You can return to this page to review your application as many times as you want before you submit it.

Be sure to review your application line-by-line.

If you see any alerts or warnings, address them, you must address them.

If there are no errors, you will see the green check mark to indicate your application is complete.

**Alerts and warnings**

- You have one or more alerts and warnings based on the information you provided in your application.
- A red alert means you have incomplete responses or inconsistent data. You cannot submit your application with any alerts.
- **There are errors in Getting Started: Reason for applying**
  - Edit my responses
- **There are errors in About You: Your name**
  - Edit my responses

✔️ We found no alerts or warnings in your application
Here is a summary of all the information you provided in your application.

Make sure you have provided responses for everything that applies to you before you submit your application. You can edit your responses by going to each application section using the site navigation.

We also prepared a draft case snapshot with your responses, which you can download below.

Click on “View draft snapshot” to download a copy of your I-765.

You must save the PDF for your records. You must also upload a copy to the OPT request in iHome.
Check the statement attesting that you can understand English, and that you have read and understand every question and instructions on the application, as well as the answers to every question.

Check the statement attesting that you have read and agree to the applicant's statement.

Type your full name.

Then, prepare your payment.
Communicate With Your OISS Advisor

- Submit an OPT Request in iHome and upload the following documents:
  - Your completed, unsigned Form I-765
  - I-94 record
  - If you were issued an EAD in the past, a copy (front and back); if you were never issued an EAD, a copy of your valid passport or most recent visa stamp
  - Copies of all previous I-20s with CPT and/or OPT authorizations
  - Your 2 x 2 passport photo
  - If you have an I-20 with a different SEVIS number, your previous I-20

- Schedule an appointment with an OISS advisor.
- After you have met with your advisor, your new I-20 will be issued.
- Then you can continue to payment.

***DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR ONLINE APPLICATION WITHOUT AN I-20 FROM OISS***
Payment & Submission

We will send you to Pay.gov — our safe and secure payment website — to pay your fees and submit your form online.

Here are the steps in the payment and submission process:

1. Provide your billing information on Pay.gov
2. Provide your credit card or U.S. bank account information
3. Submit your payment

When you have paid your fee, your form will be submitted.

Pay.gov will redirect you to a uscis.gov confirmation screen, which will include your receipt number. Please keep a copy of your receipt number for your records. You can track the status of your application through your USCIS online account.

Choose your method of payment. You can pay by electronic check, debit, or certain credit cards.

Click on the blue “Pay and submit” button.
Finalize Payment

If you are using your checking or savings account, enter your banking information (routing and account, which are at the bottom of your check).

If you are using your credit or debit card, enter your personal and account information.
After Submission

- Check your USCIS online account often to see if you receive a receipt number and any updates.
- Be on the lookout for an approval notice and EAD card from USCIS. It will be mailed to the mailing address listed on your Form I-765. If your mailing address changes while the process is pending, submit a Change of Address with USCIS online or by calling 800-375-5283.
- Notify an OISS advisor immediately if you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Request for Information (RFI). Email a copy of the documents requested. Failure to respond to a RFE or RFI will lead to a denial of your OPT request.
- If there is any problem with your EAD (name misspelled, wrong dates, etc). Email a scanned copy of the card with a description to OISS.
- If you want to withdraw your OPT application after submission to USCIS and before it has been approved, contact OISS.