

STEM OPT Extension: How to Apply

PLEASE note:

Dr. Yang is not a DSO yet. All official answers, signatures and approval, etc. must be from Ms. Benson

Contents:

- Eligibility
- When to Apply
- Employment Requirements During the 24-month STEM Extension
- Step-by-Step How to Apply
 - Step-by-Step Walk-through Completing the I-983 Training Plan
 - Step-by-Step Walk-through Form I-765
- Employer Noncompliance
- Frequently Asked Questions

The STEM OPT extension allows some students with science, technology, engineering, or math degrees to apply to extend their post-completion OPT authorization. Students with STEM degrees and currently in their 12-month OPT period should review the eligibility requirements, application timeline, and instructions below.

Eligibility

To qualify for the 24-month STEM OPT extension, you must:

- Be in F-1 status
- Be currently working in a period of post-completion OPT
- Have a bachelor's degree or higher degree in an eligible STEM field (<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension>)
 - You *may* be eligible to use a prior STEM degree earned in the U.S. for this requirement; to use a prior STEM degree, you must:
 - ✓ Have received your most recent degree (which does not need to be STEM-related) from a currently accredited Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-certified school in the U.S.

- ✓ Have received your prior, qualifying STEM degree in the U.S. within 10 years of applying for the STEM OPT extension.
- ✓ The qualifying STEM degree must be on the Department of Homeland Security's STEM Designated Degree Program list (<https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>) at the time you submit your STEM OPT extension application (rather than at the time you received the degree).
- **Have a paid job offer that meets the following requirements:**
 - The job is with an employer enrolled in the USCIS E-Verify (<https://www.e-verify.gov>) program. Double-check with your employer to see if they are enrolled in E-Verify; sometimes the USCIS E-Verify database is not correct. (Kentucky State University participates in the E-Verify program. The KSU E-Verify ID number is 1352056.)
 - The job offers at least 20 hours of work per week
 - The job will provide formal training and learning objectives directly related to your qualifying STEM degree
- **Be able to complete the I-983 Training Plan (<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview>) with your employer**

Employment Requirements During the 24-month STEM OPT Extension

You must work at least 20 hours per week for an employer that a) participates in the E-Verify program and b) agrees to follow all the employer requirements in the 24-month STEM rule.

Unlike the 12-month OPT, volunteer/unpaid work or self-employment is not permitted under the 24-month STEM OPT Extension regulation.

Please review the new guidance about acceptable types of activity during the 24-month STEM OPT Extension <https://www.kysu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Employment-Requirements.pdf> that is substantially different than the 12 month OPT and past guidance for the STEM Extension.

When to Apply

- USCIS must receive your STEM OPT extension application before your current 12-month OPT EAD card expiration date.
- Apply as early as 90 days before your current 12-month OPT EAD card expiration date.

- Take into consideration:
 - Contact your DSO early. It may take your DSO some more time to process your new I-20 due to tight schedules.
 - Allow sufficient time to mail your application to USCIS.

Step-by-Step How to Apply

STEP 1: Confirm your 12-month OPT information is correct

Is your 12-month OPT information up-to-date? Check the SEVP Portal (<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help>). Your DSO must ensure the 12-month OPT information in your SEVIS record is accurate and updated before processing your STEM OPT I-20 request.

STEP 2: Contact your DSO and gather & Complete the following documents

(Gather and complete the following documents)

- I-983 Training Plan (<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/form-i-983-overview>) (see our walk through guidance on Completing Form I-983 in the next Step)
- Completed I-765 Form (<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>)
 - It is okay to leave the E-Verify field blank in the I-765 Form in this situation. Your DSO maintains a list of employers who do not share the E-Verify number with university officials because the employers will submit the OPT extension application on behalf of their employees. If your employer is not on the list, your DSO might contact you to ask for a confirmation letter from your employer that states their policy.
 - For help completing the Form I-765, please see the Step-by-Step Instruction on Form I-765 for STEM OPT Extension

Your DSO will review your documents and issue a new, updated I-20 with a STEM OPT Extension recommendation printed on the back page.

STEP 3: I-983 Training Plan Walk through for STEM OPT Extension

Your DSO needs to review your completed I-983 training plan before issuing you a 24 Month STEM OPT I-20. STEM OPT students and their employers are subject to the terms of the Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students, effective as of the start date requested for STEM OPT on the Form I-983. The I-983 Training Plan is intended to ensure educational benefits for F-1 students in their practical training experiences. You and your employer must complete and sign Form I-983. KSU OIA cannot provide advice to employers about the I-983 Training Plan requirements. However, the formal training plan must clearly articulate the STEM OPT student's learning objectives and affirm the employer's commitment to helping the student achieve those objectives. When completing the I-983 Training Plan with your employer, please remember that you are an F-1 Student sponsored by KSU not a worker. So, focus more on how you want to learn and how training with your employer will benefit you and your education.

The information below is to assist students and their employers to properly complete the Form I-983. You can also review the [I-983 Training Plan instructions](#) provided by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

Section I: Student Information (completed by the student)

- **Student Name:** Enter your full name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name) exactly as it appears on your passport, on your I-20 and SEVIS record
- **Student Email Address:** Enter current email address
- **Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:** Enter Kentucky State University
- **Name of School Where STEM Degree Was Earned:** Enter Kentucky State University (if you are filing based on a non-KSU degree, you must meet with an KSU DSO prior to completing this form)
- **SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT:** Kentucky State University's F-1 School Code is NOL214F10724000
- **DSO Name and Contact Information:** Enter the name and contact information of your DSO. Use the name of your DSO listed in the "School Information" box of your current I-20, and the following contact information. Yolanda Benson, 310 Academic Service Building, Kentucky State University, Frankfort KY 40601, Yolanda.benson@kysu.edu, 502-597-5795
- **Student SEVIS ID Number:** Enter your SEVIS identification (ID) number (see "SEVIS ID" at top of Form I20, beginning with N)
- **STEM OPT Requested Period:** The duration of your STEM OPT extension is based exclusively on your current OPT end date, regardless of whether the authorized dates match actual training dates.

- **Qualifying Major and CIP Code:** Enter your major name as it appears on your diploma and then your CIP code.
 - If you have a Form I-20 issued in 2015 or later, the CIP code can be found in the “Program of Study” section on page 1. The CIP code is a six-digit code (XX.XXXX) following the major.
 - If you are basing your STEM on a prior degree and have a Form I-20 issued prior to 2015, you can find your CIP Code (XX.XXXX) at the top of page 3, preceding the specific major.
- **Level of Qualifying Degree:** enter your qualifying degree type upon which you are basing STEM OPT (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Ph. D)
- **Date Awarded:** Enter the date from your diploma. Or you can log in to your WEIRD account. Find “Unofficial Transcript.” Scroll to the bottom of the transcript, and you will see what date your KSU degree was earned.
- **Based on Prior Degree?** Select No. If you are filing based on a non-KSU degree, you must meet with a KSU DSO prior to completing this form.
- **Employment Authorization Number:** This is the USCIS# on your Employment Authorization Document (EAD card). The SEVP Training Plan slides reference the “A” number. However, EADs issued after October 24, 2011 do not have the “A” prefix before this number. Enter your 9-digit USCIS Number (XXX-XXX-XXX) found on your EAD card, but NOT your Card Number (WAC-XX-XXX-XXXX)

Section II: Student Certification (completed by the student)

Please review this section carefully, sign and date it before you submit it to your DSO. Scanned copies of original signatures or verified electronic signatures could be accepted.

Section 3: Employer Information (Completed by the Employer)

- **Employer Name:** Must be the full legal name of the employer or the company. If at KSU, Enter Kentucky State University – better with specific department. For example, Kentucky State University – College of Agriculture, Communities, and the Environment.
- **Street Address, Suite, City, State, Zip Code:** Must be the employer or the company's mailing address. If at KSU, Enter 400 E. Main Street, Frankfort, KY 40601
- **Employer Website URL:** if available. If at KSU, Better Enter specific department or lab website link. For example: <https://www.kysu.edu/academics/college-acs/school-of-ace/index.php>, If no website, list N/A

- **Employer ID Number (EIN):** Enter the employer’s EIN. If at KSU, Enter Kentucky State University’s EIN: 61-1099712
- **Number of Full-Time Employees in the United States:** Provide the employer’s number of full-time employees in the United States. If at KSU, Enter Kentucky State University’s total number of employees as 500.
- **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code:** This code is used by federal statistical agencies to classify business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy. If at KSU, Enter Kentucky State University’s NAICS code: 611310.
- **OPT Training Hours Per Week:** Enter the agreed-upon number of average working hours per week. In order to qualify for STEM OPT, the student must work a minimum of 20 hours per week for each job.
- **Start Date of Employment:** Enter the date when the student will begin STEM OPT with the employer.
- **Compensation:** Enter the dollar amount of salary, stipend, and/or other compensation, and the frequency of pay (per hour, per week, bi-weekly, monthly).
- **Other compensation** may include housing, tuition waivers, transportation costs, etc.

Note: The terms and conditions of a STEM practical training opportunity (including duties, hours, and compensation) must be commensurate with those applicable to similarly situated U.S. workers, except that a STEM OPT participant must work at least 20 hours per week while employed.

Section 4: Employer Certification (Completed by the Employer)

This section should be reviewed carefully and completed by the employer. The Employer Official with Signatory Authority, who is an appropriate individual in the employer’s organization, who is familiar with the student’s goals and performance, and who is an employee who has signatory authority for the employer should review the certification and affirm the statement by signature.

Employer = Kentucky State University

If you are employed by Kentucky State University, the Chair or Dean of your hiring department, or PI or faculty supervisor, should sign as the Employer Official with Signatory Authority. However, you’d better confirm with your supervisor on who is has the signatory authority.

Employer = non-KSU

If you are working for an employer other than Kentucky State University, your employer will need to determine who can sign this section.

Please review this section carefully, sign and date it before you submit it to your DSO. Scanned copies of original signatures or verified electronic signatures could be accepted.

Section 5: Training Plan for STEM OPT Students (completed by student and employer)

In order to better ensure the academic benefit and integrity of the extension, Federal regulations require each STEM OPT student to prepare and execute with his or her prospective employer a formal training plan that identifies learning objectives and a plan for achieving those objectives. The STEM OPT student and his or her employer must work together to finalize the plan.

- **Student Name:** Enter student's full name (Surname/Primary Name, Given Name) exactly as it appears on the student's SEVIS-issued Form I-20.
- **Employer Name:** Enter the employer's name, as it appears in "Section 3: Employer Information."
- **Site Name:** Enter the employer's site name, which may be the same as employer name in Section 3. However, if the student is working for a branch or subsidiary of a large entity, or anywhere other than the headquarters, provide the name of this work site. If working at KSU, Enter Kentucky State University - better with specific department. For example, Kentucky State University - College of Agriculture, Communities, and the Environment.
- **Site Address:** Enter the exact address of the work site where the STEM OPT will take place.
- **Name of Official:** Enter the name of the appropriate individual in the employer's organization who is familiar with, and will monitor, the student's goals and performance. This may or may not be the same Employer Official as in Section 4.

If at KSU, you can enter the name of the Dean, or Chair, or Principal Investigator (P.I.) or Faculty Supervisor who signed the Employer Certification.

- **Official's Title:** Enter the title of the appropriate individual in the employer's organization who is familiar with, and will monitor, the student's goals and performance

If at KSU, Enter Dean or Department Chair, the KSU title of the Principal Investigator (P.I.) or Faculty Supervisor

- **Official's Email:** Enter the email address of the appropriate individual in the employer's organization who is familiar with, and will monitor, the student's goals and performance.

If at KSU, enter the email address of the Dean or Department Chair, or Principal Investigator (P.I.) or Faculty Supervisor

- **Official's Phone Number:** Enter the phone number of the appropriate individual in the employer's organization who is familiar with, and will monitor, the student's goals and performance.

If at KSU, enter the phone number of the Dean or Department Chair, or the Principal Investigator (P.I.) or Faculty Supervisor

- **Student Role:** This section should be completed by the employer in consultation with the student. Describe what tasks and assignments the student will carry out during the training and how these relate to the student's STEM degree. The plan must cover a specific span of time, and detail specific goals and objectives.
- **Goals and Objectives:** This section should be completed by the employer in consultation with the student. Describe the specific skills, knowledge, and techniques the student will learn or apply; how the student will achieve the goals set out for his or her training; and the training curriculum including the timeline.
- **Employer Oversight:** This section should be completed by the employer in consultation with the student. Explain how the employer provides oversight and supervision of individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such oversight and supervision, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.
- **Measures and Assessments:** This section should be completed by the employer in consultation with the student. Explain how the employer measures and confirms whether individuals filling positions such as that being filled by the named F-1 student are acquiring new knowledge and skills. If the employer has a training program or related policy in place that controls such measures and assessments, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.
- **Additional Remarks:** Use this section to provide any additional information about the training plans

Section 6: Employer Official Certification

Certification of Official with Signatory Authority: Note: The individual who signs this Certification need not be, but can be, the same individual who signed the Employer Certification in Section 4. An employee with signatory authority for the employer should review the certification and affirm the statement by signature. On the material change certification (#4), please note that material changes in the plan can include (but are not limited to) the following: any change of Employer Identification Number resulting from a corporate restructuring, any reduction in compensation from the amount previously submitted on the Form I-983, "Training Plan for STEM OPT Students," that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in

hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity, and any decrease in hours below the 20-hours-per-week minimum required under this rule.

Please review this section carefully, sign and date it before you submit it to your DSO. Scanned copies of original signatures or verified electronic signatures could be accepted.

If you are employed by Kentucky State University, the Chair or Dean of your hiring department, or PI or faculty supervisor, should sign as the Employer Official with Signatory Authority. However, you'd better confirm with your supervisor on who has the signatory authority.

Evaluation(s) on Student Progress

This page can be left blank when you submit your I-983 Training Plan to DSO to request your STEM OPT extension I-20. However, you must complete these evaluations annually during your STEM OPT extension period. In other words, this section must be completed at the 12 and 24 month points of the STEM OPT Extension. So, be sure to mark your calendar now.

STEP 4: I-765 Walk through for STEM OPT Extension

Overview

These directions are designed to help you complete the Form I-765 in order to apply for the STEM OPT Extension. Please note that the following suggestions are not legal advice and provide a general overview of the most commonly misunderstood items—be sure to complete ALL relevant fields of the Form I-765. Be sure to use the most recent version of the Form I-765 by visiting the USCIS I-765 website.

Important General Advice:

1) Type your I-765

- Typing is preferred. Typing helps prevent unclear handwriting from causing errors on your EAD and helps avoid mail delivery problems or delays. Use the fillable PDF I-765 on the USCIS website to type in your answers.
- If you can't type your form, clearly print answers in black ink.

2) Sign your I-765 in black ink

- Typed signatures are not acceptable. The government will reject and return I-765s that are not signed.
- Make sure that your signature fits within the box provided.

3) Answer all questions fully and accurately

- If a question does not apply to you, type or print “NA” (short for ‘Not Applicable’) unless otherwise directed. If a question asks for a numerical response and does not apply to you, write “None”.
- Include all pages of the Form I-765 along with your supplemental documents. The government will reject and return applications that do not include all 7 pages of the Form I-765.

4) If you need extra space, use Part 6. Additional Information (page 7 of Form I-765)

- Make sure to type or print your A-number (if any) at the top of the sheet.
- Use Part 6 to provide all previously used SEVIS numbers along with evidence of previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.
- Provide the Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number to which your answer refers.
- Even if you do not need the extra space, include the blank page with the rest of your application materials.

5) Carefully prepare the I-765 fee

- The government will reject and return OPT applications if there is not the exact amount of money available to pay the fee when the application arrives at the government center. Do not send a check and plan to add money to your bank account later. Have 100% of the fee money ready when you mail your application to the government.
- The check or money order for the fee must be drawn from a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and must be payable in U.S. currency:
 - Do not use a check or money order from a foreign bank with online U.S. accounts. This is most common for Canadian students with U.S. dollar Canadian bank accounts.
- Make the check or money order payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. NOTE: Spell out U.S. Department of Homeland Security; do not use initials like “DHS”.
- Dates on a check or money order are critical! Write the current date on the check or money order; do not write a future date.
- Use the standard U.S. date style of Month Day Year (example: May 20, 2021).

- USCIS Form G-1450 allows you to send your credit card information in place of a check or money order

Credit Card, Personal Check, Cashier’s Check, or Money Order:

- Money orders can be bought at many large grocery stores and places like the U.S. Post Office or Kroger.
- Usually you must have a checking account at a bank to either write a personal check or request a cashier’s check.
- If you buy a money order or get a cashier’s check from a bank, the amount of money written on the document is guaranteed to be available when USCIS processes your application.
- If you write a personal check, you could make a mistake and not have enough money in your checking account when USCIS processes your application fee. USCIS will reject your application!
- If using the Form G-1450, be sure to pay attention to detail as any error on the form will result in a processing delay or denial. Like with the personal check, make sure that you have enough money/ credit available in your account to cover the application fee.

SAMPLE personal check for OPT application

The image shows a sample personal check with the following details:

- Check Number:** 1027
- Payee:** U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Amount:** \$ 410.00 (Four hundred ten and 00/100)
- Payable For:** OPT Application
- Signature:** Your signature
- Check Number (MICR line):** ⑆ 22222222 ⑆ 000 ⑆⑆⑆ 555⑆ 1027

Part 1: Item 1: Reason for Applying

Applicants requesting authorization for the STEM OPT Extension should select “1.c. Renewal of my permission to accept employment”.

Part 2: Information About You:

Part 2: Item 1: Full Legal Name

- Write your Family Name in CAPITAL letters.
- If you can't fit your full name in the space, see Part 6: Additional Information for instructions.

Part 2: Item 2-4: Other Names Used

Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you have never used another name, write “N/A”

Page 2: Part 2: Item 5: U.S. Mailing Address

Important mail about your OPT application, including your official receipt and Employment Authorization Document (approval card), will be mailed to the address you write here. If your mail is sent to someone other than yourself, please include an “In Care of Name” (part 2, item 5.a.—see screenshot below for example) as part of your mailing address.

Warning! Government mail will not be forwarded to a new address by the U.S. Postal Service, even if you ask the U.S. Postal Service to forward your mail. The only way to change the address USCIS uses for your OPT-related mail is to submit an official change of address to USCIS using their website tool.

Part 2: Item 8: Alien Registration Number (A-Number)

The A-number is printed on your EAD (labeled ‘USCIS number’).

Part 2: Item 12: Have you previously filed Form I-765

Yes: Check “yes” - all STEM OPT Extension applicants will have previously filed the I-765 when applying for their 12-month post-completion OPT. See the **Instructions for Part 6** for more instructions.

Part 2: Item 21a.: Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record Number

See our website for more instructions on how to retrieve your I-94 number:

<https://www.kysu.edu/academics/college-acs/school-of-ace/international/current-students.php> In

some cases, your most recent entry to the U.S. was after a short trip to Canada or Mexico, and there will not be updated trip information in your I-94 record or in your passport.

This is standard, and you can have different information in Questions 16 & 17 from what appears on your I-94.

Part 2: Item 24-25: Status at Last Entry and Current Immigration Status

- Most OPT applicants will write “F-1 Student” for items 24 and 25.
- If you have changed from a different immigration category to F-1 status by filing paperwork with the U.S. government, include a copy of your change of status Approval Notice.

Part 2: Item 27: Information about your Eligibility Category

Write ‘c 3 C’ if you are applying to extend your post-completion OPT based on your qualifying STEM degree

Part 2: Items 28.a.,b.,c.: STEM OPT Eligibility Details

- a. Degree: write your degree level and major, for example: Bachelor’s in Biology.
- b. Provide your employer’s name as it is listed in E-Verify
- c. Employer’s E-Verify number—confirm this number with your employer; it is not public knowledge.

Part 2: Items 29–31: Further Questions about your Eligibility Category

These questions not apply to ‘c 3 C’ applicants—leave checkboxes blank, write “N/A” or “none” in response fields.

Part 3: Applicant’s Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification and Signature:

Part 3: Item 7.a.: Applicant’s Signature

Your signature must be handwritten in black ink (not typed) and fit inside the box. Signatures that fit will be scanned and printed on your EAD card. If the signature is too big, your application could be delayed.

Part 4: Interpreter's Contact Information, Certification and Signature

Complete all fields with "N/A", unless an interpreter read and explained every question and instruction to you.

Part 5: Contact Information, Declaration, and Signature of the Person Preparing this Application, if Other Than the Applicant

Complete all fields with "N/A", unless another person completed this form on your behalf.

See the following page, **Instructions for Part 6**, for detailed instructions.

Reminder: Include ALL pages of the Form I-765, even pages that do not apply to you, when you submit your application to USCIS for adjudication.

Part 6: Additional Information

Part 6: Item 1-2: Additional Information

Complete this section only if:

- You do not have enough room to sufficiently answer any of the items contained in Parts 1-5
- You have been approved for CPT in the past
- You have been approved for OPT in the past
- You have used a different SEVIS ID in F-1 status in the U.S. (for example, you attended school for a while, left the U.S. to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20, you would have a SEVIS ID from your first period of attendance that is different than your current SEVIS ID). Your SEVIS ID is on the top right corner of your I-20, and starts with N00...

If you need to complete this section because one or more of these apply to you, please complete Items 1 and 2 (if applicable).

For each of the items listed above, complete one box in Part 6.

I suggest using the following to complete the Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number for any previous work authorization, as this information is required specific to Category (c)(3)(C) (per

the I-765 instructions, page 4 <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-765instr.pdf>: Page 3, Part 2, Item 27

CPT: Please list your CPT approvals. We suggest this format: **CPT Authorizations** (as a title to the section). Employer; Start date – End date; Part-time or Full-time; Degree level (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate). You can find your CPT details on the I-20 that was approved for each period of CPT.

OPT: Please list your past OPT approvals. We suggest this format: **OPT Authorizations** (as a title to the section). Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate). Make sure to also include a copy of any previously issued EADs.

Previous SEVIS IDs: Please list your other SEVIS IDs you have used in the past. We suggest this format: Previous SEVIS IDs (as a title to the section). SEVIS ID: N00...; program start date – program end date; Degree level (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate). (Use Page 3, Part 2, Item 26 to label your response in Part 6).

If you are using Part 6 to record any information that did not fit in the appropriate section in Parts 1-5, make sure to use the accurate locator. For example, if your family name does not fit in the box provided in Part 2, Item 1.a., in Part 6, you would complete a box as follows, in addition to writing your full, legal, family name.

3. a. Page Number

1

3.b. Part Number

2

3.c. Item Number

1a

STEP 5: Pick up Your New I-20 and Prepare Your Application

1. When you receive an email or phone call from your DSO (or any other agreement contact methods), go and pick up your new STEM OPT Extension endorsed I-20
 - Sign the new I-20 at the bottom of page 1.
 - Photocopy after signing; you will send the photocopy, not the original I-20
2. Gather the following documents
 - Copy of Form I-20 with your signature and STEM Extension endorsement by your DSO (must arrive at USCIS within 60 days of issuance)

- Form I-765 (Be sure to include your employer’s name as listed in E-Verify and E-Verify Company Identification Number or valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number)
- Copy of your transcript
- A copy of Form I-94 (which can be obtained at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>)
- A copy of your current EAD card (front and back)
- 2 passport-style photos. Lightly write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo. (Review number 2. C on page 8 of the “Required Documentation” section of USCIS photo instructions
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html>.)
- [Form I-765 filing fee](#) (extra \$85 biometric services fee is **not** required for OPT applications) paid by money order, personal check, cashier’s check, or credit card using [Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions](#). If you pay by check, you must make your check payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- Completed [G-1145 Form](#) (optional; it signs you up for email/text message notification of your application’s arrival at USCIS)
- Note: the I-983 Training Plan does not need to be submitted to USCIS (unless USCIS requests a copy during STEM OPT extension processing). You should keep a copy of the plan for your own records, and your DSO also keeps a copy.
- Also, USCIS I-765 filing instructions (both general and STEM OPT) do not require copies of previous I-20s, passport biographical page, nor F-1 visa page. You may include these copies if you want to, but they are not required.

FINAL Steps: Mail your application to USCIS:

Be sure to check all documents for completeness and accuracy.

- Refer to I-765 Instructions.
- Be sure to sign Forms I-20 and I-765.
- Keep a complete copy of your application for your records.
- We do not maintain copies of your OPT applications.
- All documents should be single-sided. Do not use staples.
- Keep a copy of your express mail receipt and money order receipt, if applicable.
- Mail completed application to the USCIS office that has jurisdiction over the address listed on your Form I-765 (see below):

Mail all documents listed in item 2 from STEP 5 to:

Note: Your STEM OPT application must arrive at USCIS within 60 days of I-20 issuance.

Always check the USCIS website to make sure of the correct filing address. Sometimes USCIS change the address without notice.

On January 8, 2021, USCIS changed the filing addresses for F-1 student I-765 filings, including F-1 OPT (pre-completion, post-completion and STEM OPT), off-campus employment with an international organization, and off-campus employment due to severe economic necessity. The [USCIS Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765](#) page, with a Last Reviewed/Updated date of 01/08/2021, now instructs filers to submit these applications to the **USCIS Chicago Lockbox**, at:

U.S. Postal Service (USPS):

USCIS
PO Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680

FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Prior to this change, such applications were filed either at the Phoenix or Dallas lockboxes, depending on where the student resided. These changes were made without advance notice, although on the afternoon of Friday, January 8, 2021 USCIS finally posted the following update on the [Form I-765 launch page](#):

"On Jan. 8, we adjusted the filing location for certain foreign students filing Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. Please review our [Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765](#) page to see where you should file your application."

Employer Noncompliance

If you believe your STEM OPT employer is not complying with the terms and conditions of the 24-month STEM OPT extension regulations, and the Form I-983 instructions, you may:

- Contact the Student and Exchange Visitor Program at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) by following the instructions found on ICE.gov.
- Report violations through this [Homeland Security Investigations tip submission form](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I find additional government resources about the STEM OPT extension?

[STEM OPT Hub](#) -from the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) Study in the States

[OPT Extension for STEM Students \(STEM OPT\)](#) -from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) [Last Updated: 01/24/2018]

2. Where can I find my CIP code?

I-20s from June 2015 or earlier: the CIP code is printed at the top of page three of your I-20. The code is 6 digits long (xx.xxxx). Once you find your code, you can consult the entire list of individual [eligible CIP codes](#) for the STEM extension available on the SEVP website.

I-20s from July 2015 to present: the CIP code is printed next to your major on page one of your I-20.

3. What is the KSU SEVIS School Code?

NOL214F10724000

4. What's KSU's Employer ID number (EIN)?

61-1099712

5. What's KSU's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code?

611310

6. How can I find out what date my KSU degree was awarded?

Check on your diploma.

Or Log in to your WEIRD account. Find it on your "Unofficial Transcript." Scroll to the bottom of the transcript, and you will see what date your degree was earned.

5. **If I have a dual major, can I qualify for the 24-month extension based on one of the degree programs?**

Yes, if one of the degrees is on the STEM Designated Degree Program List <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf> and any job worked while on the extension is related to your STEM degree.

6. **Can I qualify for the 24-month extension based on my minor or certificate program?**

No.

7. **When does my 24-month extension of OPT start?**

If you have properly filed for a 24-month STEM extension, the period of extension starts the day after the expiration of your original OPT period.

8. **Can I work with an expired EAD while my 24-month extension is pending?**

Yes. Your work authorization is automatically extended for up to 180 days while the 24-month STEM extension application is pending. There is no interim documentation of the extended authorization. If your employer needs information about what documents to collect as proof of extended work authorization, please refer to them to [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services I-9 Central](#).

9. **Can I travel outside of the U.S. if my original EAD expires and my 24-month extension is still pending?**

Yes, your EAD is considered extended for up to 180 days while your STEM OPT extension application is pending with USCIS. During that period, you can travel outside the U.S. even if your previous EAD is expired.

For more information about what documents to carry, and citations for this rule, see our Travel and OPT section <https://kysu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Travel-and-OPT.pdf>.

10. **Do I need to use the KSU OIA or Registrar address on the I-765?**

No, you are not required to use the KSU Office of International Affairs address on #3 of I-765 form. However, be sure to provide an accurate and valid address for at least 4 months into the future so you can receive your EAD card. The post office will NOT forward OPT mail. If you might change your address while your OPT application is pending, consider renting a post office P.O. Box or using a friend's address.

11. Can I change employers while the 24-month extension is pending?

Yes, you can change employers while your 24-month STEM OPT extension application is pending with USCIS.

If you change employers, report the change to your DSO and explain that your STEM OPT extension application is still pending with USCIS. Regulations state that employment changes must be reported within 10 days.

Your DSO will provide a copy of an updated I-20 directly to USCIS.

No Updated I-983 Needed

Students must report but are not required to submit an updated I-983 for the following changes:

- New personal address within the US
- New personal address outside of the US

New/Updated I-983 Needed

Students must report and are required to submit a new/updated I-983 for the following material changes:

- New employer
- Change in supervisor and/or supervisor contact information
- Employer street address (company/headquarter address)
- Employer site address (physical work location)
- Change to employer's EIN
- Any reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked
- Any significant decrease in hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity
- Changes to the employer's commitments or student's learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983
- Company Acquisition/Merger