

STEM OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

24-Month STEM Extension is a one-time extension, per education level, of OPT to individuals who are engaging in post-completion OPT (or Cap-Cap extension) and pursuing a field on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Name of student's major must show in SEVIS and on the STEM CIP list approved by the Department of Homeland Security.
2. The work must be directly related to the student's major field of study.
3. The student must have completed their degree.
4. Student's employer must be registered as E-Verified.
5. Student must send I-983 and OPT Extension Recommendation form to DSO.

Timeline for Filing OPT Application:

1. Students can apply no earlier than 90 days prior to the end date on their EAD card.
2. Student **MUST** apply before the end date on their EAD card and within 60 days of the creation of their OPT extension I-20.
3. The start date is the day after OPT ends, regardless of approval date.

Things to Consider:

1. Student will receive a new EAD card and may continue working for **180 days** while waiting for new card.
2. Students are allowed a total of 150 days of unemployment during OPT and 24-month extension. Students must work at least 20 hours per week.
3. Students on cap gap extension may apply for STEM OPT extension.
4. **TRAVEL:** An F-1 student with an expired visa should wait for OPT approval to travel, if a valid visa is required for reentry. The Department of State will **NOT** issue a visa to an applicant with a pending OPT application. Students should have a valid F-1 visa, Form I-20 signed by DSO, valid passport, EAD card and letter from employer.
5. You must file form I-765 while in the United States.

Application Procedure:

- Send the following completed documents to the DSO:
 - OPT Extension Recommendation form
 - Form I-983 filled out by the student and the employer
- Send the following documents to USCIS:
 - **USCIS fee**
 - **Form G-1145** filled out
 - **Form I-765**, filled out, signed, dated (submit all pages)
 - A copy of your **I-94 sheet**
 - A copy of your **visa**
 - A copy of the ID pages from your **passport**
 - Copy of your **EAD** card
 - Photocopies of **all I-20's** pages 1 & 2(signed)
 - **Diploma** and **transcript** from Marist College
 - Copy of **OPT extension I-20** (signed by you and DSO)
 - **Two passport photos (2 x 2)** (with name in marker on back), taken within the past 30 days

GUIDELINES for form I-765:

PART 1:

- Check the “Renewal” box

PART 2:

- **Item 5:** This is the address where USCIS will mail your documents related to this application only. If using anyone else’s address, **BE SURE** to put their name in the “In Care Of Name” field, to ensure delivery
- **Item 6:** Check YES if you currently in the same address you just gave as the place to send your documents, in item 5. If you check yes, you do **NOT** have to complete Item 7. If you check NO, please complete item 7.
- **Item 7:** Please give the address where you currently live. USCIS will **NOT** mail documents here, and it’s okay if this will change over the

- course of your application processing. Just use the address where you live today.
- **Item 8:** You will only have an A-Number if you are applying for the STEM OPT Extension, and it will be on your EAD card (Called a “USCIS number”).
 - **Item 9:** Write “none.”
 - **Items 13 – 17:**
 - If you have an SSN, please give it in Item 13b. You can then check NO for Item 14, and skip down to item 18.
 - I do not recommend applying for a Social Security Number with this application; however, only fill out 13-17, if you would like to apply for SS card with your I-765.
 - **Item 21a:** The link to “**Get Most Recent I-94**” is on this webpage. Print a copy to go with your application.
 - **Item 21c:** Write “NA” if you have a passport. For almost everyone, this will be “NA.”
 - **Item 24:** This is “F-1 student” unless you changed your status from within the US, and have not left the US since then.
 - **Item 25:** This is “F-1 student.”
 - **Item 26:** You can find your SEVIS ID number at the top left of your I-20. It starts with N00.
 - **Item 27:** This item is asking you to give the regulatory citation of the kind of work permission you are applying for.
 - STEM OPT: (c)(3)(C)
 - **Items 28:** Fill out if STEM OPT
 - **Item 28c:** Be sure that this number is 5-7 digits long. Employers and students often confuse this request for an EIN tax ID number for the company, or the individual student’s E-Verify ID. You will need to ask your company for this number, as it is not public knowledge.
 - **Item 29-31:** Skip these, as they are for other immigration categories only.

PART 3:

- **Item 1a:** Check the box that reads “I can read and understand English”.
- **Item 7.a:** sign in black ink – this should be an original signature, and cannot be typed or stamped.

PARTS 4-5:

- Draw a diagonal line across each page you are not completing, and write “NA” next to your line.

PART 6:

Complete this section only if:

- You have been approved for **CPT or OPT** in the past
- You have **used a different SEVIS ID** in F-1 status in the US (for example, you attended school for a while, left the US 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). If you need to complete this section because one or more of these apply to you, please complete item 1 and include the I-20s with this application.

For each of the items listed above, complete one box in Part 6. We suggest using the following to complete the Page number, Part Number, and Item number:

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 Name; Start date – End date; Part-time or Full-time; Degree level (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or PhD). 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 PhD)
- **Previous SEVIS ID’s:** Please list your other SEVIS ID’s you have used in the past. We suggest this format: **Previous SEVIS ID’s** (as a title to the section). SEVIS ID: N00.....; program start date – program end date; Degree level (Bachelor’s, Master’s, or PhD).

Use Return Receipt Requested.

- See example on Marist College Registrar’s Office web page for filling out Return Receipt Request:
<http://www.marist.edu/registrar/pdfs/Return%20Receipt%20Request%20example.pdf>

Make sure your mailbox has your name on it. The post office will **NOT** deliver mail to you from the government without your name on the mailbox, or if you checked “In Care of Name” field.