



Updated: Feb 2022

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Initial 12-Month Post-Completion OPT

(Students on F-1 Visa)

Optional practical training is defined as a work experience directly related to your field of study. F-1 students who graduate from US institutions are allowed 12 months of initial OPT per degree level: Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD. Under certain circumstances students might be eligible for a 24 month OPT extension, applicable after the initial 12 month OPT, for which you can refer to the 24 Month STEM OPT application for more information.

Who Can Apply:

F-1 students who have maintained their F-1 status, have been in F-1 status for one academic year, and who have completed all the coursework required for their degree are eligible. In order to maintain F-1 status you must:

1. Keep your passport valid at all times,
2. Actively enrolled in the school you are authorized to attend,
3. Continue to pursue a full course of study unless authorized by the Office of International Student Life for less than full-time,
4. Follow procedures for moving from one educational program to another and school transfer and
5. Refrain from unauthorized employment.

When to Apply:

The application for post-completion OPT can be submitted up to 90 days prior to the completion of your program and no later than 60 days after your program end date. The start date of the OPT can be no later than 60 days after the completion of your program. **Program completion is not graduation, it is the end of your final semester when you have completed all your academic work.**



Updated: Feb 2022

How to Apply:

Make sure to follow these step-by-step instructions.

1. Complete the WPI Application (this form) for OPT recommendation and sign
2. Complete form [I-765 application form](#).
3. Upload to the [OPT Electronic Submission Form](#)-- this is a [WPI IH website form](#)
4. Special note on US mailing address:
 - **The local US Postal Service will not deliver US government mail if they are not completely certain that the individual lives at the address.**
 - The address you supply must be a valid address that you will have for at least four months into the future and your name must be on the mailbox.
 - The local US Postal Service will not forward US government mail. It is your responsibility to notify the USCIS in the event of an address change.
 - **If you are unsure of your future address or think you will be moving, please use the International House address at 28 Trowbridge Road, Worcester MA 01609, most students do this**
5. **Note:** Page 3, Question #27 on the I-765 must be completed as (C) (3) (B) if you are doing 12 months of OPT.

CHECKLIST FOR YOUR OPT PACKET:

*** PLEASE NOTE: There are now two methods for applying for OPT, 1) electronically or 2) on paper.** You only need to submit one application.

1) Electronic application:

For more information on how to submit the application through USCIS's online system, please find instructions through this WPI video link (tinyurl.com/WPIOPTonline).

*Please note, the USCIS online system is different from the WPI online submission form. The WPI online submission form and OPT meeting with IH advisor needs to happen **before** you submit your application to USCIS.

- ✓ Passport style photo (electronic or scanned copy of a physical photo. Check here for [additional details on what qualifies for passport pictures](#))
- ✓ \$410.00 fee, paid by debit or credit card online through the USCIS system
- ✓ Completed I-765 Form → this will be in a survey format through the online portal, you will not upload a PDF of the I-765, but IH still keeps a copy of the PDF for our records
- ✓ Most recent I-20 (**issued during your OPT appointment with OPT recommendation on page 2**)
- ✓ Scanned copies of all previously issued I-20's – photocopies should be sent in the application (always keep original forms)
- ✓ Passport – only the photo ID page is needed
- ✓ I-94 (downloaded from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>)



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2) Paper application (what to put in the envelope that you physically mail to USCIS)

- ✓ Two (2) full-frontal passport/visa physical photos (2-inch by 2-inch square)
- ✓ Additional details on what qualifies for passport pictures
- ✓ \$410.00 fee, check or money order payable to the Department of Homeland Security. They will NOT accept cash
- ✓ Completed I-765 Form, signed with a blue pen
- ✓ Most recent I-20 (issued during your OPT appointment with OPT recommendation on page 2)
- ✓ All previously issued I-20's – photocopies should be sent in the application (always keep original forms)
- ✓ Passport – only the photo ID page is needed
- ✓ I-94 (downloaded from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>)

Applications should be mailed to the Chicago Lockbox. The address can be found here:
<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses>

USCIS Chicago Lockbox

U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

Attn: I-765 C03
P.O. Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680-5374

FedEx or UPS:

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03 (Box 805373)
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

The Office of International Student Life will review your application, issue a new SEVIS I-20 Form with the OPT recommendation, and advise students on how to mail or submit the application to US Citizenship and Immigration Services. You will receive a Receipt Notice, an Approval Notice, and an EAD (OPT) card from USCIS, these will be mailed to the address you put on the I-765 form (see mailing address note above)



12 Month Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) Request Form

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

FIRST NAME: _____ LAST NAME: _____

WPI ID #: _____ Major/Department: _____

Degree: BS MS PHD Expected Completion date: _____

Non-WPI Email: _____ Telephone #: _____

Proposed employment for OPT (describe what kind of jobs you are looking for, and how it relates to your major): -- *This must be filled out, even if you don't yet have a job offer

Employment must be directly related to your major area of study

OPT beginning date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY) OPT end date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

OPT Employer/Company name (if known): _____

Company EIN (Employer ID Number for Federal Tax, if known): _____

Supervisor name, email, and telephone # (if known):

Company Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Please be aware that it is *YOUR RESPONSIBILITY* to inform the International House of *ANY CHANGES* in your employment situation.

You can do this through the [OPT UPDATE FORM](#)

Student Signature

Date (MM/DD/YYYY)



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Information for WPI Students on 12 Month OPT

While on Optional Practical Training (OPT) you remain in F-1 non-immigrant status and you must have a valid I-20 form and a valid I-94 with the D/S notation.

Travel on OPT

If traveling while on OPT, you must have:

- 1) Valid passport,
- 2) Valid F-1 visa for your return,
- 3) Recently signed I-20 form,
- 4) Your Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card), and
- 5) Proof of employment/offer letter or paystubs from your work in order for you to re-enter the US in your F-1 OPT status.

*If your visa has expired, you can apply for a new F-1 student visa from a US Consulate abroad with the same documentation as mentioned above. Please note, do not show any documents which discuss applying for an H-1B, as F-1 student visas are non-immigrant intent.

Reporting Requirements

While on your initial 12 months of post-completion OPT you are required to report the following information to the International House. [You can do this through our OPT Update Form on the IH website](#)

- Any change of your US address
- Name and address of your OPT employer, and any change in employment such as
 - Starting a new job, leaving a job, change of company address, etc

Limited Periods of Unemployment to Maintain Status

- During post-completion of OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment.
- Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during the 12-Month post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read the above information, including your reporting requirements to the International House. Please keep a copy of this for your files and to serve as a reminder.

Student Signature

Date (MM/DD/YYYY)