Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Online Application Instructions

DO NOT submit your online OPT application without your OPT I-20 with your OPT recommendation. You request this new I-20 by completing the [request form](#). You will be contacted by OIA once your OPT request has been approved and your OPT I-20 has been issued. Then, you can proceed with the rest of the application process.

Note: Please remember that you are personally filing the I-765. This means that you are responsible for ensuring that the information on the application is correct and complete. Please read and follow USCIS's directions carefully as you complete the application. The Office of International Affairs at North Park University does NOT have access to your application thus cannot correct, edit, or change any information on your application for you. If you have any issues or questions regarding your I-765 application, you will need to contact USCIS, directly. OIA can provide some guidance and help if you do need to contact USCIS; we encourage you to communicate with OIA for assistance.

Step 1: Prepare Your Documents

When you submit the online I-765 application for Post-Completion OPT, you will need to have the following documents ready to upload.

Save all documents as .pdf or .jpeg documents and follow USCIS's requirements for file names. Do not use foreign characters.

1. Passport identification page
2. Form I-94 arrival record - retrieve your most recent [I-94 record](#) and save as a .pdf
3. Digital Photos - you must upload e a digital passport-style photo taken within the last thirty days and the photo must follow the U.S. Department of State [Photo Composition Template](#). You can visit a location like Walgreens or CVS to have an official passport photo taken, or you can use an app such as PhotoAid: https://photoaid.com/ead-photo. We recommend using one of these official resources. Be sure to check that your photo file has an acceptable name that follows USCIS's file name formatting outlined in the instructions and is saved as either a .jpeg / .jpg or .png file type. The online OPT application has a photo tool you can use to check your photo.
4. Any I-20s with CPT authorization or previous OPT authorization, if applicable. Include any I-20s with CPT authorization from North Park or any school you previously attended.
5. An I-20 from a previous school or degree program, if applicable. The online application does not explicitly ask for this, but it is recommended you include previous I-20(s) as unsolicited evidence.
6. Any previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) cards, if applicable
7. **Your new OPT I-20 obtained from the Office of International Affairs**

a) [OPT I-20 Request Form](), signed by both you and your advisor.
b) OIA will contact you when your new I-20 has been prepared. Please allow 3 business days for processing.
c) Be sure to sign your new I-20 in ink at the bottom of page 1, in the "Student Attestation" section
d) Confirm your I-20 has your OPT recommendation with the requested start date.

Step 2: Create Your myUSCIS Account

- Set up your myUSCIS account by going to [uscis.gov]() and selecting "Sign In" --> "Create Account"
- Use a personal e-mail to create your myUSCIS account. Do not use your school e-mail.
- The system will send you a one-time PIN to log into your account; you will need to continue to use two-factor authentication when signing-in to your account.
- Follow all other USCIS instructions to finalize the account creation process.
- Save your log-in information as you will need to return to your account to continue your application.
- Once you create your [myUSCIS]() account, read through USCIS's [Tips for Filing Forms Online]() page. After you have reviewed the information, start your online I-765 application (next step).

Step 3: Prepare and Submit Your Online I-765 Application for Post-Completion OPT

Important Notes on Timing: You will be able to save and return to the application at a later time and date, **but you should complete all application steps and submit your application within 30 days of your OPT I-20 issuance date or your application will be denied.**

- Look for the option to "File a Form Online"
- Look for the option to file Form I-765 (toward the bottom) - be sure to select the correct form!
- Once you have selected Form I-765, you will be prompted to start the online I-765 application
- You should make an edit to you online application every 30 days or your form progress will reset, and you will need to start over.

Section 1: "Getting Started"

- Basis of eligibility: select the correct eligibility code
  - (c)(3)(B) for post-completion Optional Practical Training (most common - for employment following graduation)
- Reason for applying:
  - For post-completion OPT for your first time at this academic level, select "initial permission to accept employment"
- Is someone assisting you with completing this application?
  - Most students should select "no" unless you have an immigration attorney or other representative helping you prepare the application.

Section 2: "About You"

- Your name:
    - o Include any names you have identified as currently or in the past
- Your contact information:
    - o Current mailing address: this should be a valid address where you can receive your OPT application materials including the mailed paper receipt notice, approval notice, and EAD card. This should be an address where you can receive mail for approximately 6 months into the future in case of application processing delays.
        - ▪ If you will move from your current apartment or travel internationally earlier than 6 months into the future, it is recommended you include a friend or family member's U.S. address in your I-765. Put their name in the "in care of" field.
        - ▪ Mail from USCIS will come from the U.S. Postal Service, or USPS. You can sign up for informed delivery to receive notifications about mail you receive.
    - o If you include a friend or family member's address, select "no" to the question is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?
    - o Under "where in the United States do you live" enter your current address even if you will move during your OPT application process.
- Travel document number:
    - o Most students should leave this question blank. If you do not have a valid passport, but your country has issued a valid travel document for you instead, please enter the travel document number here. If you have a valid passport, be sure to list the passport number in the previous question.
- A-Number
    - o Most students should select "I do not have or know my A-number." However, if you have been issued an A-number from a previous EAD such as OPT or other application, please list your A-number. The A-number is the USCIS # listed on your previous EAD card, if applicable.
- What is your USCIS Online Account Number?
    - o Most students should select "I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number." You may already have a USCIS Online Account Number if you previously filed certain forms and received an Account Access Notice in the mail. You can find the OAN at the top of the notice; it is not the same as an A-Number.
- Fill-in all other requested information as applicable.

Section 3: "Evidence"

To complete the online I-765 form, you will need to upload required documents and evidence, which you should have already prepared. Refer to specific instructions in Step One.

- **2 x 2 photo** of you taken within 30 days.
- **Form I-94**
- **Employment Authorization Document**: Upload your passport biographical page here
- **If you have previously applied for OPT**, a copy of your previous EAD card(s).
- **Previously Authorized CPT or OPT I-20s** from all schools you attended.

- o If you do not have your CPT I-20s, contact OIA for a CPT print out for periods of CPT at North Park. If you do not have CPT I-20s from a previous school, write a statement outlining your CPT dates and the program information at that time. You can upload the statement in this section
- **New Form I-20**: Your new I-20 with post-completion OPT recommendation
  - o Request a new I-20 with an OPT recommendation from the Office of International Affairs
  - o Be sure to print, sign (in ink) and then scan your I-20 before you upload it
  - o **This I-20 must be uploaded and your complete I-765 application submitted to USCIS within 30 days from the OPT I-20 issue date or your application may be denied.**
- **Any other evidence** relevant to your application and your particular circumstances.

Section 4: "Additional Information"

This section is to provide additional explanation or information for your responses in your I-765 or for your uploaded evidence. This section does not allow for uploads.

In this section you can include additional information such as:

- Previous SEVIS ID #s or previous academic studies (Section: About You; Page: Your immigration information; Question: What is your SEVIS number?)
- If you have missing I-20s for previously authorized CPT or OPT, include those details (Section: Evidence, Page: Form I-20, Question: I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status)

Section 5: Review and Submit

MyUSCIS will review your I-765 for completeness. It is your responsibility to check that all uploaded documents are correct.   Correct any errors under the "alerts and warnings" section. If there are no alerts or warnings, your I-765 has been checked for completeness. There is an option to print this page or save your draft I-765 as a .pdf file. Please review your application for accuracy and save a copy for your records.

Section 6: Submit Payment

- Once your application is complete, the system will direct you to Pay.gov, a US government payment site, to pay the required I-765 application fee.
- There, you will be able to pay the application fee using a US credit / debit card or through an ACH transfer (direct withdrawal) from your US checking account.
  - o If you pay by direct withdrawal, you will need to provide your bank account number and your bank's ABA routing number
  - o Look at a copy of a bank check or bank statement from your account for your account number and your bank's ABA routing number or contact your bank for assistance.

- **IMPORTANT: Once you submit your payment information and that payment is successfully received, USCIS considers your application OFFICIALLY SUBMITTED.**
  - You cannot change or edit your I-765 application responses after payment has been submitted.
  - The fee is non-refundable once payment has been made.
- Once your application is submitted, USCIS will assign a receipt number.
  - You can print out an electronic receipt from your myUSCIS portal.
  - A paper receipt will follow in the mail a few weeks after the electronic submission

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Step 4: Monitor Your Account for Updates and Follow-up

Monitor Your myUSCIS Portal & U.S. Mailing Address

After you have submitted your OPT application, you are responsible for monitoring your USCIS account for messages and updates. Through your account, you should be able to:
- print an electronic receipt (a paper receipt will also be mailed to you)
- send additional information, in case you receive a request for additional evidence (RFE) from USCIS
- print a PDF version of your application for your records

It is recommended that you notify the Office of International Affairs if USCIS requests any additional information regarding your case, so that we can help to advise you on your options.

You can also check your case status here, for updates: https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do

You should receive the following documents in the mail in the weeks/months after submitting your OPT application: (1) I-797 Receipt Notice, (2) I-797 Notice of Approval, and (3)EAD Card. Please retain all official mail from USCIS for your records.

Change of U.S. Address

While your OPT is processing, it is recommended you do not change your mailing address. If you believe you will move during your OPT application process, please use a friend or family member's address as your mailing address.

If you need to change your US address and need to have your EAD sent to another US mailing address, you should update your address information in your USCIS account portal by following the change of address instructions on USCIS's Tips for Filing Forms Online page.

Remember, it is a requirement of your F-1 status to make address updates within 10 days of any change. Once your OPT is approved, you can make address updates at the SEVP Portal. If you need to update your address while your OPT is pending, email the Office of International Affairs with your new address.