



# Optional Practical Training (OPT) Off-Campus Employment Authorization



# Off Campus Employment/Practical Training

## Practical Training is:

- Part-time **or** full-time employment
- Directly relates to your major or program of study
- Is suitable for your degree level

For F-1 students engaging in off-campus employment, Practical Training is the primary option.

## Two types of Practical Training:

- Curricular Practical Training (**CPT**)
- Optional Practical Training (**OPT**)
  - Pre-Completion OPT
  - Post-Completion OPT (12 months)
  - **STEM OPT Extension** (24 months) – only for **STEM OPT eligible majors** – must be applied for **during** 12-month OPT



# Employment/Practical Training Online Workshops

<https://www.fau.edu/international/>

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Part of Center for Global Engagement, International Student Services (ISS) is here to provide the high-quality services, that ensure regulatory compliance, support international enrollment growth, and facilitate cultural adjustment and integration of international students, scholars, and their families. To serve as an integral part of the University's efforts of internationalization. To ensure our team members are treated with deep respect, compassion, and kindness so that we establish a safe working surrounding where each individual has opportunity to grow, and where we can feel a greater purpose and synergy as a team.

@FAUINTERNATIONALSERVICES  



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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COVID-19 UPDATES

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## OPT APPLICATION DATES WHEN TO APPLY BASED ON SEMESTER OF PROGRAM COMPLETION

I-20 program end date (on page 1) will be updated as needed when applying for OPT. This date is the official semester end date as per FAU academic calendar (not the date of commencement/graduation ceremony).

FAU Academic Calendar: <https://www.fau.edu/registrar/registration/calendar.php>

Check the ISS OPT webpage for the up-to-date chart on filing dates – when to apply, requested OPT dates, etc:  
<https://www.fau.edu/global/international/current/opt/>

After mailing your OPT - Use USCIS online tools and resources to manage your case:

- [Check your case status](#)
- [Check processing times](#)
- [Change your address online](#)

Can be found on USCIS website homepage:

<https://www.uscis.gov/>

**ISS does not have access to USCIS systems, so we cannot provide processing estimate beyond what is listed on USCIS website**



# OPT Important Reminders

- OPT is approved **once per degree level** and can only be approved in order of degree level;
  - for example, if approved for OPT at the bachelor's level you will need to next earn a master's degree or higher to apply for OPT again.
- You can apply for OPT as early as **90 days before** the semester end date during the semester in which you are completing degree requirements / all core coursework.
  - Graduate students at dissertation/thesis stage may apply for OPT before defending if all other coursework has been completed (I-20 will be shortened in this case to semester end date of OPT request).
  - **Do not file your I-765 with USCIS until AFTER you receive a new I-20 from ISS issued specifically for the OPT, with OPT requested on page 2 of the I-20.** Any petitions filed (filing fee paid) before will be denied by USCIS and the USCIS filing fee is non-refundable.
- USCIS must receive OPT application **before** the end of your **60-day grace period** and **within 30 days of when I-20 for OPT was issued.**
- **Post-OPT start date** must be requested within 60-day grace period
- If your OPT is not approved by your requested start date, USCIS will adjust your start date to a later date.
- 12-month OPT must end (at the latest) **14 months** after I-20 program end date or 12 months after OPT start date, **whichever is sooner.**
- If you decide to end your OPT early, then you cannot regain the time not used for that specific authorization period.



# OPT Important Reminders...

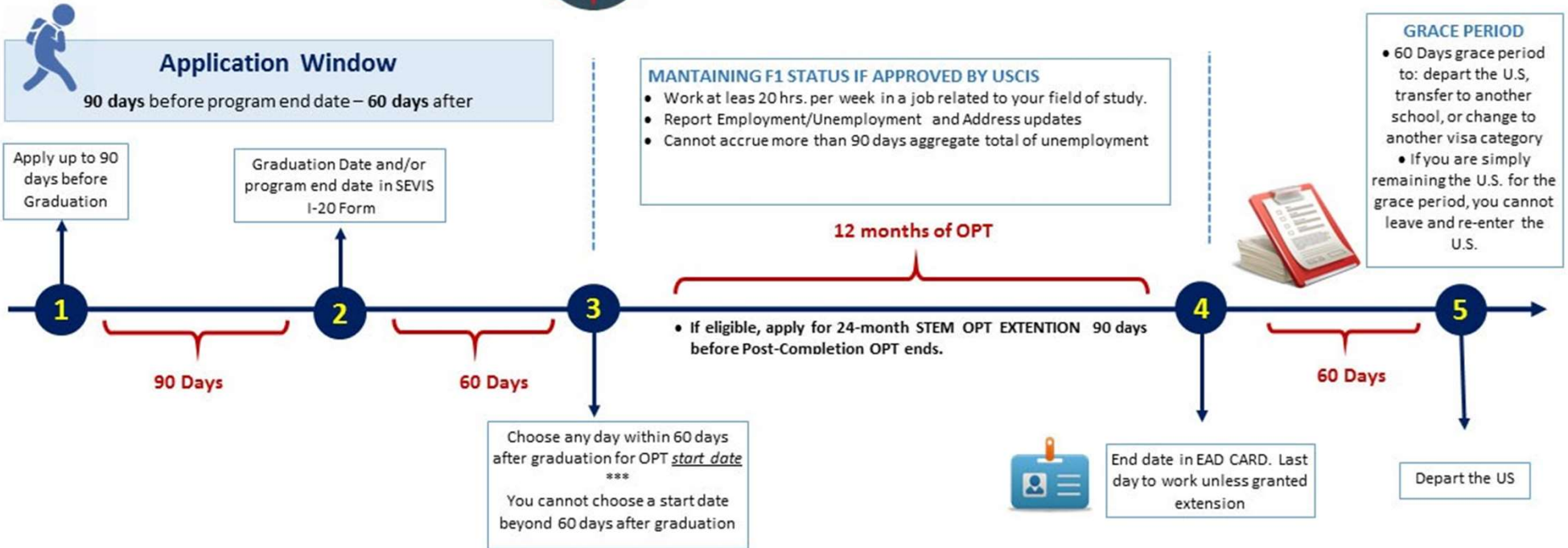
- A **job offer is not required** to apply for OPT. It is **only** required for STEM OPT.
- **90 days unemployment time** total, which starts from the OPT start date on your employment card (EAD)
- Must work at least **20 hours per week** in a field related to major (may be less during COVID-19 F-1 regulations – subject to change any time, so check with ISS)
- After OPT approval, remember to complete [OPT Employment Update Form](#)
- You can have more than one employer
- Self-employment **is permitted** on **regular OPT** – it is **not permitted** during **STEM OPT**.
- After your OPT ends you will have a **60-day grace period**
- **Please remember that ISS has no control over the OPT processing time – it depends entirely on USCIS**

More information on OPT:

<http://www.fau.edu/international/current/OPT.php>



# OPT TIMELINE





# OPT Application Checklist

Submit documents below to ISS **first** to receive new I-20 recommending OPT  
**Only submit your I-765 to USCIS after receiving new I-20 from ISS issued for OPT**

- Completed [OPT Application E-Form](#) (student and academic advisor)
- OPT Online Quiz Score Confirmation Page (proof that you completed online workshop)
- Form I-765 – (use the form live on USCIS.gov; or export .pdf version from online I-765 filing)
- USCIS filing fee of \$410
  - **Mail filing applicants:** Money Order or Cashier’s Check payable to: “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”;
  - **Online applicants** will pay on USCIS website; do not need to upload filing fee to e-form (this fee is not to be paid until AFTER OPT I-20 is sent to student following the approval of the OPT application e-form)
- Passport picture with white background – photo must meet requirements as shown on the following: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos/photo-examples.html>
- Copy/printout of most recent I-94 (retrieved from [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94))
- Copy of most recent F-1 visa page in passport (or change of status approval notice) – **you can apply for OPT with expired visa**
- Copy of passport biographical and expiry date pages – **passport must be valid (not expired)**
- Copy of any previous EAD cards (if applicable; only for students who received EAD in past)

***E-form mentioned above can be found on the FAU ISS Forms page:***

<http://www.fau.edu/international/forms/index.php>





**Secure Online Session**

**Test\_Jennifer Sunapsis**

Campus: Boca Raton

Network ID: jszekere

<b>iStartFAU Home Page</b>
<b>+ 1. New Student Initial I-20</b>
<b>+ 2. Immigration Doc Upload</b>
<b>+ 3. Current Student Requests</b>
<b>- 4. Employment (OPT/CPT)</b>
- CPT Application
- <b>OPT Application</b>
- STEM OPT Application
- STEM OPT Reporting
<b>+ 5. Other - Not F-1</b>
<b>+ 6. Immigration Compliance / Check-in</b>
<b>+ 7. Sponsored Students</b>
<b>+ Biographical Information</b>
<b>Logout of iStartFAU</b>

# iStartFAU

## OPT Application

### Optional Practical Training (OPT) Application Form

#### Read fully before submission:

This application is for applying for either the post-completion 12-month OPT or for the pre-completion OPT. If you are applying for STEM OPT extension then please use the other e-form.

**ISS needs to review your documents for OPT and issue you a new I-20 recommending you for OPT BEFORE you file with USCIS by mail or online.**

Please review the steps below and upload the necessary documents for your OPT petition. Links to the required forms can also be retrieved from:

<https://www.fau.edu/international/current/OPT.php>

**Again, you will need to upload all the required documents directly to this e-form regardless of if you apply for OPT with USCIS by mail or by online filing.**

After ISS reviews your OPT packet submission, a new form I-20 will be issued recommending you for the OPT. A copy of this new I-20 will need to be included in your packet before you mail or online file the petition to USCIS.

**This form will also need to be approved by your academic adviser** - this should be an adviser that has access to your degree audit and can confirm your program completion date. This is not an ISS adviser. Your e-form will only be routed to ISS only after your academic adviser has submitted their portion, so please be sure to make your academic adviser aware.

## OPT Application Form

### E-form Link:

<https://iss.fau.edu/istart/controllers/client/ClientEngine.cfm?serviceid=EFormOPTApplication0ServiceProvider&menuFlag=true>



# OPT Online I-765 Filing Option



Forms

All Forms

Explore My Options

Filing Guidance

Filing Fees

Forms Updates

Department of State (DS) Forms and Other Non-USCIS Forms

Home > Forms > All Forms > Application for Employment Authorization

# I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

**Alert: USCIS Stops Applying Certain EAD Provisions for Asylum Applicants**

[See more](#)

**Alert Afghan Parolee:** If you are an Afghan national paroled into the United States and you are applying for employment authorization, you will need a Social Security number (SSN) to work in the United States.

[See more](#)

**Alert:** USCIS mistakenly rejected bona-fide-determination-related [Forms I-765, Application for Employment Authorization](#), submitted without a fee or fee waiver from June 14 through Sept. 29, 2021.

[See more](#)

**Alert:** The [settlement agreement](#) in *Vangala v. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 4:20-cv-08143 (N.D. Cal.)*, provides that any filing fees, including those for accompanying requests (such as Form I-765), will be the fee that would have been required at the time of the Original Receipt Date, the date on which USCIS received a benefit request that was then rejected pursuant to the No Blank Space Rejection Policy.

[See more](#)

**Alert:** USCIS is implementing the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland's Sept. 11 preliminary injunction in *Casa de Maryland Inc. et. al. v. Chad Wolf et. al.*

[See more](#)

Certain aliens who are in the United States may file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, to request employment authorization and an [Employment Authorization Document](#) (EAD). Other aliens whose immigration status authorizes them to work in the United States without restrictions may also use Form I-765 to apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for an EAD that shows such authorization.

[File Online](#)

**Go to:**

**<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>**





## Welcome to your USCIS Account

Select what you want to do

Edit My Account Profile

Editing your profile includes making changes to your email, password, phone number, security questions, or the two-step verification method and backup code.

Login to a USCIS Service

*my* USCIS

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



FIRST

Submit, manage and receive Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

myE-Verify

Confirm your records for employment eligibility, track E-Verify or Self-Check case status, and protect your identity by locking your Social Security Number (SSN).

Not sure what service you need? Start at [USCIS.gov](https://uscis.gov)



1

 <b>Add a paper-filed case</b> View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account	 <b>File a form online</b> Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online 	 <b>Enter a representative passcode</b> Review and sign forms prepared for you by your attorney or representative	 <b>Verify your identity</b> Answer questions about your immigration history to verify your personal identity
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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

My Account

My Account ▾

Resources ▾

Sign Out

## File a Form

Select the form you want to file online. Once you start, 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.

2

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization ▾

Use this form to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if your immigration status allows you to work in the United States.

**Note:** You may apply online if your eligibility category is:

- (a)(12) - Temporary Protected Status (You are submitting an initial Form I-821 or you have an approved Form I-821);
- (c)(3)(A) - F-1 student, pre-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(B) - F-1 student, post-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(C) - F-1 student, 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics); or
- (c)(19) - Temporary Protected Status (You have a pending Form I-821).

All other applicants must submit a paper [Form I-765](#).

[Start form](#)



**Getting Started** ^

- Basis of eligibility**
- Reason for applying
- Preparer and interpreter information

**About You** ^

- Your name
- Your contact information
- Describe yourself
- When and where you were born
- Your immigration information
- Other information

**Evidence** ^

- 2 x 2 photo of you
- Form I-94
- Employment Authorization Document
- Previously authorized CPT or OPT
- Form I-20**

**Additional Information** v

**Review and Submit** v

## What is your eligibility category?

**!** You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories

If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper [Form I-765](#). If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

**Follow the left side menu and answer questions accordingly**

Back

Next

**you will need new I-20 issued for OPT for this section; after ISS processes your OPT e-form is when you will receive this new I-20**

**At the end you will have option to export questions as .pdf to upload to your e-form for ISS**



### 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**

### 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)**

 **Verify your address**

We are unable to verify your address with the U.S. Postal Service. To avoid delays, please use the recommended address.

**Original address:**  
777 GLADES RD DP-49,  
BOCA RATON, FL, 33431-6424



use this original address format

**Recommended address:**  
777 GLADES RD # DP-49,  
BOCA RATON, FL, 33431-6424

**Use selected address**

**Edit original address**



## I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ▼

About You ▼

**Evidence** ▲

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

**Employment Authorization Document**

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Form I-20

Additional Information ▼

Review and Submit ▼

## Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization document (EAD) (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must upload a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a **passport**) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.

### File requirements

**Upload copy of passport and F-1 visa here; if you were ever issued an EAD in the past upload that as well.**

- 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.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file



**Choose** or drop files here to upload





**Getting Started** ^

Basis of eligibility

**Reason for applying**

Preparer and interpreter information

**About You** ^

Your name

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you were born

Your immigration information

Other information

**Evidence** ^

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization Document

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Form I-20



Additional Information v

Review and Submit v

### 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

Back

Next

**End here for now and wait to get new I-20 from ISS before proceeding**



## I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started

About You

Evidence

Additional Information

**Review and Submit**

Review your application

**Your application summary**

Your statement

[Review the I-765 form information](#)



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.

[View draft snapshot](#)



Click this option and upload a copy of your questions (I-765) to your OPT Application E-form

### Getting Started

#### Basis of eligibility

What is your eligibility category?

(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion  
OPT

What is your degree?

-

Proceed with completing your OPT Application E-form.

ISS will email you a copy of your new I-20 issued for OPT once approved and then you may continue with your online I-765 filing.



# STEM OPT Reminders

- STEM OPT can **only** be applied for **during** a period of valid OPT and major must be STEM OPT eligible. Remember not all STEM majors are STEM OPT eligible.
- **List of FAU degrees that qualify for STEM OPT** (also on ISS website OPT page: <https://www.fau.edu/global/international/current/opt/>)
- **STEM OPT applicants** – can apply for extension **as early as 90 days before** current OPT ends.
- STEM extension application **must** be received by USCIS **before current OPT ends**. It is not possible to apply for STEM OPT extension after current OPT has ended, so plan ahead!
- A student can apply for a maximum of 2 STEM OPT Extensions during their entire F-1 duration across all degree levels. Cannot apply for second extension right after first STEM extension as you will need to be within a period of 12-month OPT again to apply.
- Unlike regular 12-month OPT, you will need to have employment and submit a job offer letter in order to apply for STEM OPT.
- The employer **must** be enrolled in e-verify at the time of applying for STEM OPT extension.
- As long as you file for STEM OPT in a timely manner **and** have received your receipt notice from USCIS, you can continue working for **180 days** following your 12-month OPT end date.
- Additional 60 days unemployment time during the 24-month extension period
- You **cannot** be self-employed during the STEM OPT authorization.

CIP Title	FAU Degree Name	SEVIS Equivalent / DHS STEM list Name	CIP DHS
03.0104	Environmental Science	Environmental Science	03.0104
04.0902	Pre-Architecture / Architecture – <i>does not include other concentrations</i>	Architectural and Building Sciences/Technology	04.0902
09.0702	Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia/Media, Tech and Entertainment	Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia	09.0702
11.0101	Computer and Information Sciences, General	Computer and Information Sciences, General	11.0101
11.0102	Artificial Intelligence	Artificial Intelligence	11.0102
11.0103	Information Technology / Info Tech and Mgmt Advanced	Information Technology	11.0103
13.0501	Instructional Technology* - <i>fully online program, does not qualify for F-1 visa</i>	Educational/Instructional Technology	13.0501
14.0501	Bioengineering / Biomedical Engineering	Bioengineering and Biomedical Engineering	14.0501
14.0801	Civil Engineering	Civil Engineering, General	14.0801
14.0901	Computer Engineering	Computer Engineering, General	14.0901
14.1001	Electrical Engineering	Electrical and Electronics Engineering	14.1001
14.1401	Environmental Engineering	Environmental/Environmental Health Engineering	14.1401
14.1901	Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering	14.1901
14.2401	Ocean Engineering	Ocean Engineering	14.2401
14.3801	Geomatics Engineering	Surveying Engineering	14.3801
14.9999	Pre-Engineering / Transport and Environ Engrng	Engineering, Other	14.9999
26.0101	Biological Sciences / Integrative Biology	Biology/Biological Sciences, General	26.0101
26.0102	Biomedical Science / Medical Biology	Biomedical Sciences, General	26.0102
26.1201	Business Biotechnology	Biotechnology	26.1201
27.0101	Mathematics	Mathematics, General	27.0101
27.0301	Applied Math and Statistics	Applied Mathematics, General	27.0301
30.0101	Biological/Physical Sci Honors	Biological and Physical Sciences	30.0101
30.3201	Marine Science and Oceanography	Marine Sciences	30.3201
30.7001	Data Science and Analytics: in society, business, engineering, natural sciences, or via scientific inquiry	Data Science, General	30.7001
30.7102	Business Analytics	Business Analytics	30.7102
40.0501	Chemistry	Chemistry, General	40.0501
40.0601	Geology	Geology/Earth Science, General	40.0601
40.0699	Geosciences	Geological and Earth Sciences/Geosciences, Other	40.0699
40.0801	Physics	Physics, General	40.0801
42.2704	Experimental Psychology	Experimental Psychology	42.2704
42.2706	Complex Sys and Brain Science / Neuroscience and Behavior	Behavioral Neuroscience	42.2706
51.2205	Medical Physics	Health/Medical Physics	51.2205

\*Fully online degrees do not meet F-1 visa regulation requirements



# STEM OPT Application Checklist

Submit documents below to ISS first to receive new I-20 recommending STEM OPT

- Completed [STEM OPT E-Form](#) – for ISS office use only not for USCIS
- Form I-765** – **important** you **must** provide employer **e-verify** number to be eligible for STEM OPT.
- Job Offer letter
- Form I-983** Training Plan (pages 1-4) – to be completed with your employer/supervisor
- Copy of awarded STEM OPT eligible degree and/or academic transcripts
- USCIS filing fee of \$410. (not uploaded to e-form, but is paid at the very end AFTER you receive I-20 from ISS issued specifically for STEM OPT on page 2 of the I-20)
- Passport picture with white background – photo must meet requirements as shown on the following: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos/photo-examples.html>
- Copy/printout of most recent I-94 ([www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94))
- Copy of most recent F-1 visa page in passport (or change of status approval notice)
- Copy of passport biographical and expiry date pages
- Copy of any previous EAD card(s)

**Form mentioned above is on found on the FAU IS Forms page:**

<http://www.fau.edu/international/forms/index.php>



# STEM OPT Form I-983 Training Plan

- Training plan **I-983** is not sent to USCIS, however, ISS office, the student and the employer are required to have a copy on file as per Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
- Only **pages 1 through 4** of the form I-983 needs to be completed at the time of applying for STEM OPT
- The employer official that signs the I-983 should be the supervisor that directly oversees your employment progress and training goals.
- **Page 5** of the training plan I-983 is to be completed only after your STEM OPT has been approved by USCIS as follows:
  - **First evaluation** is to be completed **within first year** of STEM OPT
  - **Final evaluation** is to be completed during the **final year** of STEM OPT and must be submitted no later than 10 days following STEM OPT end date.
- If you change employers during STEM OPT you will need to complete a new **I-983** training plan and submit to the ISS office within 10 days of employment start date.
- How to complete I-983 Training Plan with your employer:
  - <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983Instructions.pdf>



# What is E-verify?



- E-Verify is a web-based system that allows enrolled employers to confirm the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States.
- E-verify database interfaces with Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) records to ensure employment eligibility.
- It is **required** for **STEM OPT students** to be employed by an employer that is enrolled in e-verify.
- It is of **no cost** to the employer to enroll in e-verify. Enrollment is completed online by the employer.
- E-verify number is **4 to 7** digits long (this number is different from EIN)

Employers and employees can learn more about e-verify and steps to enroll by visiting the following website:

<https://www.e-verify.gov>



## Obtaining a Social Security Number (SSN)

F-1 visa holders are eligible to obtain an SSN only after receiving proper employment authorization from ISS and/or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

### **OPT:**

1. Student can request SSN when completing the form I-765 for USCIS
2. SSA office issues Social Security number
3. Student receives Social Security number card in the mail around the same time as they receive OPT approval notice

Your Social Security number does not change and needs to be kept somewhere safe and confidential.

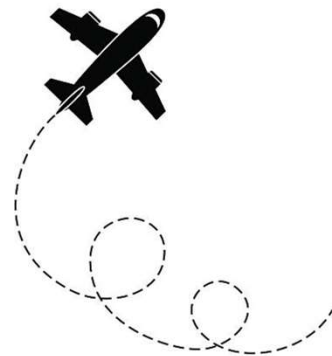
If you already have a social security number, you will be using the same number throughout your stay in the U.S.





# Travel While OPT is Pending?

- You can travel while the OPT is pending, however, not recommended due to delayed inspection at US port of entry.
- If traveling, you will need the following:
  - I-20 signed for travel (signature valid for **6 months** during OPT),
  - Valid passport (valid 6 months into the future),
  - Valid F-1 visa (must not be expired for re-entry to US), and
  - Copy of receipt notice if OPT is pending, or
  - EAD card if approved for OPT & job offer letter (recommended)
- Do not be outside the US for more than 5 months at a time to maintain F-1 status
- You can apply for F-1 visa renewal during approved OPT





# Questions?

Please email us at [iss@fau.edu](mailto:iss@fau.edu) or give us a call at 561-297-3049

ISS office has virtual (Webex) advising hours

**Tuesdays – 10am until 12pm**

**Wednesdays – 2pm until 4pm**

**Thursdays – 2pm until 4pm**

**Links to Webex advising**

**found on ISS Canvas page:**

**<https://canvas.fau.edu/courses/80282>**

