

24 Month STEM OPT Application Information

F-1 students who received U.S. bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in the certain STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) fields are eligible for 24-month extension of post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) employment authorization for a total eligibility of up to 36 months.

Additional information about the updated 24 Month STEM OPT Extension can be found on the Study in the States STEM OPT Hub here: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>

Eligibility:

- Students are eligible for up to two authorized of STEM OPT Extensions during their lifetime.
- The student must have received a degree from the eligible **STEM major list** (must have proof of degree completion, such as a diploma and I-20 with STEM Major listed, to apply).
- This degree can be from USF (see list of USF STEM Majors below) or from a previous degree earned at a SEVP certified school in an eligible STEM major.
- The employment being performed while on the STEM OPT Extension must be related to the STEM degree on which the STEM OPT Application is based.

USF STEM Majors

Major Code	Description	CIP Code
BIOL	Biology	26.0101
BSDS	Data Science	11.0301
BTEC	Biotechnology	26.1201
CHEM	Chemistry	40.0501
CHMN	Chemistry – ACS Certified	40.0501
CS	Computer Science	11.0701
CSBR	Computer Science	11.0701
DML	Digital Media and Learning	13.0501
DTTL	Digital Tech Teach Learning	13.0501
ENVA	Environment Studies	03.0103
ENGY	Energy Systems Management	15.0503
IDEC	Int'l Development Economics	45.0603
IENG	Internet Engineering	11.0801
MATH	Mathematics	27.0101
MSAN/MSDS	Analytics/Data Science	52.1301
MSEM	Environmental Management	03.0103
MSFN	Financial Analysis	52.1399
MSHI	Health Informatics	51.2706
MSIS	Information Systems	11.0103
MSWS	Web Science	11.1004
PHYS	Physics	40.0801
UNSC	Undeclared Science	40.0101

- The student must be authorized for post-completion OPT and working in a job related to his or her field of study, and have not exceeded the limit of 90 days unemployment.
- The student must have already reported their current Post-Completion OPT employment through SEVIS Portal: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help>
- At the time of application for the STEM OPT extension, the student must have confirmed employment with an employer who is registered with and participating in the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) E-Verify employment verification program. Click **here** <http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify> for more information. Students on a STEM OPT extension must always be employed by an E-Verify employer during their period of STEM OPT authorization.
- Students must work together with their employer to complete Form I-983, and this document must be submitted to ISSS. The student and employer must update and resubmit this form to ISSS if there are any substantive changes in I-983 Training Plan information.

When to apply:

- Applications must be received by the USCIS prior to the student's current post-completion OPT end date.
- Applications must be received by USCIS within 60 days of signing the STEM OPT I-20.
- Students can apply as early as 90 days before their current post-completion OPT EAD end date.
- While the 24-month extension application is pending, the student's initial post-completion OPT employment authorization is automatically extended for 180 days, or until the date the application is adjudicated, whichever comes earlier.
- ISSS processing time is **FIVE** business days after the office has received a complete STEM OPT Application. Incomplete applications cannot be processed.

Required documents to submit to ISSS:

- All documents must be submitted as one package to ISSS.
 - Bring them in person to the ISSS office on University Center 5th floor
 - Submit as a PDF through the ISSS Online Request form:
<https://myusf.usfca.edu/iss/requestdocument>
- Incomplete applications cannot be processed.
- **I-765** Download from: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
 - Follow ISSS example for I-765
 - Add N/A to questions that do not apply to you (type or handwrite).
 - Be sure to check the box "**I am applying for** Renewal of my permission to accept employment".
 - Enter name as it is on your passport.
 - **Alien Registration Number:** Enter the USCIS# found on the front of your EAD card
 - **Eligibility Category:** Use eligibility code (c)(3)(C).
 - **(c)(3)(C) Eligibility Category:**

- Enter your degree
 - Employer's name as listed in E-Verify
 - E-Verify Company Identification number (or their Client Company Identification Number) – this number should be 6-7 digits. It is NOT the same as the EIN (Employer Identification Number).
 - In Part 6 (page 7) list all previous SEVIS ID Number, any OPT (pre-completion or post-completion), any CPT (part-time or full-time) and the degree level.
 - In Part 6 (page 7) List the name of your degree and include the following phrase with your specific information: "CIP Code xx.xxxx,[list degree as it is on I-20].This CIP Code is on the ICE STEM Eligible List and the correct code and description for [list name of program in diploma]". (see example)
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- Photocopy of diploma on which STEM OPT application is based.
 - Photocopy of passport biographic page(s), including passport expiration information
 - Photocopy of current valid I-20
 - Photocopy of any previous I-20 with OPT or CPT authorization (only need to include copies of I-20s that have OPT or CPT). This include OPT or CPT at other schools or for other degrees.
 - Photocopy of I-94 Record <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>
 - Photocopy of current EAD card, front and back
 - Completed Form I-983, STEM OPT Training Plan <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/I-983.pdf>
 - Must be completed and signed by the employer.
 - Employment must be paid.
 - Make sure you include the EIN (9 digit Employer Identification Number)
 - Any ISSS Advisor can be listed on I-983. Visit the ISSS website for a list of advisors. Include the ISSS phone number (415) 422-2654, email iss@usfca.edu and USF Address 2130 Fulton St, San Francisco, CA 94117.
 - Additional questions should be directed to the employer.
 - Evaluations do not need to be completed at the time of application, they need to be completed and submitted to ISSS at 12months, 24months, and at the end of any employment.
 - Signed **OPT Extension Agreement** (see last page of this packet)

**Applicants for 24 Month STEM OPT Extension must complete and sign the statement below:
24 Month STEM OPT Extension Agreement**

By signing below, I understand that it is my responsibility to maintain health insurance coverage while on my STEM OPT Extension. I understand that if I receive authorization from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for STEM 24-month extension, I am responsible for maintaining my legal F-1 visa status in the United States by meeting the following requirements:

- Make sure that all previous OPT, CPT, SEVIS ID numbers and levels of education are listed on the I-765.
- Working as a paid employee for an E-Verify employer at least 20 hours per week.
- Working in a position related to the STEM major approved by DHS for the 24-month extension.
- Collaborating with employer to update Form I-983 Training Plan if there are any substantive changes, and submitting the updated form to ISSS within 10 business days.
- Submitting an Annual Self-Evaluation about the progress of the training experience detailed on form I-983.
- Submitting a Final Self-Evaluation on the completion of the training experienced as detailed on Form I-983.
- Sending of a validation report to the DSO every six months, beginning when the 24-month extension starts and ending **either** when F-1 immigration status expires **or** when extension period ends (whichever comes first). Validation report must include: student's full legal name, SEVIS identification number, current mailing & residential address, name & address of current employer, start date of work for current employer.
- Not exceeding the 150-day limit on unemployment during any period of post-completion OPT authorization (regular post-completion OPT and 24-month extension).
- Reporting a change of my residential address to the SEVP Portal within 10 days of moving
- Reporting the name and address of my employer(s) to the SEVP Portal within 10 days of my change of employment so ISSS can update my OPT information in the SEVIS system.
- Completing and submitting an updated Form I-983 training plan to ISSS within 10 days of any change of employment.
- Reporting the loss of employment to ISSS within 10 days
- Contacting the ISSS office if I need to transfer to another institution, change my visa status, or complete my stay as an F-1 student in the United States.
- Keeping my passport valid for six (6) months at all times.
- Having my documents checked by the ISSS office before leaving the United States for any travel outside of the country.
- Submitting required tax forms and paying any taxes due.

My signature below confirms that I understand and agree that if I fail to meet any of the requirements indicated above then I may jeopardize my legal status in the United States.

Last name: _____ First Name: _____ USF ID#: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form must be submitted with all required items to request an I-20 recommending an OPT STEM Extension. Completed requests will be processed within FIVE business days. Incomplete request forms will not be accepted.