

OPT: Optional Practical Training

International Student Office

City University of Seattle

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Updated: November 2020



Eligibility

- **Full-time OPT** – after degree completion
- **Part-time OPT** – while studying; earliest eligibility: after having been enrolled in a degree program full-time for 9 consecutive months
- **Lawful F1 status** at the time of OPT application
- Post-graduation OPT: **apply for graduation** through the student portal before submitting the OPT application to the DSO

General Application Process

1. Submit complete OPT application package to the DSO via e-mail.
2. DSO reviews packet and responds within 5 business days.
3. I-20 with the OPT endorsement is issued and provided to the student.
4. Student mails the complete packet (including a copy of the endorsed I-20) to US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
5. USCIS mails the student a receipt notice (usually within 10 to 14 days of receipt).
6. USCIS mails the student an approval notice with the EAD (employment authorization document); typical processing time: 90-120 days. If requested, the Social Security Card is typically received within a week of the EAD.

Tips:

Students are recommended not to move while their OPT application is pending. Any address changes need to be reported directly from the student to USCIS by phone.

Mail documents with a tracking number so that there is proof that USCIS has received them.

If there is no approval notice received within 120 days, call USCIS helpline.

Required Documents



- ▶ OPT request form
- ▶ Form I-765 (hand-signed with blue ink; signature needs to be entirely within the signature box)
- ▶ Copy of the passport ID page (including expiration date)
- ▶ Form I-94 (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>)
- ▶ Copies of all previously held I-20s (pages 1 & 2)
- ▶ Copies of previously held EADs (front and back), if applicable
- ▶ 2 passport style photos (taken within the past 30 days; eyeglasses are not allowed)
- ▶ Personal check, money order, or credit card authorization of \$410 (include when mailing the application to USCIS)

Post Completion OPT Important dates




- Earliest date to apply: 90 days before completing the program.
- Latest date to apply: USCIS needs to receive application within 60 days of course completion.
- Requested OPT start date needs to be within the 60 day grace period.
- OPT must be completed within 14 months of course completion and late submission may result in less than 12 months of OPT.
- The OPT application packet has to be received by USCIS within 30 days of the OPT recommendation/I-20 issuance date.



Part-time OPT

- ▶ Earliest date to apply: after three consecutive full-time quarters in the academic program and within 90 days of the desired OPT start date.
- ▶ Part-time OPT needs to be 20 hours or less per week, except for approved vacation quarters.
- ▶ Part-time OPT needs to be completed before the program completion.
- ▶ Part-time OPT needs to be deducted from the post-completion full-time OPT (for example, 6 months of part-time OPT leads to a deduction of 3 months post-completion full-time OPT).
- ▶ Once USCIS approves the part-time OPT, it will be deducted from the full-time post-completion OPT regardless of whether students actually work.

THIS NOTICE DOES NOT GRANT ANY IMMIGRATION STATUS OR BENEFIT.

NOTICE TYPE Receipt		NOTICE DATE September 25, 2013	
CASE TYPE I-765, Application for Employment Authorization		USCIS ALIEN NUMBER	
RECEIPT NUMBER LIN [REDACTED]	RECEIVED DATE September 23, 2013	PAGE 1 of 1	DATE OF BIRTH October 30, 1987
NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS [REDACTED] C/O CITY U OF SEATTLE ISO 521 WALL ST SUITE 100 SEATTLE, WA 98121		PAYMENT INFORMATION: Application/Petition Fee: \$380.00 Biometrics Fee: \$0.00 Total Amount Received: \$380.00 Total Balance Due: \$0.00	
			
RECEIVED OCT 01 2013			
<p>The above case has been received by our office and is in process.</p> <p>Please verify your personal information listed above and immediately notify the USCIS National Customer Service Center at the phone number listed below if there are any changes.</p> <p>Please note that if a priority date is printed on this notice, the priority does not reflect earlier retained priority dates.</p> <p>If you have questions about possible immigration benefits and services, filing information, or USCIS forms, please call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283. If you are hearing impaired, please call the NCSC TDD at 1-800-767-1833. Please also refer to the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov.</p> <p>If you have any questions or comments regarding this notice or the status of your case, please contact our customer service number.</p> <p>You will be notified separately about any other case you may have filed.</p>			

USCIS Receipt Notice

- ▶ Check your receipt notice carefully.
- ▶ Call USCIS immediately if any of the information is incorrect.

Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

APPROVED

- Verify that all information is correct – dates of authorization match the dates on your Approval Notice, name, birth date, etc.
- You may only work within the dates specified on the EAD card.
- If lost, you must request a replacement EAD by filing form I-765 and submitting the fee.



Social Security Card



If you request the SSA to issue you an SSN on the Form I-765, your social security card should arrive within two weeks of your EAD.



Employment

- All OPT position have to be related to the field of studies.
- Post-completion OPT needs to be full-time – more than 20 hours per week. Full-time employment may be comprised of several part-time positions.
- Position can be an internship, volunteer position, or paid employment.
- Keep documentation about positions you applied to, to be able to demonstrate that you have been actively seeking employment.
- 90 days of unemployment allowed for the approved post-completion OPT period; take steps not to overstay the 90 days.
- Seek to transfer schools, start a new program, or depart the US within the 90 days.



OPT Reporting Requirements

- Once you start OPT employment, report the employment through the SEVP portal within 10 days.
- Your SEVIS record may be automatically terminated if your employer information is not updated and you exceed the 90 days of unemployment.
- Request an I-20 update by submitting the OPT reporting form to the DSO.
- Keep all documentation about the employment for your records (job offer letter, job description or a letter from the supervisor stating your position, hours, start date, responsibilities, etc.).

OPT Reporting Requirements cont.

- ▶ While on OPT you are still with CityU on F1 student status, therefore you are also required to continue to report:
 - ▶ Change of legal name – email iso@cityu.edu and attach a copy of your passport with your new legal name
 - ▶ Change of address – update through the SEVP Portal and CityU Student Portal
 - ▶ Any change in OPT employment – update through the SEVP Portal and submit the OPT Employment Reporting Form to iso@cityu.edu



Reporting OPT Employer Information to City University of Seattle

During post-completion OPT, F1 student status is dependent on employment. Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during post-completion OPT. To ensure that your SEVIS record is not automatically terminated, please provide the following information to City University of Seattle as soon as you secure employment. The deadline to report is 10 days after your employment begins.

Student Name: _____ **Student ID#** _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Employer Name: _____

Employer Identification Number (EIN) (highly recommended - you will have to ask your employer):

Employer Address: (where you physically work – if the company is located at another address, also provide the company address on the second line)

Is this your first OPT employer (circle one)? Yes/ No
If no, name of the last employer: _____ Employment end date at this company: _____

Type of your current employment (circle/mark one):
 Self-employed (business license required)
 Other (including regular paid position, internship, contractor, ...)

Full time/ Part time (circle/mark one):
 Full time position (more than 20 hours/week)
 Part time position (20 hours/week or less)

Start date: _____ **End date (if known):** _____

Job Title: _____

Explain how the employment is related to your course of study:

Travel & OPT



- ▶ While the OPT application is pending, travel is not recommended
 - ▶ Students could travel with the USCIS receipt notice; however, if the application is approved while you are outside the U.S. – you will be asked to present a job offer upon reentry
- ▶ Once OPT is approved – carry your EAD, a recent paystub and a letter from your employer explaining that you are expected to return to employment along with the other travel documents (valid passport, valid F1 visa, properly endorsed I-20, bank statement).
- ▶ If you haven't secured a job, don't travel as you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. without a written job offer.



Medical Insurance while on OPT

- ▶ F1 students on post-completion OPT are eligible to continue to enroll in the international health insurance plan if they
 - are continuously enrolled,
 - contact their advisor to enroll each quarter by the 20th before the quarter start
- ▶ Visit www.wahealthplanfinder.org for alternative insurance options until you can enroll in the insurance plan provided by your employer.



End of OPT

- Following the OPT end date there is a 60 day grace period to start another CityU program, transfer to another school, or prepare for departure.
- Be certain to secure a new I-20 or leave the U.S. within the 60 days deadline.
- Email iso@cityu.edu if you are completing OPT early and leaving the U.S. so that your SEVIS record is completed, and you don't keep accumulating days of unemployment.



Questions?



E-mail your advisor or iso@cityu.edu .