

OPT: 17-MONTH EXTENSION

INSTRUCTIONS & REQUEST FORM

UPDATED 8/2011

Definition:

The 17-Month Extension is an extension of the period of post-completion optional practical training (OPT) from 12 months to a total of 29 months for eligible F-1 students. The 17-month extension is allowed once per lifetime.

Deadlines:

- Application must reach UCSIS prior to the end date listed on the EAD or the application will be denied
- Students can apply with the International Center as early as 120 days before the EAD Expires
- The deadline to submit the application to the International Center is no later than 30 days before your current EAD expires.

Eligibility:

- Currently participating in a 12-month period of approved post-completion OPT and must apply in advance of the current OPT's expiration.
- Completion of a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree from IIT* in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) as identified by the Department of Homeland Security (listed on page 3)
- Work for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to the student's major area of study
- Work for, or accepted employment with, an employer enrolled in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' E-Verify program. Please check with your employer's HR department. To learn more about E-Verify go to: <http://www.uscis.gov>
- Properly maintain F-1 status:
 - Have not been unemployed more than 90 days during current OPT period. Violating this rule may affect eligibility for further benefits. See Unemployment Limits for more details
 - Have kept the International Center informed of your correct name, address, place of employment and interruptions of such employment

Reporting Requirements

To maintain F-1 status while on the OPT STEM Extension, students are required to report certain information to the IC

- **Initial Reporting:** Upon receipt of EAD Card **and** within 10 days after the start date on the EAD
 - Submit a copy of the EAD Card to the International Center within 10 days of receipt. Email a clear, scanned copy to icenter@iit.edu. We must be able to read the dates on the card.
 - Use the survey to report employment status within 10 days after the start date listed on the EAD card even if you are not employed.
 - Log on to MyIIT to verify correct Local & Permanent International Addresses. See instructions on the International Center website if you need information about how to update your addresses for immigration purposes.
- **Ongoing Reporting:** Students must report the following to the International Center within 10 days of any change
 - Change in Name > Must submit a copy of passport showing the name change
 - Change in Address > Report through MyIIT.
 - Employment Status
 - Interruption of Employment
 - Permanent Departure from the U.S. during OPT > SEVIS record will be completed & remaining OPT time will be void.
 - Change of Immigration Status > Submit approval notice to the international center in addition to completing survey.
 - ❖ Make sure to log on to MyIIT every 5 months to keep your account active!
- **Validation Reports:** Mandated by new OPT immigration regulations for the OPT Extension.
 - Every six months beginning with the start date of the OPT Extension, you must report / verify the following information within 10 days of your reporting dates:
 - Local & Permanent International Address > Through MyIIT
 - Employment (even if nothing has changed) > Report through IC survey.
 - ❖ **Example:** Your OPT Extension start date is May 16, 2010. Your validation dates are: November 16, 2010 & May 16, 2011. Earliest date to make the 1st validation report: November 6th, 2010. Last day to make the validation report: November 25th, 2010.
 - ❖ The IC will provide a handout with your validation dates and reporting timeframe with your processed application. Please keep this for reference and remember to mark these dates in your calendar!

To report on the items listed above, except Address changes, students should complete the Post-Completion OPT Reporting Survey. This online tool is a quick and easy way to maintain your OPT responsibilities.

http://www.iit.edu/~internat/current%20students/OPT_Reporting_Requirements.php

Unemployment Limits

- Students approved for the STEM extension are limited to 120 days of unemployment over the entire 29 month period of Post-Completion OPT.
- Each day that a student does not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment, including weekends beginning on the start date shown on the EAD card.
- Travel outside the United States while unemployed does not stop the unemployment clock. This time will be considered unemployment.

Required Documentation:

1. I-Center OPT extension request form; completed by student and employer (For IC – does not get mailed to USCIS)
2. Completed form I-765 > The IC will review the I-765, but cannot guarantee accuracy of information. Please see the points below for tips on how to complete the I-765:
 - Question #11:
 - Check “Yes”
 - Write where your last employment application was sent (Nebraska, Texas, California, etc)
 - Dates: Write the work authorization dates on your current EAD card
 - Question #16: Eligibility code for STEM Extension: (c)(3)(c)
 - Question #17: List the major & code that appears on the I-20 on page 3 under your family name, not the name used by the institution. You will have to hand write this since the number of characters is limited.
 - **Example:** For EE majors print “14.1001- Electrical, Electronics, and Communication Eng.
 - If your current I-20 does not have the code, you can write this after receiving your OPT extension I-20.
 - Block 16: **DO NOT FORGET TO SIGN!** Sign in blue ink & remember to write your phone number & the date.
3. Photocopies of previous I-20(s)
4. Photocopy of current EAD card
5. Photocopy of IIT transcript or diploma stating STEM degree
6. Photocopy of I-94 card (front and back) and copies of your passport (biographic and U.S. visa pages)
7. A check for \$380 payable to CIS
8. 2 passport style photographs. Write your name and I-94 number on the back of your photographs
9. Employment letter including job description including how the employment relates to the STEM field

Procedures:

1. Submit all of the required documentation to the International Center & speak with an international student advisor. If you are out of town & mailing the documents to the IC, you will receive an email confirming receipt. We recommend that you mail your documents with tracking capabilities.
2. The IC Advisor will review the documents within 14 days. After review, the IC advisor will issue a new I-20 for the OPT Extension. The employment authorization period for the 17-month OPT extension begins on the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT employment authorization and ends 17 months thereafter, regardless of the date the actual extension is approved. This will show on page 3 of your I-20, along with your employer information as listed on the following request form.
3. Once the application is processed through the IC, you will receive an email to pick up the application. If you would like the application mailed, you must first pre-pay for shipping via the IC ship website: <http://tiny.cc/ICShip>.
4. Immediately review the new I-20 upon receipt from the IC. If correct, PRINT, SIGN & DATE the new I-20s on line 11. Your application will be rejected if not signed! Contact the IC advisor right away if any corrections need to be made. You will receive two identical I-20s. Keep one for yourself and the other goes with the application. Dependent I-20s & the validation reporting dates worksheet do not get mailed with the application.
5. Mail the application and supporting documents (2-9 listed above) to the appropriate USCIS Lockbox based on your address (refer to the address on the I-765). It is your responsibility to make sure USCIS receives the documents listed above within 30 days of the I-20 issue date & before the expiration of your current EAD card.

Important Issues to Note:

- Employment authorization is automatically extended while a timely-filed 17-month OPT EAD extension is pending until the new EAD is received or for 180 days, whichever is earlier.
- A student may change employers during the 17-month extension; however, USCIS advises against changing employers while the I-765 is pending, since the I-765 names a specific employer.
- Employer is required to notify the IC within 48 hours if the student is terminated or departs the company. A student is considered departed if the student does not report for 5 consecutive days without company approval.
- Failure to observe the aforementioned reporting requirements may result in the loss of F1 status & work authorization based on this status.
- The following majors are eligible for the STEM Extension:

*Aerospace Engineering, Applied Mathematics, Architectural Engineering, Biochemistry, Biological Engineering, Biology, Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Imaging and Signal Processing, Civil Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Construction Engineering and Management, Computer Engineering, Computer Information Systems, Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Industrial Technology and Management, Industrial Technology and Operations, Information Architecture, Information Technology Management, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Molecular Biochemistry and Biophysics, Mechanical Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, Network Engineering, Physics, Power Engineering, Structural Engineering, Telecommunications and Software Engineering, Transportation Engineering, VLSI and Microelectronics

Code of Federal Regulations [8CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(C)]

(C) 17-month extension of post-completion OPT for students with a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) degree. Consistent with paragraph (f)(11)(i)(C) of this section, a qualified student may apply for an extension of OPT while in a valid period of post-completion OPT. The extension will be for an additional 17 months, for a maximum of 29 months of OPT, if all of the following requirements are met.

(1) The student has not previously received a 17-month OPT extension after earning a STEM degree.

(2) The degree that was the basis for the student's current period of OPT is a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in one of the degree programs on the current STEM Designated Degree Program List, published on the SEVP Web site at <http://www.ice.gov/sevis>.

(3) The student's employer is registered in the E-Verify program, as evidenced by either a valid E-Verify company identification number or, if the employer is using a designated agent to perform the E-Verify queries, a valid E-Verify client company identification number, and the employer is a participant in good standing in the E-Verify program, as determined by USCIS.

(4) The employer agrees to report the termination or departure of an OPT employee to the DSO at the student's school or through any other means or process identified by DHS if the termination or departure is prior to end of the authorized period of OPT. Such reporting must be made within 48 hours of the event. An employer shall consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the employment or if the student has not reported for work for a period of 5 consecutive business days without the consent of the employer, whichever occurs earlier.

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REQUEST FORM & EMPLOYER AGREEMENT

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I. Student Information: (To be completed by the student) - Please type or print clearly

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Local Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

IIT Student ID: _____ SEVIS ID# N _____

IIT E-mail: _____ Personal E-mail: _____

Home/Cell Phone Number: _____ Work Phone: _____

Major & Degree (BS/MS/PHD) received: _____

OPT Expiration Date: _____

**Your extension request will automatically be for 17 months immediately following your current OPT*

Please list all periods of unemployment during current OPT period (Start and End dates)

Do you have dependents currently in the US on F-2 status? Yes No

II. Student Acknowledgment: (To be completed by the student).

By Signing below you understand the following (Please check the boxes)

I understand my employment must be related to my field of study

I am aware that my employers may contact the IC in the future to give pertinent information regarding my employment

I understand that I am required to report any changes in my name, address, name/location of employer and any periods of unemployment within 10 days of the change to the International Center

I will limit unemployment to no more than 120 days, applied to the entire 29-month period of post completion OPT.

I understand that I must make a validation report to the International Center every 6 months beginning with the start date of my OPT Extension even if nothing has changed.

Validation report Dates (mm/dd/yy): (____/____/____) & (____/____/____)

I agree to these terms and understand that if I do not comply, I will be failing to maintain my F1 status.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

III. Employer Agreement: (To be completed by the employer) - Please type or print clearly

The student named above is/will be working at my company in a position directly related to his/her major area of study. My company has enrolled in E-Verify electronic work verification program and is in good standing.

Employer's Name (As listed in E-Verify): _____

Address (Employee's work site): _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Supervisor (First & Last): _____ Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Position of above Named Student: _____ Start Date of Employment _____

Company's E-Verify Identification Number: _____

I, the employer, agree that I will notify the International Center at IIT within 48 hours of the termination or departure of this student from my company. I understand that if this student does not report to our company for 5 consecutive days without our authorization that is considered departure from our company.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

***Please see page 3 for information explaining the terms and conditions of Optional Practical Training.**