



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

International Student Center 24- Month OPT STEM Extension Guide



To apply for the 24-month OPT STEM extension, you must submit an application to USCIS much like your first application for OPT. The application for the STEM extension **MUST** be received by the USCIS Service Center by the end date on your current OPT EAD card. You can apply as early as 90 days before your current Post OPT expires, but not earlier. Unlike your previous OPT application, if you do not receive the new EAD before the current EAD expires, you are allowed to continue working for up to 180 days while the application is pending.

You will require a new I-20 from the ISC that is endorsed for your extension, a copy of which must go into your application to USCIS. Before requesting this I-20 from the ISC, please read through the following information.

To request this new I-20, please submit the OPT STEM Extension Record Form (last page of this guide) and your I-983 Training Plan, completed by you and your employer. You may submit these items in-person at the ISC Reception Desk or by email to isc.reception@sdsu.edu

Eligibility

To be eligible for the 24-month extension, you must meet the following requirements:

- You are currently on approved **Post-Completion** OPT.
- You apply for the OPT STEM extension before the current Post-Completion OPT expires.
- You have earned or completed all coursework towards a degree (bachelor's or higher) in a STEM field.
- You have previously applied for no more than one OPT STEM extension based on a lower degree level.
- Your employer is registered in the E-Verify program and has an E-Verify number.
- Employment during the STEM extension must be paid.

Full list of STEM degrees: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension>

Periods of Unemployment

Students on Post-OPT are limited to 90 days of unemployment during the entire period of the 12-month OPT authorization. This maximum period increases by 60 days for F-1 students who have an approved 24-month OPT period (total of 150 days). Unlike Post-OPT, your employment on the OPT STEM Extension must be paid.

I 983 Training Plan

The I-983 Training Plan must be completed by you and your employer. The following information may be useful:

- SEVIS School Code: SND214F00142000
- Designated School Official Name and Contact: ISC Advisor with whom you are working and 619-594-1982
- Student SEVIS ID: Found on the top of your I-20 (N00...)
- CIP Code: On your I-20, next to the name of your major listed there
- Based on Previous Degree? Check "No" (unless this is based on a degree you earned prior to your most recent)
- Employment Authorization Number: "USCIS Number" found on your EAD card

Reporting Requirements

Students are required to inform the ISC within 10 days of any change to their address and/or employer's information. Students must update this information using the ISC OPT Update Form, which can be found under "Forms" on the ISC website: http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/internationalstudents/optupdate.aspx. You must also verify this information with the ISC every six months from the start date of the OPT extension, even if there is no change in your employer.

An I-983 Training Plan must be submitted to the ISC at the time of the application, and the self-evaluations (two sections on the last page of the form) must be submitted after 12 and 24 months on the STEM Extension. A self-evaluation must also be done and submitted to the ISC at the end of every employment during the STEM extension. This Training Plan does not go into your application to USCIS but remains in your records at the ISC.

Failure to report to the ISC could result in a violation of your F-1 visa status.

Submitting your OPT STEM Application to USCIS

Remember: USCIS must receive your application before your current Post-OPT expires and no earlier than 90 days before it expires.

The following documents go into your final application to USCIS:

*The OPT STEM Extension Record Form and I-983 Training Plan do not go into your application to USCIS. They are submitted to the ISC only.

- G-1145 Form. (This form allows USCIS to notify you electronically that they have received your application)
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf>
- I-765 Form. This form is somewhat complex and you can find instructions on how to fill it out on the next page.
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-765.pdf>
- Copy of your new OPT STEM Extension I-20. This I-20 is issued after you submit to the ISC the OPT STEM Extension Record form and I-983 Training Plan. Don't forget to sign the new I-20 at the bottom of page one.
 - Note: Your application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the I-20 issue date
- Copy of your Post-OPT EAD card
- Copy of your Post-OPT I-20
- Copy of your passport biographic page
- Copy of your F-1 visa
- Printed copy of I-94
- Check made out to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security" for \$410
- Two recent U.S. passport-style photos
- Copy of your diploma if you have graduated or, if you have not yet graduated, a copy of your SDSU transcript (unofficial transcripts are acceptable) that shows your STEM academic program

Where to Send Your Application:

Once your application is completed, you can mail it directly to the USCIS. You can find where to send your application on the USCIS website: <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/forms-information/uscis-phoenix-and-dallas-lockbox-facilities>

Where you send your final application depends on where you live and whether you send it by courier or regular mail.

I-765 Form Instructions

Use the following instructions to fill out the I-765 Form. Please write clearly and in print or blank ink. You can scan a copy of this I-765 to an ISC advisor after you are done if you want it to be checked.

- At the top, check "I am applying for - Renewal of my permission to accept employment".

1. Write your full name clearly in the order listed.

2. If you don't have one, leave this blank.

3. This should be an address that will stay the same for 3-4 months as USCIS will mail you notices and the final EAD card to this address.

4. Your country of citizenship.

5. Your place of birth.

6. Your date of birth.

7. Gender.

8. Marital status.

9. Your social security number.

10. Write your most recent I-94 number here.

11. Check "Yes".

Under "Which USCIS Office?", you should write the service center at which your Post-OPT was approved. You can find this on your Post-OPT EAD Card, next to "Card #". It should be one of the following: YSC, SRC, WAC, or LIN

Under "Date(s)", you should write the dates of your Post-OPT.

Under "Results", write "Granted".

12. The date of your last entry into the US. This is on your I-94 and your entry stamp.

13. The Port of Entry of the last time you entered the US (ex. LAX - Los Angeles).

14. The status of your last entry into the US (likely F-1 Student).

15. F-1 Student.

16. You should write the following "(C) (3) (C)" which is the code for the OPT STEM Extension.

17. Write your degree (ex. "M.S. Computer Science") and write your employer's name and E-Verify number here. You should ask your employer for their E-Verify Number. **It is 4-7 digits long and should not be confused with the EIN number, which is longer and is the number required on your I-983 Training Plan.** If your company does not have an E-Verify number, you will not qualify for the OPT STEM Extension.

18. You should leave this blank.

!!Sign your I-765 at "Applicant's Signature" within the box. Your signature should not go outside this box. USCIS scans your signature onto your new EAD card and your application will be delayed if your signature is too large.

What Happens After you Apply?

Notification/Receipt Notice

Within 4 weeks, you will receive a Receipt Notice stating that the USCIS has received your application, and that it is pending. This Receipt Notice will have your application tracking number. This number is used to track the status of your application. If you do not receive this within 4 weeks, contact the ISC.

With your application tracking number, you can check the status of this your application on the USCIS website: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>

Approval

Your approval for OPT STEM Extension comes from the USCIS in the form of an Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card). Like with your application for Post-OPT, the USCIS takes a maximum of 90 days to process your application for the OPT STEM Extension. You are allowed to continue working up to 180 days after your Post-OPT expires while your OPT STEM Extension is pending.

Travel

During your 24-month OPT STEM Extension, you are still in F-1 status and require F-1 immigration documents when re-entering the U.S. after travel.

- Valid Passport
- Valid F-1 Visa
- Valid I-20
- Travel Signature on your I-20 done within the last 6 months
- Employment Authorization Document (EAD card)
- Offer letter from employer

If you have any questions on these documents, please contact the ISC Reception. You are also welcome to make an appointment with an ISC advisor by calling the ISC Reception.

International Student Center:

(619) 594-1982

Fax: (619) 594-1973

Email: isc.reception@sdsu.edu

OPT STEM Extension Record Form

Name: _____

RED ID #: _____

Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

Major: _____

Degree: _____

Employment Information

Job title or Position _____

Employer Information

Name of Employer _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Supervisor Information

Name of Supervisor(s) _____

Contact Information _____

Explain how employment is related to field of study:

SEVIS Reportable Dates

3 Reportable Dates _____, _____, _____

You are required to update your employer information every 6 months during the STEM Extension, even if there is no change. Please list the three dates at which you must complete these updates. 6, 12, and 18 months from the start of your OPT STEM Extension.

Annual Self-Evaluation Dates _____ and _____

You are required to do a self-evaluation every 12 months on the OPT STEM Extension. These evaluations are the last 2 pages of the I-983 Training Plan. They should be submitted to the ISC. If you end any employment during the STEM Extension, you are also required to submit a self-evaluation of that employment to the ISC.

OPT Extension Statement of Understanding

I fully understand all the eligibility and reporting requirements stated above. I am only allowed to work in my field of studies for E-Verified companies in a non-voluntary position. I must report address and employment changes and update the ISC with this information at the times stated above. All periods of unemployment combined can be no more than a total of 150 days.

Signature: _____ Date: _____