

## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING 24 - Month Extension Information Sheet

### What is 24 - Month Extension of OPT?

- 24-Month Extension is a temporary employment authorization available to eligible F-1 students following post-completion OPT.
- A student who is eligible for the STEM OPT Extension can apply for a 24-month extension, if his/her degree is on the STEM Designated Degree Programs list <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>. The degrees are listed using the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.
- A student who has been granted a 24-Month extension cannot accrue more than 150 days of unemployment (counted from the start of your total OPT period).

### Who is eligible to apply for a 24-Month OPT Extension?

- Applicants must have been granted post-completion OPT following completion of degree and be in legal status.
- Applicants have graduated with a bachelor, master or doctorate degree listed on the STEM Designated Degree list. See: <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf>
- Applicants who have less than 90 days of accrued unemployment during the initial post-completion OPT period.
- The student must be employed by, or have a job offer from, an employer who is registered in the E-Verify employment verification system. For more information on E-Verify, please visit the following webpage <https://www.e-verify.gov/>.

### Limitations on Unemployment:

Students approved for the 24-month OPT extension may not accrue more than 150 days of unemployment during the total 36-month period of OPT. Volunteer/unpaid positions and self-employment will not qualify as valid employment for OPT purposes during the 24-month OPT extension.

### 24 -Month Extension Available Twice:

There is a lifetime limit of two periods of 24-month STEM OPT; each occurring after a higher degree level has been obtained. A STEM degree obtained at a U.S. university prior to your current degree may be the basis for a STEM extension under certain circumstances.

See more detailed information on the STEM Hub: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>

### Starting and Ending Dates:

The start date of the 24-month OPT extension will be automatically set to the day after the expiration of the current 12-month OPT authorization. The end date will be 24 months later. (It is not possible to request smaller increments of time for the OPT extension.)

### Application Procedures

#### When should one apply for the 24-month OPT extension?

Students must apply for the 24 -month OPT extension prior to the expiration of the first 12 months of "regular" OPT. The application must be received by USCIS prior to the expiration date of the first OPT period in order to be properly (timely) filed. (USCIS recommends that you file within 90 days of the expiration date of the current OPT)

**What happens while the application is pending?**

If the application for the 24-month OPT extension is successfully received prior to the expiration of the first OPT period, students may continue employment until the application is processed or until 180 days have passed, whichever is sooner.

It is very important for you to contact OISS if you change employers while your application is being processed.

**Step One—You must submit to OISS:**

- Completed and signed “Request for 24 Month Extension of OPT”
- Completed [Training Plan I-983 form](#)

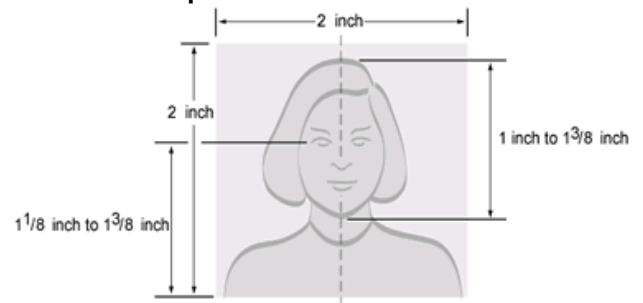
**Step Two—An OISS staff member will:**

- verify your eligibility to apply for the OPT extension;
- if eligible, will update the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and make the appropriate recommendation on the I-20;
- return to you form I-20 showing recommendation for OPT extension

**Step Three—You must assemble the following documents:**

1. Completed and signed form I-765 and G-1145 (Use black ink when signing)(Note: you may download forms from <http://www.uscis.gov>)
2. Photocopy of the pages of your passport that have your photo and expiration date
3. Photocopy of the OPT Extension-endorsed I-20, pages 1 and 2 (**created by OISS**)
4. Photocopy of all previous I-20 forms
5. Photocopy of your **UNO diploma, official UNO transcript, or unofficial UNO transcript showing your conferred degree.**
6. Copy of your I-94 form
7. Two passport style photographs, with your name and SEVIS # written in **pencil** on the back:

*Photo is not drawn to scale. However, please ensure that it meets specified measurements*



8. A personal check or money order for **\$410.00** made payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**
9. **Put the following materials into the following order for mailing:**
  - a. Original G-1145
  - b. Original I-765
  - c. Check or money order stapled halfway up the I-765
  - d. Two photos placed back-to-back in plastic bag, stapled to bottom left of I-765
  - e. Photocopy of the OPT-endorsed I-20, pages 1 and 2
  - f. Photocopy of all previous I-20 forms
  - g. Photocopies of any previous EAD cards front and back
  - h. Copy of your I-94 form
  - i. Photocopy of the pages of your passport that have your photo and expiration date
  - j. Photocopy of your UNO diploma, official UNO transcript, or unofficial UNO transcript showing your conferred degree

**Step Four—You should mail the application to the USCIS Lockbox** having jurisdiction over your place of residence. There are five USCIS Lockbox Centers in the United States that process I-765 (OPT) applications. The address you use on the I-765 will determine where you should send your application. Filing jurisdiction information can be found at: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>. (Please note that U.S. Postal Service deliveries and express mail and courier service deliveries have different addresses). You may send the application 1) via certified & return receipt mail, 2) via overnight U.S. Post express mail or 3) via express mail or courier service. You should maintain proof that the application was sent and proof that it was received by USCIS.

It is suggested that you keep a copy of these materials for yourself. Also be sure to sign your STEM OPT I-20 form when you receive it from OISS.

### **Your Obligations During Optional Practical Training Extension**

- You are required to **immediately** report any change of name or address, or disruption of employment to the OISS for the duration of the authorized training. You may do so by emailing the information to [oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu).
- You must make a validation report to the DSO every **six months** starting from the date the 24-month extension begins and ending when the student's F-1 status ends, the student changes educational levels at the same school, the student transfers to another school, or the 24-month OPT extension ends, whichever is first. The validation is a confirmation that the student's name and address, employer name and address, and/or loss of employment is current and accurate. The report is due within **10 business days** of each reporting date and must be made even if all information is still correct. The information may be sent to [oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu).
- You and your employer agree to submit an [I-983 form](#) to update your employment information as soon as a material change occurs and within 10 days of each 12-month evaluation.
- If your employment ends, your employer should send a report to OISS including your name, SEVIS ID number (if available), and the date that your employment ended. This information may be sent to [oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu).

### **OISS Obligations During Optional Practical Training Extension**

OISS is responsible for updating your records in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) to reflect changes in your name, address, or disruption of employment for the length of time practical training is authorized.

### **Travel Outside of and Re-entry to the U.S.**

While you are engaged in OPT extension, you are still in F-1 status and you must have your form I-20 endorsed for re-entry to the United States. At the port of entry, you will be required to present your form I-20, your EAD card, a valid passport and visa and proof of employment in the U.S. You will not be permitted entry unless you are entering to begin or continue OPT employment. Also, while engaged in employment on the OPT extension, the re-entry signature is only valid for 6 months.

If the student whose approved period of OPT has begun travel outside of the U.S. while unemployed, the time spent outside the U.S. will count as unemployment against the 90/150-day limits.

If a student travels while employed either during a period of leave authorized by an employer or as part of their employment, the time spent outside the U.S. will not count as unemployment.

You cannot travel outside of the U.S. if your employment authorization document expires and the 24-month extension request is still pending. For travel outside of the U.S., you must wait to receive the new employment authorization document.



### REQUEST FOR 24 MONTH EXTENSION OF OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Please Type or Print

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student #: \_\_\_\_\_ SEVIS #: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

The start date of the 24-month OPT extension will be automatically set to the day after the expiration of the current 12-month OPT authorization. The end date will be 24 months later.

Employer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer's E-Verify Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

University of New Orleans is required by federal regulation to continue to maintain your SEVIS record for the full period of OPT, including any extension.

**By signing this form below, I certify that the above information is true and correct, and that I understand and agree to adhere to the following DHS regulatory requirements.**

- You are currently on Optional Practical Training (OPT) and are employed or have been offered employment for practical training in your major field of study.
- Your current or future employer is enrolled in E-Verify. For more information, see: <https://www.e-verify.gov/>
- You have not been unemployed for more than 90 days while on OPT.
- You will report to [oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu) within 10 days of each occurrence:
  - any change in your home address each time that you move
  - any change in the name AND/OR the address of your employer by submission of a new [I-983 form](#)
  - the loss of your job at any time during your OPT authorization
- Your employer agrees to notify the Office of International Students and Scholars ([oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu)) within 5 days in the event of the termination of your employment or your departure from the job.
- You and your employer agree to submit an [I-983 form](#) to update your employment information as soon as a material change occurs and within 10 days of each 12-month evaluation.
- You will report any changes in employment information (including periods of unemployment) to OISS at [oiss@uno.edu](mailto:oiss@uno.edu) within ten days of the change.
- Your OPT will end if you accrue a total of 150 days of unemployment (counted from the start of your total OPT period), or if you transfer to another school.
- You understand that you must submit a validation report to OISS **every six months** from the date your extension period of OPT begins to verify the above information, even if the information has not changed.

If you have provided USCIS with the OISS as your mailing address, please indicate below whether or not you give OISS staff permission to open your mail, for the purpose of updating your student file.

- YES, OISS staff can open my mail                       NO, I would prefer OISS staff not to open my mail

I affirm that I understand the information provided to me on this application form and on the supplemental "OPT STEM Extension Information Sheet" and I agree to the conditions set forth as described by these documents.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_