



Guidance for Online Filing of Form I-765 for STEM Optional Practical Training

Please review USCIS instructions in detail here <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Please note that the information below is only intended to provide general assistance on how to complete the online I-765 form. It is not intended to serve as formal legal advice. **You are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the I-765.**

1. Gather the documents below for streamlined completion of your online I-765 form. Additional information on these documents can be found in the 'Evidence' section of our guidance below:
 - Digital color U.S. style passport photo of yourself taken within the last 6 months.
 - Most recent [Form I-94](#)
 - Scan of passport identification page (plus extension page, if applicable)
 - Scan of your current post-completion Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card (front and back)
 - Scan of STEM OPT I-20 from the International Center issued within 60 days of filing the STEM OPT application with USCIS
 - Scan of diploma and/or official transcript for STEM degree
 - Institution Accreditation for previously earned STEM degree, *if applicable* (see 'Evidence' section for details)
2. If you have not already done so, you will need to create a [USCIS online account](#).
3. Begin your application by clicking 'File a Form Online' under 'Select What You Want To Do' (if you do not have cases in progress) or through the 'My Account' tab. Select 'I-765, Application for Employment Authorization' from the list of options -> Click 'Start form.'

*For any fields that are not applicable on the electronic application, please leave blank.

- ***What is your eligibility category?***
 - Select c(3)(C) STEM Extension.
- ***What is your degree?***
 - List degree level and major field of study for your STEM OPT qualifying degree, as listed on page 1 of your I-20.

- ***What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify?***
 - Please obtain this information directly from your employer's Human Resources department. University of Michigan employees should list 'The University of Michigan.'

- ***What is your employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number?***
 - Obtain this information directly from your employer's Human Resources department. Please note that the E-Verify company identification number or E-Verify client company identification number is not equivalent to the company's EIN number. Do not use the EIN number for this section.
 - If you are applying for STEM OPT extension based on F-1 status sponsored by U-M – Ann Arbor, U-M's E-Verify number will be e-mailed directly to the supervisor that you list on your [online STEM OPT I-20 request form](#).

- ***What is your reason for applying?***
 - Select 'initial permission to accept employment.' This guidance is based on page 1 of the [USCIS instructions for I-765](#) which indicate that the renewal option is for an EAD issued to an eligible applicant after the expiration of a previous EAD issued under the *same category*. STEM OPT extension (c)(3)(C) is a different category of employment authorization from post-completion OPT (c)(3)(B).

- ***Have you previously filed Form I-765?***
 - Select yes and be sure to upload evidence of previous I-765 filings including a scan of your post-completion OPT EAD card (front and back) in the 'Evidence' section of the form.

- ***Is someone assisting you with completing this application?***
 - Select the appropriate answer. Most students should select 'no,' unless you have an immigration attorney or employer representative helping you prepare the application. Most students handle the OPT application filing on their own.

- ***What is your current legal name?***
 - Record your name as shown in your passport

- ***Have you used any other names since birth?***
 - Please be sure to include any other names used with the university or listed on any formal documents. This includes other naming formats, aliases, maiden names and nicknames.
- ***How may we contact you?***
 - Daytime telephone number
 - Mobile telephone number (if any)
 - Email address
- ***What is your current U.S. mailing address?***
 - Record the address you want your OPT documents and EAD card mailed to. If it is a friend or family member's address, list their name in the 'In care of name' box, if applicable. We strongly recommend that this mailing address is valid for at least 6 months into the future since changing addresses during a pending OPT application may lead to mail delivery issues.
- ***Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?***
 - Select the appropriate answer and if you answered 'No,' list your physical address.
- ***What is your gender?***
- ***What is your marital status?***
- ***What is your city, town, or village of birth?***
- ***What is your state or province of birth?***
- ***What is your country of birth?***
- ***What is your date of birth?***
 - Be sure to use the U.S. date format (MM/DD/YYYY)
- ***What is your country of citizenship or nationality?***
 - List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.
- ***What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?***
 - Instructions on finding and printing your most recent I-94 are available on the International Center's website: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/i-94>
- ***Date of arrival***
 - Record the date you last entered the U.S

- ***Place of arrival***
 - Select your port of entry of arrival from the drop down menu. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) preclearance is available in some foreign airports which is why your port of entry may also be a location outside of the U.S.

- ***Status at last arrival***
 - Select F-1 – F1 – Student, Academic or Language Program unless you obtained an in-country change of status through USCIS after your most recent date of entry to the U.S.

- ***What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?***

- ***What is your travel document number (if any)?***
 - Most students should leave this question blank. If you do not have a valid passport, but your country has issued a valid travel document for you instead, please enter the travel document number here. If you have a valid passport, be sure to list the passport number in the previous question.

- ***What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?***
 - Be sure to list the expiration date of your most recently issued passport, even if your F-1 visa is in a prior passport.

- ***What country issued your passport or travel document?***
 - List the information from your most recently issued passport, even if your F-1 visa is in a prior passport.

- ***What is your current immigration status or category?***
 - Select F-1 – F1 – Student, Academic or Language Program

- ***What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?***
 - Record the information directly from your I-20. The SEVIS ID is listed on the top left corner of your I-20 and starts with “N00...”

- ***What is your A-Number?***
 - Please list your A-number. Your A-number is the USCIS # listed on your post-completion OPT EAD card.
- ***What is your USCIS Online Account Number?***
 - Input your USCIS Online Account number, if known/created
- ***Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?***
- ***Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?***
 - If you would like a social security card issued, you must select 'Yes' to the consent of disclosure and provide your parents' name information.

Evidence

- *2x2 photo*
 - You will need to upload a recent (taken within the last 6 months) U.S. style passport photograph of yourself. Please refer to the [Department of State's website](#) as well as the instructions on the online I-765 application for additional information on the photo requirements.
 - As a best practice, do not re-use photos that you have previously used on your passport or visa, as this may lead to issues with your application.
 - You may wish to use the Department of State's [Photo Tool](#) to upload your photo and crop to the correct size.
- Most recent [Form I-94](#). Please note that if you changed to F-1 status within the US via a successful in-country change of nonimmigrant status (Form I-539) application with USCIS and have not since traveled outside the US, the I-94 is located on your change of status approval notice document (I-797).
- Employment Authorization Document or Government ID
- Upload a scan of your post-completion OPT EAD card (front and back)

- Although the USCIS system indicates that a scan of the EAD is sufficient for this section, we strongly recommend that you also upload your most recently issued valid passport identification page showing picture, name, date of birth, and passport expiration date.

If the photo in the passport is not clear or varies widely from your current appearance, we recommend that you also include a clear copy of another form of identification, such as a state-issued driver's license or identification card.

- Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status
- Upload a scan of your STEM OPT I-20 from the International Center **issued within 60 days of filing your OPT application with USCIS**

Please take the following actions before uploading the STEM OPT I-20 to the USCIS online system:

1. Double check your Program of Study information on page 1 of the I-20 and the STEM OPT recommendation dates on page 2 of the I-20 to ensure they are correct.
2. Please be sure to sign/date (MM/DD/YYYY) the bottom of page 1 of your I-20 in the 'Student attestation' section.
3. **Your OPT application must be filed with USCIS within 60 days of the OPT I-20 issuance date.** You can confirm the date your OPT I-20 was issued by viewing the "DATE ISSUED" section on page 1 in the "School Attestation" box. If your STEM OPT I-20 recommendation is expiring or has expired, please contact the [International Center](#) as soon as possible for assistance with obtaining an updated STEM OPT I-20.

- College degree
- Upload a scan of your diploma and/or official transcript indicating the degree level and major field of study for your STEM degree
- Institution Accreditation
- This section is only applicable if your STEM OPT extension is *based on a previously earned STEM degree*. If you are applying for STEM OPT extension based on your post-completion OPT degree from U-M, you do not need to upload anything in this section.
- If you are applying for STEM extension based on a previously earned STEM degree, we suggest that you upload the following documentation:

1. I-20 (pages 1 and 2) from your previous degree showing the STEM eligible CIP code.
2. School accreditation approval letter from your school or alternate documentation of current accreditation.
 - If your previously earned STEM degree was conferred by the University of Michigan, the accreditation information can be found on the [Higher Learning Commission website](#). Please print the action letter.
 - If your previously earned STEM degree was not from U-M, please search for documentation of your academic institution's accreditation online or contact your previous academic institution to verify how to obtain evidence of school accreditation.
3. SEVP certification documentation from your school or here (must be currently certified): <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/school-search>.

Additional Information

If you need to provide additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

*STEM extension does not require listing previously issued CPT/OPT or SEVIS numbers.

Review your application

- Be sure to carefully review your application before filing online to ensure that all applicable questions were answered. The online system will allow you to submit the application without completing some of the required fields for the application.

Your statement

- Under 'Applicant's statement,' you must check 'I can read and understand English, and have read and understand every question and instruction on this application, as well as my answer to every question.'

Your signature

- You must check 'I have read and agree to the applicant's statement.' Be sure to read the statement listed above this attestation.
- Provide your digital signature in the box by typing your full legal name.

Pay and submit

- Pay the application fee indicated on the USCIS website. The application fee can be paid via bank account (ACH), debit, or credit card.

After submission

- You will receive a confirmation that your Form I-765 was successfully submitted. Following the completion of your online filing, you should be able to review your I-765 receipt notice in your online USCIS account and track the status of the application.

Please review our [After You Have Applied for OPT](#) page for a summary of recommended next steps after filing your OPT application.