24-Month STEM OPT Application

Use this application if you are currently in an authorized period of post-completion OPT (C3b) and have earned a designated STEM designated degree.

Eligibility

- Maintaining F-1 status
- Current approved Post-Completion OPT (C3b) is based on completion of a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in a DHS STEM Designated Degree Program.
- Current approved Post-Completion OPT (C3b) has not yet expired
- Have a full-time and paid job or job offer from an employer enrolled in the E-Verify program
- Employer must complete a training plan and sign agreement on Form I-983
- Have a valid passport, valid for at least 6-months into future

Previous STEM degree:

If you are currently active in the 12-month post-completion OPT based on a non-STEM degree, you may be eligible to use a prior STEM degree from a U.S. institution of higher education to apply for a STEM OPT extension, if…

1. Both degrees are from currently accredited and SEVP-certified institutions.
2. You have not already received a STEM OPT extension based on this prior degree.
3. The employment is directly related to the previous STEM degree.

When should you apply?

You may submit your application to USCIS as early as 90 days before your current OPT end date. Your application will be denied if you do not file with USCIS within 60 days of the date that your STEM OPT I-20 is issued by the DSO. The deadline to submit the STEM Extension application is the expiration date of your post-completion OPT EAD card.

Apply for your STEM OPT Requested I-20 from the International Office

To apply for your STEM OPT Requested I-20, please complete Form I-983. You and your employer should fill pages 1-4 of the I-983, page 5 can be left blank for the initial STEM application, but you will be responsible for filling page 5 later during your STEM period. Then, submit the STEM OPT Extension Request and upload your I-983 in the International Student Portal. After the International Office reviews your I-983, your STEM OPT requested I-20 will be uploaded into your portal. You will need to print, sign and date the STEM OPT Requested I-20 and include the signed copy in your online or mail-in application.

Online Application Method

- Must have or create a USCIS online account
- USCIS has the right to request a Biometric appointment if you use the online method
- Receipts and notifications are sent to your USCIS online account inbox

Steps to apply online

1. Initiate the online Form I-765 from your MyUSCIS account and select the C3C option for STEM OPT Extension
2. Answer all questions in the online I-765 web form

3. Upload supporting evidence into the upload section (use the chart below)

STEM OPT Extension Evidence		
Evidence (as listed in online filing system)	**Example**	**Notes**
2 x 2 photo of you	Passport Photo	See "**Photo Requirements**" U.S. Department of State photo requirements. DOS also has a photo check tool that you can use to check the photo ahead of time.
Form I-94	Entry I-94 Or Change of Status I-797 Approval	Download your most recent I-94 here: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/
Employment Authorization Document	OPT EAD Card Valid passport biographical page	
Form I-20	Newest I-20 with STEM OPT recommendation	This is only referring to the recommending I-20, not to prior I-20s
College degree	Diploma and / or transcripts showing degree conferral	
Institution accreditation	Proof of Accreditation (screenshot from school or acredditors website)	Only required if you are filing STEM OPT based on a **prior** degree (i.e. not the OPT degree).

4. Download draft snapshot to review your answers for accuracy
5. Make application fee payment ($410 USD) with a credit card and submit your application
6. Collect your receipt notice and number
7. Log into your USCIS account regularly to check for updates or alerts regarding your app.

Steps to apply by mail
1. ***Collect the following documents:***
   1. Complete Form I-765
   2. Complete Form G-1145
   3. Complete Form I-983
   4. Proof of Completion of STEM Degree (a copy of your diploma or official transcripts)
   5. Copy of your post-completion OPT (C3b) EAD card
   6. Copy of your most recent post-completion OPT I-20
   7. Copy of your new STEM OPT Requested I-20 (see above)
   8. Copy of your most recent I-94
   9. Copy of Current Valid Passport (valid for at least 6-months past filing date)
   10. Copy of F-1 visa
   11. Two U.S. passport style photos taken in the last 30 days (can't reuse photos from previous apps)
   12. $410 Check or Money Order make payable to "**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**". (Write SEVIS ID on the Check/Money Order. Check www.uscis.gov for updated fee.)

2. *Mail documents in the order listed above to USCIS*

For U. S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

USCIS
PO Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680
Recommended to purchase Delivery Confirmation when shipping via USPS

For Express mail and courier deliveries (FedEx, DHL, UPS):

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn
3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Mandatory STEM OPT Reporting

*   During STEM OPT, students can no longer update employer information on their own via their SEVP Student Portal.
*   Students will still have access to the SEVP portal to view employer information and edit personal info like their US address. Students are still responsible for updating changes to US address within 10 days of any change.
*   Students are responsible for reporting changes to their employer information directly to the DSO/International office. Changes to employer information can only be edited by the DSO and International Office.
*   Changes to employer information will require the student and employer to complete an updated Form I-983 and complete the *OPT Employer Update* request in the International Portal.
*   All STEM OPT employment reports and accompanying I-983's must be submitted to the International Portal.
*   Within 1-3 business days, information students submit to the International Office will be updated to their SEVP Student Portal.
*   STEM OPT validation reports are required every 6 months through the entire 24-month STEM Extension period. Even when there are no changes in employment, validation reports are still due every 6-months from the STEM OPT start date. All reports submitted to International Portal.
*   At the 12th month (1 year) mark of the STEM OPT Extension, students are required to complete the "Evaluation on Student Progress", the top portion of page 5 of Form I-983.
*   At the 24th month (2 year) mark of the STEM OPT Extension, OR anytime a student ends an employment opportunity during STEM OPT, students are required to complete the "Final Evaluation on Student Progress", the bottom portion of page 5 of Form I-983.
*   Reporting during STEM OPT is **mandatory**. Failure to report in a timely manner during and authorized period of STEM OPT is considered a violation of F-1 status and may result in termination.

Please contact us with any questions:
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