

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES • UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

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Instructions for 24-Month Extension of OPT (STEM OPT)

An F-1 student who is in a period of Optional Practical Training (OPT) and meets certain criteria below may apply for a 24-month extension. If granted, employment authorization is extended for an additional 24 months beyond the initial OPT end date.

Eligibility

- The student must have a bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree with a code (see Primary Major on p.2 of I-20) found on the [STEM Designated Degree Program List](#). This may be a prior STEM degree if conferred within 10 years.
- The student must be in an approved post-completion OPT period based on a designated STEM degree.
- The student has a job or job offer from an employer enrolled in E-Verify.
- The student must apply before the current post-completion OPT period ends.

E-Verify Program

The [E-Verify Website](#) is an internet-based system operated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees.

Application Process

Initial review of application must be made by an International Student Services (ISS) advisor. If a student is found to be eligible, the advisor will print out a new I-20 endorsed for 24-month extension. The student must submit the I-20 and complete the application before the initial post-completion OPT period ends. ISS suggests that applications be submitted to USCIS **no earlier than 90 days** prior to the current OPT end date.

Required Documents:

- Completed Form I-765 Line #16: (c)(3)(C)
- USCIS [Form G-1145](#) -**Not required if filing OPT STEM online.**
- I-20 form endorsed by ISS advisor for 24-month OPT STEM extension
- 2 photos per USCIS specifications (U.S passport specification) with name and I-94# on the back if filing by mail. One photograph without name and I-94# on the back if filing online.
- Photocopy of valid passport biography page
- Photocopy of most recent F-1 visa page (not required if filing online).
- Photocopy of both sides of your latest I-94 card if you have one. Students entering the U.S. after May 2013 will not have an I-94 card. Print out the I-94 at the [I-94 Official Website](#).
- Photocopy of all previous I-20s, showing either CPT or OPT, at current level
- Photocopy of degree diploma and/or official transcript showing degree award
- Photocopy of EAD card for initial period of OPT and any previous employment authorization
- Filing fee (see amount at [the USCIS I-765 page](#)): Personal check made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security for I-765 processing fee \$410 OR complete the [USCIS form G-1450 Authorization for Credit Card Transactions](#) -**Not required if filing OPTS STEM online.**
- Completed [I-983 Training Plan](#)

Employment While Application Is Pending

Applicants who timely file for a 24-month extension of OPT will be able to continue employment while the application is pending, until a final decision is made by USCIS or up to 180 days past the initial OPT end date, whichever comes first. The receipt notice from USCIS will serve as work authorization until the new employment authorization card is approved (if the current card expires while the student is waiting for the new card).