

Optional Practical Training

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary off-campus employment for practical training directly related to the student's major area of study. [8CFR 214.2 (f) (10) (ii)] This authorization allows F-1 students to gain work experience for a maximum of 12 months of full-time employment.

Pre-Completion OPT Can be Authorized:

- During summer vacation or semester break: either part-time or full-time employment
- After completion of all course requirements for the degree part- or full-time employment
- While school is in session: part-time employment only (not to exceed 20 hours per week)

Post Completion OPT Can be Authorized:

- After completion of ALL requirements for the course of study

Eligibility Requirements:

- Student must be enrolled for at least one full academic year
- Employment must be in the student's area of study
- A specific job offer is not required
- F-1 students who engage in an aggregate of 12 months of full-time curricular practical training become ineligible for optional practical training.

When Should I Apply for OPT?

- For graduating students, no more than 90 days prior to the last day of classes.
- If you have already completed one academic year, you can apply for pre-completion OPT at any time but apply at least 90 days prior to the start of your employment.
- Application process can take up to 3 months to adjudicate so submitting your application early is very important.

What do I Need to Apply?

- Form I-765 [write "(C)(3)(b)" in Section 16]
- Photocopies of your visa and passport signature pages
- I-94 Arrival Document
- Two passport photos (print your name & date of birth on the back) *See photo requirements attached
- Photocopies of **all** previous I-20s (Page 1 and 3)
- Letter from your department chair certifying fulfillment of graduation requirements which must specify date of graduation
- Check or money order for \$380 payable to: Department of Homeland Security
- Make an appointment with the Office of International Student Services to process your application.

Employment Requirement:

During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment. Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization. Students granted a 17-month OPT extension may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total OPT period comprising any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization and the subsequent 17-month extension period. **8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(E)**

Employment Categories:

- Regular paid employment in a position directly related to the student's program of study.
 - For post-completion OPT, the work must be for at least 20 hours per week
 - Students may work for multiple employers, as long as it is directly related to the student's program of study.
- Payment by multiple short-term multiple employers.
- Work for hire. This is also commonly referred to as 1099 employment where an individual performs a service based on a contractual relationship rather than an employment relationship
- Self-employed business owner. The student should be able to prove the proper business licenses and is actively engaged in a business related to his or her degree program.
- Employment through an agency.
- Volunteers or unpaid interns: Students may work as volunteers or unpaid interns, where this practice does not violate any labor laws. The work should be at least 20 hours per week for students on post-completion

Reporting Requirements while on OPT:

- Employment Information including name, address and start date
- Any change in employment information
- Change of Address
 - If your mailing address changes while your case is pending, call 1-800-375-5283 or use the "Online Change of Address" function on USCIS website.
- Change of Name

Health Insurance while on OPT:

It is important to note that it is highly recommended that you purchase a health insurance plan while on OPT. Medical costs can be extremely expensive and your Adelphi insurance will no longer be viable once you complete your program. You should purchase a private plan.

Travel while on OPT:

An F-1 student who travels outside the U.S. (for less than 5 months) can be readmitted to resume employment for the remainder of the period authorized on your EAD card. **8 CFR 214.2 (f) (13) (ii)**

You must present the following evidence:

- A form I-20 endorsed by the DSO within the preceding 6 months
- Unexpired EAD card
- Letter of valid employment (You must be returning to resume employment)
- Valid passport
- Valid visa

How long will it take to receive my approval and my card?

It can take up to 90 days to receive your EAD. You can check your application online at <https://egov.immigration.gov/> once you receive your receipt letter. Scroll to “Hot Topics” and click on “Case Status Online.” You **cannot** begin employment until you have your approval, received your Employment Authorization Card and are within your valid dates of employment.

Photo Requirements for OPT

- ☑ Frame subject with [full face, front view, eyes open](#)
- ☑ Make sure photo presents [full head](#) from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1-3/8 inches (25 mm to 35 mm)
- ☑ [Center head](#) within frame (see Figure 2 below)
- ☑ Make sure [eye height](#) is between 1-1/8 inches to 1-3/8 inches (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo
- ☑ Photograph subject against a plain white or off-white [background](#)
- ☑ [Position subject](#) and [lighting](#) so that there are no distracting shadows on the face or background
- ☑ Encourage subject to have a [natural expression](#)

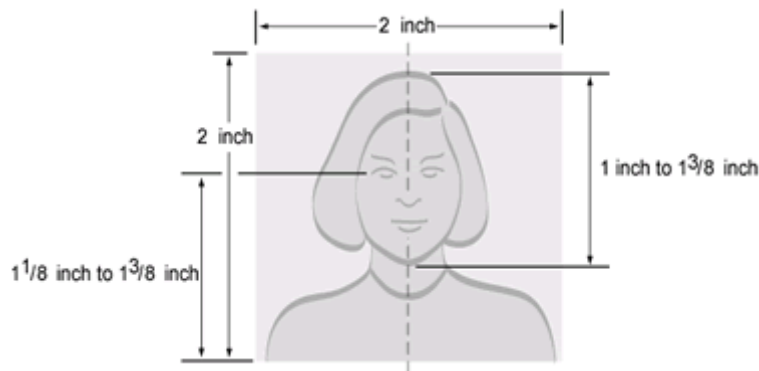


Figure 2. Head Position & Placement

Well-Composed Photos

