

Student Checklist for Optional Practical Training 24-Month STEM Extension

STEP 1: Complete Form I-765

___ Complete form I-765 as a pdf or use **black** ink and be sure to sign your name with a **black** ink pen.

___ **For Part 1. Reason for Applying:** select 1.a. Initial permission to accept employment.

___ **For Question 5 a-f:** Your U.S. Mailing Address:

If you have the STEM extension card sent to IPI, as noted on the I-765 form, you must send the STEM extension request to the USCIS lockbox in Phoenix, AZ.

If you choose to have the card sent to your current residential address in the United States, make sure that your address will be valid until you receive the approval. This may take 4-5 months.

Your address and how you ship your application (USPS, FedEx, or UPS) determine which of the four USCIS Service Centers should receive your application. It is acceptable and expected that you may send the application to a USCIS Service Center different from the one where your original OPT application was filed. See page 4 for more information.

___ **Answering question 27:** The answer for STEM extension applicants (after initial 12 month OPT) is: (c)(3)(C)

___ **Answering question 28 a-c:** You must complete this section. List your degree and obtain your employer's name and identification number as listed in the U.S. government's "E-Verify" Program. This information is usually available from your employer's human resource's office.

___ **Answering question Part 6. Additional Information (page 7):** You must provide information about past CPT and OPT authorizations, and previous SEVIS ID numbers (if applicable).

STEP 2: Complete Form I-983

___ Complete form I-983.

IMPORTANT: Read the instructions for completing the form I-983 carefully and follow them.

STEP 3: Email the following three (3) items to UAF IPI

- ___ Completed request form for the 24-month STEM Extension
- ___ Copy of completed form I-765
- ___ Copy of completed form I-983

YOU WILL RECEIVE TWO (2) ORIGINAL STEM OPT I-20's FROM UAF IPI

STEP 4: Mail the items included in the checklist below to USCIS Service Center

NOTE: If you have the STEM extension card sent to IPI, you must send your extension request to the USCIS lockbox in Phoenix, AZ. If you choose to have the card sent to your current residential address in the United States, you must send your extension request to the USCIS Service Center that has jurisdiction over your current state of residence.

Keep documents in this order and use a paper clip (do not staple them together). All the documents should be single-sided.

- ___ Form I-765, signed in **black** ink. **DO NOT CROSS LINES AS IT WILL BE SCANNED.**
- ___ \$410.00 check or money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security (spell out name, do not use initials "USDHS" or "DHS"). **Staple check to form I-765.**
- ___ One (1) original SEVIS I-20 for the OPT STEM extension, signed by UAF IPI and **YOU**.
- ___ Photocopy of your most recent I-94 and visa inside your passport.
- ___ Photocopy of your passport identification page, which includes your picture. Your passport must be valid.
- ___ Copy of your current EAD card (both sides) and any previous EAD cards (if applicable).
- ___ Copy of your most recent degree that shows: degree name, date awarded, and field of study. This can be a copy of your diploma, official transcript, or an unofficial transcript. The field of study shown must be on the approved list of STEM fields of study. UAF IPI will have already verified that your field of study is on the approved list prior to issuing you a new I-20, recommending the OPT 24-month STEM extension.
- ___ Two (2) passport-style photos with a white background taken within the last 30 days. See important instructions on photo requirements below. On the back, in pencil, write your name and I-94 number. Place photos in a plastic Ziploc bag or an envelope and paper clip to top of application.
- ___ Since your employment must directly relate to the STEM field, it is recommended that you include a statement from your employer regarding how the employment relates to the STEM field of study.

___ Include photocopies of all other previous I-20s issued to you by all schools (including any that are pre-SEVIS).

KEEP ALL I-20s, OPT/STEM EXTENSION APPLICATIONS FOREVER, IN THE EVENT YOU ARE SPONSORED FOR AN H-1B WORK AUTHORIZATION OR IF YOU WISH TO APPLY FOR U.S. PERMANENT RESIDENCY.

___ Scan and email a copy of your new STEM OPT card to IPI after you receive it.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON USCIS PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

Often applicants will have their photos rejected for failing to meet the required specifications. In order to avoid this, be sure to show these instructions to the photographer before the photos are taken.

For an example of the new photo style go to:

http://travel.state.gov/passport/guide/composition/composition_874.html. This link includes information on the required dimensions of the photos, how the photos must be posed etc. The photo should not be larger than 2 by 2 inches, with the distance from the top of the head to just below the chin measuring about 1-3/8 inches.

1. Frame subject with full face, front view, eyes open.
2. Make sure the photo presents full head from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1-3/8 inches (25mm to 35mm).
3. Center head within the frame of the picture.
4. Make sure eye height is from between 1-1/8 inches to 1-3/8 inches (28mm and 35mm) from the bottom of the photo.
5. Photograph subject against a plain white or off-white background.
6. Position subject and lighting so that there are no distracting shadows on the face or background.
7. Compose your face in a natural photo.
8. There must be no spots on the photo.
9. There must be no shadows on the photo.
10. Eyeglasses worn on a daily basis can be worn for the photo. However, there should be no reflection from the eyeglasses that obscures the eyes.
11. Sunglasses or tinted glasses cannot be worn in the photos.
- 12. Print your name and I-94 number on the back of the photos in PENCIL. DO NOT PRESS ON THE PICTURES.**
- 13. Place the pictures in an envelope or small plastic sandwich-size bag and attach the envelope or bag to the OPT application packet. Be sure not to staple or otherwise put any holes in the pictures.**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON MAILING YOUR APPLICATION

NOTE: If you use FedEx to ship your application to USCIS, you will need a phone number for the recipient. Please use the following phone number for USCIS: 1-800-375-5283.

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, or Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	<p><u>USCIS Phoenix Lockbox</u> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries: USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For Express mail and courier service deliveries: USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>
Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia	<p><u>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</u> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries: USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For Express mail and courier service deliveries: USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121, Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>