



Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) Information Sheet

While on post-completion optional practical training (OPT), you will continue to be in F-1 status and must notify FIU ISSS Office and USCIS of any updates to your personal and employment information. Please provide ISSS with the following information when you:

- Receive your OPT EAD card. Upload copy in [FIU ISSS Panther Portal](#)
- Find or change employment. Update your [SEVP portal](#) and provide ISSS with updates using the [FIU ISSS Panther Portal](#)
- Move to a new home address. Update address (within 10 days of change) via Panther Soft
- Change your status to a different category (please provide proof)
- Permanently depart the United States prior to the expiration date of your OPT
- Obtain admission to pursue another degree program (you may not study and engage in OPT simultaneously)

REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE:

If you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE) for your OPT application from USCIS for any reason, you must contact ISSS immediately.

SEVP PORTAL:

The [SEVP Portal](#) is an important tool that lets F-1 students on post-completion OPT meet their legal reporting requirements to USCIS. Please visit the following website for more details: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help>

Download the SEVP Portal Student User Guide:

https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/assets/sevp_portal_student_user_guide.pdf

EMPLOYMENT:

- OPT employment must be in a job that is related to your most recent degree program.
- You MUST maintain evidence and provide ISSS updates for each job using the [FIU ISSS Panther Portal](#)
- You should keep a signed letter from your employer stating how the work performed relates to your degree.

90-DAY UNEMPLOYMENT RULE:

- Immigration permits students on post-completion OPT only an aggregate of 90-days unemployment computed from the start date on the OPT EAD card.
- A student who exceeds the 90-day period of unemployment while on post-completion OPT or STEM OPT is considered in violation of his or her status and USCIS MAY TERMINATE your SEVIS record. Notify ISSS if you may be in violation.
- You MUST report your employment using the [FIU ISSS Panther Portal](#) within 90-days of the OPT start date and continue to submit updates as need.

STEM OPT EXTENSION:

STEM OPT extensions are available to students with degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. You may be eligible to extend your OPT for an additional 24 months if:

- You have majored in one of the STEM areas of study (a list is available at <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm>).
- Your employer must be participating in USCIS E-Verify and agree to a formal training program.
- Your application must be received at the appropriate USCIS service center prior to the expiration of your OPT.

Please view the [STEM OPT checklist](#) for application details. For more information about STEM OPT please visit: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>

H-1B CAP GAP EXTENSION:

If you are on OPT and have a properly filed H-1B petition and change of status application (filed under the cap for the next fiscal year) pending with USCIS, you may be eligible for an extension of your status and/or employment authorization. You may contact ISSS for the cap gap Form I-20 once you receive the H-1B receipt notice and/or the approval notice by submitting a [Document Request Form](#) along with a copy of the I-797.

TRAVEL:

If you plan to travel abroad, you must have the following documents in order to re-enter the U.S.:

- Valid SEVIS FORM I-20 showing OPT approval dates and travel signature obtained within the last 6 months
- Valid F-1 visa stamp
- Valid passport (at least six months into the future)
- OPT Card
- Proof of employment

Note: If your F-1 visa has expired, you must obtain a new visa stamp from a U.S. consulate abroad prior to re-entering the U.S. You must contact the consular office in your home country to find out the application requirements and processing times.

WHEN OPT CARD EXPIRES:

After your **OPT EAD card expires**, you have the following options:

1. Depart the United States within 60 days of your OPT expiration date.
2. Obtain admission to another degree program in the U.S. within 60 days of your OPT expiration date (you should receive an I-20 for the new program within the 60 day grace period, and begin the new program within 5 months from the OPT expiration date).
3. Obtain change of status to a different nonimmigrant category. You are responsible for obtaining appropriate legal status if you wish to continue staying in the U.S. You must submit proof of the change of status to ISSS.

Please notify the appropriate ISSS office of any change in your status and contact information as explained above. We must have this information to complete reporting requirements to the Department of Homeland Security.

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If you have any questions concerning your F-1 status while engaging in OPT, do not hesitate to contact ISSS.