

HOW TO APPLY FOR 24-MONTH STEM OPT (p.1)

CRITERIA: (You must meet all criteria to be eligible to apply for STEM OPT.)

- You have graduated with a Bachelor's, Master's, or Ph.D. in a STEM field. These are identified by CIP code. For a complete approved list please go to <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stem-list.pdf>
- Application must be submitted to USCIS during the period of your current OPT, but no earlier than 90 days before your current EAD card expires.
- You have not applied for more than two 24-month extensions previously.
- Your employer is registered in the E-Verify Program.
- Your employer has completed Form I-983.

STEP 1: International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Procedures

- Submit the following to ISSS through iNorthTX:
 - Completed STEM Optional Practical Training OPT Request eForm for a new I-20
 - Copy of \$100 OPT Case Management fee payment receipt (<https://international.unt.edu/content/opt-fees>)
 - Your completed STEM OPT Quiz
 - Copy of I-983
- ISSS will review your application and prepare a recommendation (new I-20) to USCIS. This may take up to 10 working days.
- During this time, it is advised that you begin **STEP 2** below.
- ISSS will notify you via email when your STEM OPT I-20 is ready to be dispatched to you.

STEP 2: Prepare Your Application for USCIS Assemble your documents in this order:

- \$410 check or money order payable to *Department of Homeland Security* OR signed G-1450 Authorization for Credit Card Transactions
 - If filing online, you can pay by credit card, debit card, or ACH (automatic withdrawal from funds from your bank account)
 - Please note that filing fees may change and it is recommended that you verify the current filing fee on the USCIS website before sending in your application. (check www.uscis.gov for most recent information)
- Two (2) color passport style photos
 - Guidelines: Color photos with a **white background** taken no earlier than 30 days before submission to the USCIS. They should be unmounted; glossy and unretouched. The photos should be a full-frontal pose, such as a passport photo. Your head should be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order to which you belong. A photographer familiar with "passport photos" can help you. For additional information see the Department of State website for details.
 - If filing via the mail-in option, lightly print your name and your I-94 number on the back of each photo with a pencil. We recommend you place both photos in a small plastic bag or envelope, so they don't get lost in the rest of application.
- Completed Form I-765 form (Check online at <http://www.uscis.gov> to ensure you have the latest version.)
 - Respond to Q. #27 by writing (c)(3)(C) within the parentheses.
 - Fully complete Question #28.
 - You can use either your personal address or our office address on the form. If you would like to use our address for the application, you may list this address on your I-765:
 - c/o ISSS
1155 Union Circle #311067
Denton, TX 76203-5017

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HOW TO APPLY FOR 24-MONTH STEM OPT (p.2)

- Photocopy of pages 1 and 2 of the I-20 showing the OPT recommendation.
 - Make sure to sign the I-20 (the “STUDENT ATTESTATION” on page 1 before you make a copy.
 - I-20 must have been issued within the last 60 days.
 - Print out your I-94 card online at <http://www.cbp.gov/i94> (or if you travelled before April 2013, make photocopies of both sides of your I-94 card (if you have one, it will be a white paper card in your passport))
 - Photocopy of your passport identity, expiry and visa pages.
 - Photocopy of Previous EAD Card(s)
 - Copy of your Diploma
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- G-1145: USE THIS FORM ONLY IF YOU CHOOSE TO MAIL YOUR APPLICATION.
 - This form will allow the Lockbox facility to send you an email or text message when they receive your application. You are not required but are encouraged to include it. Place it on top of your application packet. You can download the form at www.uscis.gov

****You may submit your packet through iNorthTX for an advisor to review before mailing the application.****

STEP 3: File online at <https://myaccount.uscis.gov/> OR mail your application to USCIS (do not file both ways)

- Make a copy of the entire packet for your records.
- If you decide to mail your application instead of filing online, there are two recommended ways to mail your packet. Review the I-765 instructions found online at <http://www.uscis.gov> to ensure the proper mailing address. Sending your packet without a delivery receipt is not recommended.
 - USPS Deliveries (**Preferably use Priority Mail or Certified mail with Return receipt requested**)
 - Express Mail and courier service Deliveries (UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc.)

USPS Deliveries	For FEDEX, UPS, DHL & other courier service deliveries
USCIS Attn: I-765 C03 P.O. Box 805373 Chicago, IL 60680-5374	USCIS Attn: I-765 C03 (Box 805373) 131 South Dearborn – 3 rd Floor Chicago, IL 60603-5517

- *Please check the USCIS website for the most up to date filing address. www.uscis.gov. Please note that the address for mailing through USPS and through express mail or a courier service is different. Verify the correct address before sending.*

USCIS will send a receipt letter (mailed to ISSS or address listed under Part 2, Question #5 on your I-765) several weeks after they receive it. If you choose to use the UNT ISSS Office address, you authorize ISSS staff to open USCIS correspondence and make a copy for your file.

Prepared to the best of our knowledge in 9/2021 (Updated 09/2021) by the staff of International Student and Scholar Services, (Phone (940) 565-2195).

USCIS regulations and procedures are subject to change with little notice. Please inform us of any difficulties you encounter following these instructions.