

STEM - OPT

24-month extension of OPT for majors in Science-Technology-Engineering-Math ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

There are several important rules and procedures that must be followed before and after applying for STEM OPT. Complying with these rules and procedures is necessary to maintain lawful F-1 immigration status. Your signature confirms that you have read and understand what you are required to do. This form will be kept in your file and you should make a copy for your records.

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____ Student ID: _____

Applied for STEM OPT previously: Yes No

DEAR STUDENT:

Please read the following and acknowledge with you signature on page 2.

- Sixty-day filing deadline:** Your STEM OPT application (and all supporting documents) must reach USCIS Service Center no later than 60 days from the issue date my new Form I-20. You are responsible for assuring your STEM OPT application is received by USCIS within 60 days of the issue date.
- Mailing address:** You are responsible for notifying an International Student Advisor if you move from the address listed on your I-765 application. Notification should be made within 10 days of moving. Failure to make such notification may result in delays in receiving notifications and/or your EAD card. **(Official USCIS mail is not forwarded even if you put in a change of address at your local post office.)**
- STEM OPT start date:** You are allowed to continue working for up to 180 days beyond you original OPT end date while your STEM OPT application is pending.
- Limits on future periods of STEM OPT:** If you have already obtained one STEM OPT extension, you will be eligible for a second STEM OPT extension at a higher degree level. You are only eligible for a total of two STEM OPTs.
- STEM OPT on previous STEM degree:** You may use a previously obtained a US-earned STEM degree as a basis to apply for a STEM OPT extension even if it did not serve as the basis for your standard 12-month post completion OPT.
- Employment related to STEM OPT:** The 24-month STEM OPT employment or internship opportunity must be directly related to your STEM OPT degree.
- Form I-983:** The Form I-983 needs to be completed and signed by both yourself and your immediate supervisor.
- Self-Evaluations:** You must complete **two** self-evaluations during the course of your STEM OPT period: the first evaluation must be completed within 12 months of the STEM OPT start date and a second, concluding evaluation at the end of your STEM OPT. Evaluations must be signed by yourself and your immediate supervisor, and then submitted to an International Student Advisor. You will need to submit a self-evaluation at the conclusion of any employment, regardless of how long you have been with that employer. Your evaluation must include:

- a. An assessment of your overall performance using the measures identified in the agreed upon training plan.
 - b. An evaluation of your success in applying and acquiring the new knowledge, skills and competencies that were previously identified in the plan.
 - c. A discussion of your accomplishments, successful projects, overall contributions, etc., that occurred during the specified review period.
 - d. A statement addressing any modifications to the objectives and goals for projects or new areas for skill and competency development.
9. **Cannot be volunteer and self-employed:** A volunteer/unpaid position cannot support a STEM OPT extension. In addition, self-employment does not constitute employment in the context of a STEM OPT extension.
10. **E-Verify and EIN numbers:** The employer you work for must be enrolled in the E-verify program as evidenced by a valid E-Verify company or client company ID number and an employer identification number (EIN) used for tax purposes.
11. **WAC number:** If you completed the G-1145 notification you will receive either an e-mail or written notification with a WAC number. You may go to the link below to check the status of your case using your WAC number. <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard/CaseStatus.do>
12. **Submission of EAD to ISSP:** You are required to e-mail or bring a copy of your STEM OPT Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to ISSP as soon as you receive it from USCIS.
13. **Reporting Requirements:** In order to maintain my immigration status while on post-completion STEM OPT, you must:
- a. Notify ISSP of my new address by updating my address via the MyFresnoState student portal within 10 days of moving.
 - b. Report changes in employment by sending an e-mail ISSP with the name of company, address, job title, and start date. You are required to do this each time you change employer.
 - c. Confirm the following with International Student Advisor every 6 months: legal name, mailing address, employer name and address and status of current employment.
14. **Periods of unemployment during STEM OPT:** You may not accrue an aggregate of no more than 60 days of unemployment while on STEM OPT. You are required to keep thorough and accurate records of your employment and request an updated Form I-20 each time you change employer, and any periods of unemployment. If you accrue more than 60 days of unemployment while on STEM OPT, your SEVIS record may be terminated.
15. **Sixty-day "grace" period after STEM OPT:** You are permitted a 60-day grace period to remain in the U.S. following the end date on your STEM OPT/EAD card. You are not permitted to work during this period.
16. **Health Insurance:** You are required to maintain health insurance coverage while in the U.S.

Acknowledgement: My signature below indicates that I have received and read the information presented above.

Student Signature

Date

For questions or concerns regarding STEM OPT acknowledgement form, please contact California State University, Fresno's intlstudentservices@csufresno.edu