

OPT- Mailing Application to USCIS Instructions

This handout contains instructions for you to complete your OPT application and mail it to USCIS. Please follow the instructions very carefully. If you are unclear regarding a particular step, please email cie@csueastbay.edu

We strongly recommend your review the [Online OPT Workshop](#) materials before you complete this process.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

In order to apply for OPT; you will need to follow the procedures below:

1. Attend an OPT Workshop via Zoom or review the [OPT workshop online version](#).
2. Complete the [OPT Request Form](#). Email your completed OPT Request Form (and any emails from your academic departments) to cie@csueastbay.edu for review. CIE advisors will process your request and send your OPT Request I-20 via email.
3. Once you receive your OPT Request I-20, you will need to print and **SIGN and Date** page 1. You only need to send a copy of the OPT request I-20.
4. Complete [USCIS Form I-765](#). **Guidelines are on pages 4-5**.
5. Have two immigration photographs taken (see enclosed photograph specifications). Photos must be taken within the previous 30 days.
6. Prepare your application to mail to USCIS: Once you have received your OPT request I-20 from CIE, you will need to prepare and submit the following list of items to USCIS:
 - **Notification-** [G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance](#). This should be first page
 - **Payment-** [Fee for I-765](#), payable to US Department of Homeland Security. Personal check, cashier's check or money order is acceptable. We recommend you use www.uscis.gov/feecalculator
 - Please note you do not have to pay the biometric services fee
 - **Photos-** Two full-face passport style photos. They must be taken in the USA and within the past 30 days. Put the photos in an envelope with your payment (check) and attach with a paperclip on top of the entire application. Do not staple the fee and the photos.
 - **I-765-** Original [USCIS Form I-765](#). Make sure it is signed in wet ink, no electronic signatures are accepted. Include all pages (7), even if they are blank. You must use the current edition of the I-765.
 - **OPT I-20-** photocopy of your new OPT Request I-20 from CIE
 - **Previous I-20(s)-** photocopies of your previous I-20's at this degree level
 - **I-94-** Photocopy of paper or printout of electronic [Form I-94](#)
 - **EAD-** Photocopy of any previous EAD cards (if applicable)
 - **Passport-** photocopy of Bio Page, most recent entry stamp, and photocopy of F-1 visa page.
 - If you changed your status in the USA and do not have an F-1 visa, please include a copy of your I-797 approval notice

7. Mail your application to USCIS:

- We recommend you mail your application using a trackable method and keep a record of your application's delivery such as UPS or FedEx
- Make sure your application is received by USCIS **less than 30 days** after your OPT I-20's issuance date.
 - If you delay your mailing and it is received after 30 days, USCIS will most likely deny your OPT application.
 - If you are close to the 30 days, please request a new I-20 from CIE
- The address to which your EAD card will be sent determines where the application should be mailed. Your EAD card will be sent to the address you listed as mailing address on the I-765
- Make a copy of your complete application before mailing
- Do not use any staples in the application
- The order of your application is important
- Obtain your filing address directly from the [USCIS I-765 Lockbox](#) website

THEN WHAT?

Notification:

USCIS may or may not provide you with your receipt number and/or confirmation via Text Message or Email if you submit the G-1145. If you did submit the G-1145 and haven't received a text message and/or email, the next best tracking option is checking your bank account to see if your check has been cashed.

Receipt Notice:

Once USCIS receives the application, a receipt will be processed and sent to the address on the I-765 (this normally takes 3-5 weeks).

Processing Time:

USCIS generally processes applications within 90 days but based on the time of year and how busy they are, the "standard" length of time required for processing is subject to change. Processing times can range from 3-5 months.

Approval Notice:

USCIS will mail your official Approval Notice to the address indicated on your I-765. This notice does not permit you to work but please keep it for your records.

EAD

Your EAD will be produced and mailed to you separately from the Approval Notice. You generally will receive the EAD about 2 weeks after the Approval Notice. Your EAD is required to be in your hands before you can start working.

- Please take a picture of your EAD and email it to CIE.
- **Note:** the US Postal Service does not forward mail from USCIS. We highly recommend you sign up for **Informed Delivery by USPS** (<https://informeddelivery.usps.com/>) to track the delivery of your card.

SEVP Portal

You will receive an email from SEVP containing a link to create your SEVP Portal account. You must use this link within 14 days to create your account. Even if you don't have employment to report at that time, please create your account to active it.

Passport Photo Requirements

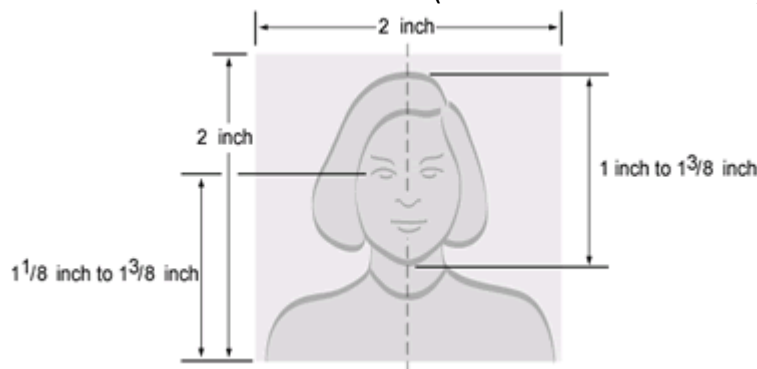
Your photo is a vital part of your application. To learn more, review the information below on how to provide a suitable photo. We recommend you use a professional passport photo service to ensure your photo meets all the requirements.

***DO NOT TAKE THESE PHOTOS AT HOME.**

***PHOTOS MUST BE TAKEN IN THE USA within the past 30 days.**

All photos must be no more than 30 days old when an application is filed and must meet the specifications for full frontal/passport photos as stated on the US Department of State website:

- In color
- Printed on matte or glossy photo quality paper
- 2 x 2 inches (51 x 51 mm) in size
- Sized such that the head is between 1 inch and 1 3/8 inches (between 25 and 35 mm) from the bottom of the chin to the top of the head.
- Taken in front of a plain white or off-white background
- Taken in full-face view directly facing the camera
- With a neutral facial expression and both eyes open
- Taken in clothing that you normally wear on a daily basis:
 - Uniforms, clothing that looks like a uniform, and camouflage attire should not be worn in photos except in the case of religious attire that is worn daily.
 - You may only wear a hat or head covering if you wear it daily for religious purposes. Your full face must be visible and your head covering cannot obscure your hairline or cast shadows on your face.
 - Headphones, wireless hands-free devices or similar items are not acceptable in your photo.
 - If you normally wear prescription glasses, a hearing device or similar articles, they may be worn for your photo. Glare on glasses is not acceptable in your photo.
 - Dark glasses or non-prescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons (a medical certificate may be required).



For more information on photo standards visit the Department for State website at <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos.html>

I-765 Guidelines for OPT Applications

These directions are meant to help you with best practices in completing the Form I-765 for Post Completion OPT. **Please note- this is not legal advice!! You will be signing the form so please answer what you think is best.**

General Guidelines

You can find the [Form I-765](#) and official instructions to complete the form for free via USCIS. You are responsible for making sure you have the current version of the form. **We STRONGLY recommend you type as much as possible (besides your signature) as the data entry for this form is done via machine reading. Your signature and any answers you were not able to type, should be completed in BLACK INK. NO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES ARE ALLOWED!!** If you need more space for a response, use Part 6 Additional Information. You are responsible for answering all relevant questions, the tips below do not cover all relevant questions.

Part 1

Item 1. Select 1.a.- Initial permission to accept employment

Part 2

Item 2: Share any other way your name is given on your legal documents. This includes “FNU,” multiple last names you may sometimes use, or previous names you used if you changed your name for any reasons, such as marriage.

Item 5: This is the address where USCIS will mail your documents related to this application only. If using anyone else’s address, BE SURE to put their name in the “In Care Of Name” field, to ensure delivery. Do not use a CSUEB address

Item 6: Check YES if you currently in the same address you just gave as the place to send your documents, in item 5. If you check yes, you do NOT have to complete Item 7. If you check NO, please complete item 7.

Item 7: Please give the address where you currently live. USCIS will NOT mail documents here, and it’s okay if this will change over the course of your application processing. Just use the address where you live today.

Item 8: You will only have an A-Number if you have ever had an EAD card before and it will be listed on your EAD card (called a “USCIS number”). Those who have never had an EAD card or an application with USCIS before can leave this field blank.

Item 9: Leave Blank

Items 13 – 17:

If you have an SSN, provide it in Item 13b. You can then check NO for Item 14, and skip down to item 18.

If you do NOT have an SSN, you can apply for it through this application, and your SSN will be issued to you when your OPT application is approved. You would answer NO to item 13.a., YES to Item 14, Yes to 15 and give the required information in items 16-17

Item 21a: Your I-94 number is found on your most recent [I-94 entry record](#).

Item 24: “F-1 student” unless you changed your status from within the US, and have not left the US since then.

Item 25: “F-1 student.”

Item 26: You can find your SEVIS ID number at the top left of your I-20. It starts with N00.

Item 27: This item is asking you to give the regulatory citation of the kind of work permission you are applying for. OPT: (c)(3)(B)

Item 28: Applicants for Post Completion OPT can leave this blank.

Item 28.c: Leave Blank

Items 29 – 31: Skip these, as they are for other immigration categories only.

Part 3

Item 1a.- Be sure to check this box

Items 3-5- Complete your contact information

Item 7a- Make sure you sign in **BLACK** ink. This should be an original signature. **No electronic signatures accepted**

Parts 4-5

Please leave these pages blank as you should be completing the forms yourself

Part 6

Complete this section only if:

- You have been approved for **CPT** in the past
- You have been approved for **OPT** in the past
- You have used a **different SEVIS ID** in F-1 status in the US (for example, you attended school for a while, left the US to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20, you would have a SEVIS ID from your first period of attendance that is different than your current SEVIS ID). Your SEVIS ID is on the top right corner of your I-20, and starts with N00..

Item 1. If you need to complete this section because one or more of the above statements apply to you, please complete Part 6, Item 1. This field may auto-populate

Item 2. Complete if you have a USCIS # or A #

Items 3-7. For each of the items listed above (i.e. CPT, OPT, different SEVIS ID numbers), complete one box in Part 6, starting with 3.a. We suggest using the following to complete the Page number, Part Number, and Item number, as this information is required specific to Category (c)(3)(B) (per the [I-765 instructions](#), page 4):

For 3a-c, 4a-c, and/or 5a-c, etc., list the following:

For previous OPT applications

Page 2, Part 2, Item 12

- **OPT:** Please list your past OPT approvals. We suggest this format:

OPT Authorizations. SEVIS #, OPT, Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD), whether full time or part time

For example: N000000000, OPT, 09/08/18-09/07/19, Bachelor's, Full Time

For previous CPT and SEVIS Numbers

Page 3, Part 2, Item 26

- **CPT:** Please list your CPT approvals. We suggest this format:

CPT Authorizations. SEVIS #, CPT, Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD); Part-time or Full-time. You can find your CPT details on the I-20 that was approved for each period of CPT.

For example: N000000000, CPT, 05/20/19-09/07/20, Bachelor's, Part Time (or Full Time)

- **Previous SEVIS ID's:** Please list your other SEVIS ID's you have used in the past. We suggest this format:

Previous SEVIS ID's SEVIS ID: N00.....; program start date – program end date; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD).

For example: Previous SEVIS ID N000000000, 09/08/13-05/20/16, Bachelor's