

Preparing & Mailing Your OPT Application to USCIS

USCIS FORM & FEE INFORMATION

You must always check the edition date of the version of the I-765 and the filing fee before mailing your application:
https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

- On the <u>USCIS I-765 main page</u>, you can confirm the current form and fee version under "Form Details."
- When you download the I-765 form, you can view the **version** on the bottom left-hand corner of each page.





APPLICATION REMINDERS

- Request tracking of your application package when you mail your application.
- Make sure all pages of your application are printed single-sided and not stapled.
- You MUST be physically present in the U.S. in F-1 status to apply for OPT.
- At this time, the HIO strongly discourages the use of the USCIS online filing system for all Form I-765 OPT applications.
- Make a photocopy or scan of your entire application and retain it for your own records.

ASSEMBLE YOUR APPLICATION

Personal Check or Money Order for \$410 payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security".
2 recent passport pictures in an envelope, not previously used for OPT, visa or passport applications – label the back
of your photos with your full name and SEVIS ID in pencil.
 More information on Passport Photo Requirements can be found here:
https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos/photo-examples.html
Original Form G-1145
Original Form 1-765, signed and dated in black ink (NO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES) – include ALL 7 pages of the
I-765
 Always <u>confirm</u> the current version of the form and filing fee <u>before</u> mailing your application:
https://www.uscis.gov/i-765
New Form I-20 with OPT recommendation. You must print the electronic OPT I-20 you received from the HIO. You
must physically sign and date in black ink (NO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES) your printed I-20. Put the signed and
dated I-20 in your OPT application to USCIS.
Photocopy of most recent I-94 record – www.cbp.gov/i94
 If you travel before submitting your application to USCIS, but after you submitted your request to the HIO, include an updated I-94 record.
Photocopy of most recent U.S. visa page in your passport (Canadians do not need to provide this)
Photocopy of biographical page of your passport
Photocopies of <u>ALL</u> past I-20s issued to you from all schools you have attended in the U.S. If you cannot locate I-20s
from previous schools, please include a letter stating that you cannot locate them and provide dates of when you were at
those schools. You may use this template: http://www.hio.harvard.edu/opt-missing-i-20-letter-template
Photocopy of any USCIS approval notices from change of status applications (<i>if applicable</i>)
Photocopy of any previously issued EAD (employment authorization document) (if applicable)



Preparing & Mailing Your OPT Application to USCIS

APPLICATION WINDOW

YOUR APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY USCIS:

- **POST-COMPLETION**: No more than **90 days before** your I-20 expiration date.
- **PRE-COMPLETION:** No more than **90 days before** your requested OPT start date.
- No later than **30 days from** the date the HIO advisor made the recommendation on your Form I-20 (date issued).
- Applications that arrive to USCIS outside this time period will be denied and you may not be able to reapply for the OPT authorization.



MAILING YOUR APPLICATION

*Mailing addresses can change without notice so you <u>must_check</u> the USCIS site to view the most up-to-date instructions at the time you mail your application.

- 1. Go to https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses
- 2. Find section/tab labeled "Foreign Student"
- 3. Under Category Description, find "F-1 Optional Practical Training"
- 4. Under "Filing Location" find the USCIS Lockbox address(es). Must use a specific address depending on whether you use United States Postal Service (USPS) or a courier service (FedEx, DHL, UPS)
 - You must select a shipping option that guarantees a delivery date and provides proof of delivery. Keep clear records of your payment receipt and delivery confirmation.
 - If using USPS, do NOT use Certified Mail. Certified mail does not guarantee a delivery date.

Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765,
Application for Employment Authorization

Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765,
Application for Employment Authorization

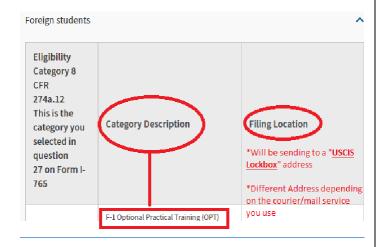
• Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors, USCIS is experiencing delays in issuing receipt notices for some applications and petitions filed at a USCIS lockbox facility. For more information, see the USCIS Lockbox Undates web alert.

If you are filing Form I-765 with a nother form, file both forms at the location specified by the other form. For example, if you are filing Form I-765 with a Form I-539, file both forms according to the Form I-539 Instructions. Use addresses below only when you are NOT submitting Form I-765 with another form.

Asylees/refugees and their spouses and children

Categories based on nationality

Foreign students



ISSUES WITH YOUR APPLICATION

Please contact your HIO advisor directly about any of these issues before taking action on your own:

- You do not receive the USCIS Receipt notice within 60 days of the government receiving your application.
- USCIS returns your application to you for <u>any</u> reason, you will likely need a new I-20 so please contact the HIO.
- You receive a notice from USCIS requesting additional information (known as a Request for Evidence).
- You will not graduate as planned this semester.

The HIO provides general guidance on your OPT/STEM OPT application based on information obtained from reliable sources and reflecting our years of experience in working with students. We make every attempt to ensure that we provide you with the most up-to-date information available. Any advice provided to you by our office (as well as the information in this packet) does not constitute legal advice, however. The OPT application is a personal application for which you are responsible; the application preparation and USCIS case decision will vary depending on the facts at issue in your particular case. The HIO does its best to provide you with the most current guidance, but please be mindful that USCIS may change its interpretation of these policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements at any time. The HIO is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from USCIS.